

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre:	Ballyneety - Baile an Fhaoitigh	Ref:	1881
County:	Limerick	Mark:	319
Category:	C	Date(s):	02/08/2023

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	44
Streetscape & Public Places	80	43
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	41
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	33
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	23
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	61
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	38
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	36
TOTAL MARK	550	319

Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu don bhliain 2023. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo. Adh Mór...

Thank you for the comprehensive entry form and the map of the village which was acceptable for adjudication purposes.

You also included a 74 page action plan from 2021 to 2025 which this adjudicator thought rather large for a small village.

It would have been better if a 4/5 page review of the plan was included to see what works were completed over the last 3 years.

2021 was the last time you entered the competition and that was done as a desktop exercise so it was good to visit Ballyneety a place that this adjudicator would be fairly familiar with.

The adjudicator realises that you had a serious fire in the village that put paid to entering the competition last year so welcome back and hopefully the lost jobs may eventually be restored to the community.

The Sustainable Development Goals are at the heart of the United Nation's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Tidy Towns has now fully integrated them into the competition with the objective of asking groups to demonstrate how SDGs impact of their activities.

The committee of 14 and the volunteer core of 9 is sufficient to undertake the work of Tidy Towns in the village.

You have a good cross section supporters from Limerick City and County Council, other agencies such as Ballyhoura Development, local clubs, businesses, and residents.

Thank you for acknowledging the work of the CE Scheme participants as these people provide invaluable back to local committees around the country.

The methods of communication consist of newsletters, whats app groups, and the old reliable word of mouth.

The committee should maybe consider setting up a Facebook Page as it would be another communication tool to let people know about your activities.

It could be populated with regular content and photographs which in this adjudicator's opinion would be a good way to attract additional volunteers.

It would be in the interest of the committee to re-engage with the local Knockea National School and get both teachers and pupils involved in some of your projects, particularly in the areas of Biodiversity and Sustainability.

The special project that of funding a new defibrillator was a collaborative effort on the part of a number of groups in the parish.

So well done on being involved.

Thank you for the endorsement of the competition and what it has meant to the village since you first entered 20 years ago.

Streetscape & Public Places / Sráid-Dreach & Áiteanna Poiblí:

You have quite of input under this category heading and the adjudicator noted all during his walkabout.

The pictorial records were welcomed as it was easy to identify the places as one travels the various part of the village

The refurbished Thatched Cottage was the standout feature in the village and well done to the owners who took it upon themselves to do this work to the highest of standards.

The Stoller Pub has been transformed under new ownership and the additional car parking is welcomed by the local community.

On the same note credit to the long-established Crosses Funeral Directors for allowing their car park to be used for daytime parking.

The adjudicator drove into the Golf Club and noted the additional improvements that have been made in the last year and the buildings and car parking area were presented to a high standard.

A visit was also paid to the Ishka Water Bottling Company and again the modern plant and the adjoining extensive grounds were in pristine condition.

The Elm Court Daybreak, Oifig An Phoist, and Inver Service Station combined is a busy well organized facility that provides good services for the local population as well as passing visitors.

Parking options have improved very much since the addition of more spaces as it used to be a little chaotic in past years.

The Garda Station a magnificent building looked as if it had recently been refreshed by painting.

St Albies Credit Union building was tidy and presentable but the concrete post and rail fencing at the side could benefit from a coat of paint.

The quality of stone walls in the village and on the extremities is top-class.

The footpaths which extended out both ends of the R512 were in good condition and the two additional new sections in the centre of the village were noted.

Ballyneety has a high volume of traffic passing through daily and pedestrians must have safe passage and access to good footpaths.

You mentioned the transformation in the village over the decades as unoccupied houses were either taken over and refurbished or camouflaged by painting.

There were only two properties that would consider “unloved” in the village and one seemed to have a planning notice on the door so this is a good sign that it will be taken over soon and refurbished.

Some very impressive individual residences, excluding the cluster developments, in the village were viewed during the walkabout

Road surfaces were good but some of the road markings had faded a little.

The maintaining of the public space in the housing development at Bellewood is a task that is done by Tidy Towns volunteers and you are to be commended for this/

As a matter of interest is there a residents association in this housing area?

Overall the standard was very good.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

A large body of work has taken place in this category over the last year.

Much of the work time has been spent on necessary maintenance such as looking after the green areas in Bellewood as well as tending to the flower beds in different parts of the village.

Top marks to the local resident who planted native blackthorn hedging on the Limerick approach.

This was viewed and is making steady progress.

The Ishka Plant has been commented on in favourable terms in the previous category and as you rightly say the owners look after their green areas with great care.

There are some excellent planting arrangements spread around the village and the adjudicator was impressed with how they were looked after.

The need for all-year-round planting with a requirement for pollinator-friendly plants has been taken on board by the committee.

The new refurbishment of the Stroller was further enhanced by the nice attractive window boxes as were the two single-storey houses further down the street.

Well done all involved as the standard in this category was very good.

Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality / An Dúlra agus an Bhithéagsúlacht i do cheantar:

Key to this category is knowing what habitats exist in your area and where they are.

It is of equal importance to be aware of special category areas in the locality and also has some knowledge of biodiversity and the law before embarking on any biodiversity-related project.

The input that you have included in this category is rather sparse.

Ballyneety Village has an abundance of wildlife habitats and this needs to be identified and then promoted to the maximum.

The adjudicator suggests that you get in touch with the County Biodiversity Office for advice on how to go about doing a fauna and flora survey of the area.

It would be an ideal time also to reengage with the local school and have school children involved from the outset.

For further information consult the excellent section on this category in the Tidy Towns Handbook where you will find top-class information and advice.

www.biodiversityireland.ie is another source of pertinent information as well as giving updates on the All Ireland Pollinator Plan.

Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:

“Doing more with less” was a very catchy slogan when it came out some years back but now it has become a necessity to help reduce our environmental impact.

This category has been evolving in keeping with current EU and government policy

It encapsulates how we try to minimise our use of all resources within the community.

It is a broad category so you may be surprised at how many of your existing community initiatives are relevant.

What you have submitted certainly fits within the objectives of the category but whilst some are particular to Ballyneety many are replicated by groups around the country

Well done on grass-cutting mulching and having a rainwater harvesting of 1000 gallons capacity.

Well done to the 3 schools associated with the parish who are committed to progressive recycling methods.

Home composting has become popular and as you state the compost can be used to enrich hanging baskets

Overwintering or saving of plants has become very popular with groups around the country and you have joined the movement!

You are wished well with your deliberations with Electric Ireland to install solar panels on the roof of the Courthouse and the adjudicator hopes it comes to fruition.

For further information, you don't have to look any further than the Tidy Towns Handbook which has an excellent section on this category containing a raft of relevant information and links to many important websites.

Do consult with the County Environmental Officer as well to find out what relevant workshops might be planned for the autumn/winter around the County.

These types of workshops are great networking events to get to know what other groups are doing not only in this category but in other sections as well.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Some excellent work has been undertaken over the last year to ensure that the village is as litter free as possible.

Good to note that you were part of the Limerick Good Friday Clean up setting an example for others to follow.

A turnout of 30 volunteers is very impressive.

The village was virtually litter free on the day of adjudication and this was in no small way due to your efforts and the fact that people see the good example that you have set.

Community composting to add to home composting

There was some evidence of dog poo in one or two areas and the committee might prevail upon the local county engineer to assess the village for dog fouling bins.

There needs to be some advertising deterrent as well so maybe you might bear that in mind for next year's entry.

General tidiness was good although there was a fenced-off area on the Caherconlish Road that the adjudicator noted and wondered what was the issue.

Residential Streets & Housing Areas / Sráideanna Cónaithe & Ceantair Tithíochta:

The adjudicator asked the question earlier had the Housing Areas you have mentioned residents associations.

Mea Culpa for not reading this section earlier and taking due diligence.

All these areas were visited and the standard of presentation was top class with some top-class front gardens and side areas neatly kept.

This year you had no specific projects in this category and this is understandable given the trauma of last year.

The adjudicator commented in an earlier category that you had a good relationship with all the residents of the village and this can be seen by how residents have presented homesteads.

Pride of place is definitely to the fore in Ballyneety.

Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes / Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna & Lánaí:

The approach from the Kilmallock end of the R512 was acceptable as the road surface was good and directional and speed signs were clean and visible.

The verges were a little over grown in the opinion of this adjudicator and maybe a single cutting a foot in from the road would be sufficient as the rest could be left to help the preservation of various species of wildlife.

As mentioned in a previous section the footpath extends out this road a good distance to allow for safe walking.

The approach from Limerick was very good with lovely stone wall on the left but the individual flower pots need to be refilled.

Signage was clean and visible at this entrance also and traffic calming measures were well flagged in advance.

Concluding Remarks:

The adjudicator would be familiar enough with Ballyneety from passing through on many occasions.

This was the first time to have an extensive walkabout.

Lots of good work has been done in the last year and this is more laudable given the trauma that befell the community.

Just a follow on from the report of 2021 maybe the committee might make more reference to the SDGs and align them with your work activities.

You are wished continued success into the future.