

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dromcollogher - Dromcollchoille** Ref: **932**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **265**
Category: **B** Date(s):

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	39	39
Streetscape & Public Places	80	33	34
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	29	30
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	24	24
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	16	16
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	59	60
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	32	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	29	29
TOTAL MARK	550	261	265

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

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 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. Welcome to Supervalu Tidy Towns 2023. Thank you for participating again in Tidy Towns. Tidy Towns is good for your community and good for the country.

You say that you have entered for Tidy Towns “around 5 times”. You have a Committee of 3 and a volunteer cohort of between 5 and 8 persons. You say that you work closely with the Pre School, Primary and Second Level Schools and work alongside them on days like Team Limerick Clean Up through the local GAA and Ladies Football Club. Do you have any involvement with the schools in relation to Tidy Towns? It is crucially important that children and teenagers have a knowledge of your Tidy Towns and what it entails. It is good for the children and teenagers and good for Dromcollogher.

We regret to say that the map of Dromcollogher was very difficult to comprehend and it made it difficult for the Adjudicator to know the location where s/he was going to. For next year, could you approach the Second Level School to produce a map that would be easy for your Adjudicator to comprehend when undertaking an inspection of the town? This would be a good exercise for a particular class in the school to undertake and it would be informative for the class to know where streets and roads are, where industries, schools, churches, parks and so on are located. Alternatively, there may be a person in your town who is proficient in making a map of the town.

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

We arrived from the Hazelwood direction and our first impression of Dromcollogher was a jungle of machinery and derelict buildings on both sides of the road and it looked like it would be dangerous for pedestrians.

We tried to work from the name signs for Dromcollogher before we entered the town. There was no name sign! And neither was there any name sign on any of the roads that we inspected. Scoil Naomh Joseph was very well maintained. We looked at the town square - or more correctly a triangle. There is a great opportunity here.

Currently, the square has been taken over by the car and what is left of the small open space area is rather pathetic. There are some trees planted but mostly what you notice is, again, the car. The Square should double in size and that means moving the cars into another area entirely. This would then allow for the square to become what it should be - a fine and attractive place that would then attract shoppers, cafés, bars, hotels and guest houses – imagination is what is called for. We understand that the Council has a Town Enhancement Plan proposal and there is a Public Consultation to provide feedback to the Council. We hope that what happens will be imaginative and transformative for the town. If the plans for it are what they should be it would then become a catalyst for the rejuvenation of the square and make the town itself what it should be, an attractive place, a busy place.

On the Broadford Road, St. Bartholemew's Church stands on a corner site. The church was modified at some stage

and it has been imaginatively altered with large windows looking out to the trees in the site and beyond the site too. The Labyrinth is an unusual idea. It should be a beautiful reflective place, but it is quite barren and with an adjoining treeless car park. The stream running through it would appear to connect with the new park. The Broadford Road is lined with fine trees and a good stone wall, but on one site the wall was demolished and, in its place there is a mass concrete one. This was probably done at a time when there was not the sympathy for retaining trees as there is now.

The GAA boundary wall on the Newcastle Road really needs to be altered to make it a more attractive area. Indeed, it is not the only blank wall on this road, and this should be a priority – to transform the existing industrial boundaries to make this area an attractive place rather than a blank place.

On a positive note, we would like to congratulate the person or group who initiated the blue historical plaques and that provided great information on Dromcollogher and including a QR code with each. Well done.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Cemeteries are wonderful places to visit and unfortunately in Ireland we tend to neglect them. Your cemetery on a corner site on Buckley's Terrace has a wonderfully built old stone wall adjacent to the road but there is another area in the cemetery where the boundary is a concrete block wall construction. There is a Church which is rapidly deteriorating and is quite dangerous. It should be protected and made safe. There are wonderful headstones going back to the 1800s – or even before that - and it would be worth making an inventory of them – if none has been done already. At one end there is line of trees on an embankment, and they provide a softness for the cemetery. For some reason, the grass vegetation on the embankment has been removed. There is no reason to do this.

You have a relatively new park on the Newcastle Road. It is a fine park, but it has no name for the park on the entrance. The park is imaginatively laid out and with a watercourse running through it. The bridges that have been constructed are rather crude and that is a pity. The maintenance regime has obviously not been worked out – grass growing out onto the paths and that will damage the path surface if not dealt with. There should be a metre or more of mown grass from the path. Perhaps, the maintenance regime has not yet been identified. There are good trees and hedgerows around the perimeter of the park. We do hope that it will give great service to the community and there should be facilities for children also. It was great to see the park being used when we were doing our Adjudication inspection.

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

We noted a stream but in reality it is was an open culvert running between buildings and under buildings and seemed to run on towards Newcastle West from Dromcollogher. The area that we inspected was walled in with at most a 1.5m width and it had bottles and other litter in it. Unfortunately, too many streams throughout the country have had a similar fate. To have such a watercourse in a large town and left in such a condition is dreadful – but it is not unique. Consider what a wonderful opportunity this would have been if it had been dealt with differently. Yes, it can be made better and someone need to do it.

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

You mention only the Organic Centre here and we hope that the Centre thrives, as it should. It is connected with Sustainability in a very important way. Where are the other Sustainable ideas? For instance, what about bicycle parking and safe walking? What about a connection from the new park across to Broadford Road? What about a bus service? What about the proposed rejuvenation of the Town Square? This would be a great topic for the school children and for the Second Level School also.

We would suggest that your Tidy Town group should ask Limerick City and Council to include you in any proposed meeting that is focused on Sustainability. The Council has undertaken very many workshops on this and other Tidy Town Categories also. It is a very important issue, and we cannot avoid it. It is too important for that. Unfortunately, most people are only now beginning to understand it and work at it also.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Your town is generally a tidy town but it is cluttered with industrial buildings that make a blank face onto the roads. There is no need to move these buildings, but there is an imperative to make the blank boundaries more acceptable and attractive for everyone.

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

You have provided us with very little information for this Category. Yes, the housing areas mostly have a good appearance and look well maintained. But we need more information from you! We noticed in one area opposite the St. Bartholomew Church a small but attractive row of houses, one of which had a beautiful display of flower. We also noticed, what must be two very old street signs on two of the buildings opposite and it was using the Irish names only – Sráid an Tséipéil and Páirc na Coille. These signs are to be treasured.

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

As mentioned earlier, there were no Name Signs for Dromcollogher on any of the roads that we looked for. Usually, these signs in other centres have small but attractive native wildflower displays. We also mentioned earlier the road coming from Hazelwood and that was full of broken and mended machinery. A very poor entrance unfortunately. Some roads were managed well, for example, Buckley's Terrace.

Concluding Remarks:

Dromcollogher can be a wonderful town and to make it a great place will take effort. The work on the Square should be a starting point but the entire town needs an overall plan. If there is, then it should have been mentioned in your Tidy Town entry. You should also talk to Limerick City and County Council, if you have not already done so, to request to be included in seminars on the different Tidy Towns Categories.