

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Galbally - An Gallbhaile** Ref: **452**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **363**
Category: **B** Date(s):

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	51	53
Streetscape & Public Places	80	45	46
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	44	45
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	44	45
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	29	32
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	66	68
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	32	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	40	41
TOTAL MARK	550	351	363

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.

Galbally, you have presented us with 42 pages of Entry document! But, how could we object! You have provided us with a relatively short and easily readable wording and on top of that you have accompanied the text with some great pictures that make it easy for your Adjudicator to re-live the adjudication after leaving your small town. You also provided a short one-page document entitled, 2023 Adjudication Report Recommendations Response. This is a good idea for both your Tidy Town but also for your Adjudicator who will have an idea of what is now proposed or amended.

One issue that you had was the Bi-lingual signage. We see no reason not to have Bi-lingual signage. Our towns and villages have Irish names that are born of the country, the rivers, and the mountains. So, we should support the Irish language signage.

You have a Committee of 10 and that is a workable number for a Committee. You have a volunteer group of almost a 100 and that is remarkable, and particularly for a relatively small population. You write, "We enjoy the full support of all local clubs, associations and community groups". No wonder that you have 100 volunteers! In association with your volunteers, you have a long list of organisations from sporting to business and Limerick County Council, to name but a few. You also work with your schools, and you have a Junior Tidy Towns group.

Your one specific project that you have that you have referenced is the 13th Century Church Ruin in your local graveyard. This is a beautiful setting and we do hope that the works to preserve the structure will make it a significant and safe archaeological site. The road up to the graveyard and the trees outside the graveyard are beautiful and atmospheric.

You have been involved in Tidy Towns for 40 years and the pleasure that you get from this is summed up in your wording: "Quite simply Tidy Towns has been the glue that brings all the disparate interest groups in our community under one umbrella. It is uniting force in our community."

The only issue we have is the map that you presented. It is good, but it certainly does not do justice to the entire document and particularly for your Adjudicator. But, we can forgive!

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

You have a well-presented village landscape and with some very original shop windows, signage, and colour palette. These buildings are to be treasured. We do hope that your representations to the Housing and Derelict Sites Section of Limerick City and County Council to have the square in Galbally designated as an Architectural Conservation Area in the new County Development Plan, will bear fruition.

We do agree with your 2022 Adjudicator about the Square. It has so much potential to be something other than a through road. The way to deal with this is to engage the Planning and Architectural and Parks team in Limerick City and County Council to undertake a study of the Square and to see how the through road can be dealt with. It would mean "thinking outside the box" and there should be consideration of re-routing the R662. This would we know, be very ambitious but in the longer term Galbally would become an even better place than it is now. And it would be a beacon for other similar towns and villages.

It is also inspiring that two derelict buildings in the Village Square have now been rebuilt and with input from your Tidy Towns. And you are working to push for and help in the renewal of houses and shops. This is a problem in all towns unfortunately, and it is inspiring that your Tidy Towns group has taken a specific and necessary interest in it. Your collaboration with Coillte Ballyhoura has resulted in the making of a wonderful entrance to Darby's Bed Megalithic Wedge Tomb and it is perfect that a local artist undertook the work. In a continuing partnership with Coillte Ballyhoura you are working with it to promote the walk. That is the way to do things! You have a Heritage Exhibition Centre and this provides an insight into the lives and history of your area.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You have a Galbally Ecology Park and not just a small area but one of 3.75 acres. That is ambition. Your Junior Tidy Towns members took part in the work of planting the trees. This is inspiring for the future. You are cognisant of the grass margins along the roads, and you allow the native wildflowers to grow. This is a trend that has really become mainstream in the last few years, and Galbally is there too!

You have numerous flower displays throughout Galbally and the flowers are grown locally. The window boxes are made by your Men's Shed – good for the flower displays and good for the members of the Men's Shed. Your Commemoration Park has been planted with trees in an arrangement with the local GAA.

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

You have a unique awareness of Nature and Biodiversity in Galbally. Not alone do you observe what is growing, but you also apply a scientific method to measure what is happening with Nature and Biodiversity in Galbally. For example, you have taken a scientific interest in the Ash Dieback problem, and you have observed that 20 Ash trees showed no signs of the disease. And you have translated this observation to the Junior Tidy Towns group. Now, that is education and observation and wonderful for the Junior Tidy Towns group also to have real science locally and presented in an accessible way. Can we ask a question? Have you had an Ecologist working with you?

You are putting the Galbally Ecology Park to good use, and we are interested in the Native Trees and the Curlew Habitat projects as well as the Black Bee species. Again, you have used the scientific method when commenting on the decline of the Curlew. Well done.

You continue to collect seed from old individual trees and, no doubt you will be using science to measure what is happening. Wonderful. And if that was not enough, you have been working on a 3 Year Wildlife Diversity Plan and it includes a number of important projects. You have also worked with Inland Fisheries Officers to undertake a Workshop Session in the National School. This is inspiring and particularly, since it is not just the Tidy Towns people who are doing this - but "outsiders"! Very often people will listen more attentively to "outsiders" than those they are familiar with, on a daily basis. Needless to say, you are continuing the non-use of herbicides.

The All Ireland Pollinator Plan is one that you are active in and you are working with the National School. The GAA continue to set aside an area for Wildflower meadows, two local farmers have left 2.5 acres uncut and overall, there are 7 acres of land that is used for ecological purposes. That is a very significant gesture and effort by Galbally Tidy Town and the other Galbally groups also. Locally, you have encouraged your community to not mow grass lawns during the month of May – and it is wonderful to hear that people responded very enthusiastically.

You are actively working on Bird habitats and your Men's Shed have constructed Swift nesting boxes. They also make nesting boxes for the Dipper, Blue Tit, and Swifts. And, as before, you use the Scientific Method to track the Swift population. And you work with Bat Conservation Ireland to undertake a survey of the Bats.

You have so much invested in Nature and Biodiversity. It is remarkable and it will educate everyone in your Community. Not just education but enthusiastic education!

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

Galbally is steeped in Sustainability. Your school has a Green Schools Action Plan. We counted almost 20 different projects that your school is involved in under the Sustainability banner! This is remarkable. And many of the items are studies of particular issues, for example, "the collection and display of water use data from the whole school community via the water questionnaire". This is education! And education with a smile too!

Cummins Food Store seems to be immersed in Sustainability, and there is a great partnership here between Tidy Towns and the shop.

Your scientific studies and Community Workshops and Initiatives bring your town to a different level! Water Usage, Rainwater Harvesting, TFI Local Link, World Earth Hour, Meal Preparation with minimum waste, Bring Your Own Milk Container, Bird Boxes and Bat Boxes made from recycled material! The list goes on. You know what you are doing in Galbally!

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Needless to say, in Galbally you do not undertake Tidiness and Litter Control without a Litter Survey and Monitoring Plan! From that information you know where the problems are and then how to deal with them. Your Team Limerick Clean Up is in its 8th year and you had up to 100 volunteers involved in the Clean Up. As we mentioned earlier, 100 volunteers are remarkable for a small town. Not alone do you deal with the Litter, but you detail how to be aware of this Category and how to correctly dispose of the material collected. We are well aware of the disposal of items by Fly Tipping and particularly adjacent to Recycling Bins. What a shame! But you dealt with it and with Limerick City

and County Council the bins were relocated.

One item that rang a bell with your Adjudicator is the issue of too much signage! And you are working on it!

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

Yes, we thought you would! That is, to have a nominated owner of Tidy Towns initiatives and yes, you have great support within the Residential Streets and Housing Areas. And you are also working on a Wildflower Garden Competition and encouraging the plating of native bee-friendly plants.

You removed Ivy from the Stone Wall. Not all Ivy needs to be removed but it depends on the location and the wall! It is a beautiful plant but can be quite invasive too. The planters and seating outside Mulvey's really enhance it and the signage is almost vintage. So also, with the Triangle Picnic area near Daybreak.

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

The approach to Galbally is wonderful. It is refreshing to see the resurfacing of the road in the village and the car park at Moor Abbey historical site. We love the signage itself and the use of the Irish and particularly the old Irish lettering. Well done!

Concluding Remarks:

There is a remarkable resilience in Galbally and there is that "can-do" feeling in the town. It is remarkable that your village has a population of 257 people, but it feels like a place that has more than 500 people when we consider all that you have achieved. Well done!