

# Tidy Towns Competition 2023

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Glenroe - An Gleann Rua** Ref: **1145**  
County: **Limerick** Mark: **278**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **01/08/2021**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	42	44
Streetscape & Public Places	80	35	37
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	31	33
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	32	33
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	16	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	47	50
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	28	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	30	32
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>278</b>

### 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 concisely completed entry form. map of the extended Glenroe area plus a copy of the 5-year plan from 2021-25 by Dr Frances Giaquinto.

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 to ask groups to demonstrate how SDGs impact their activities.

It is clear from your submission that you have embraced the programme and aligned many of the relevant SDGs with your work activities under different categories.

As regards the 5-year plan, which was facilitated by Ballyhoura Development, it was a rather large tome for a relatively small rural area.

From an adjudicator's point of view, it might have been better if a 4/5 page progress resume of the plan was submitted with the entry form as it would highlight progress year on year since 2021.

A brilliant committee structure of an executive of 8 and a volunteer force of 87 nearly 50% of the parish. Maith sibh.

The adjudicator especially liked the add-on after all the meetings "all these included tea/cakes and banter" the essence of community spirit.

Well done on being involved in numerous progressive initiatives as outlined in this section of the entry form.

Well done to Glenroe Ballyorgan Community Council on being nominated for the All of Ireland Pride of Place Awards by Limerick City & County Council and Glenroe Tidy Towns played a major part in making this happen.

Inviting a national winner to the parish to give the TT Group some insight into how they go about their work activities was another plus for the committee.

It also was in the spirit of county border friendship but hopefully, they weren't too upset at the myriad of green and white flags!

Thank you for the pictorial records and the examples of local community cooperation.

You have an impressive list of supporters that includes the local authority, government departments, other public agencies, county-based and local organisations, clubs including Glenroe GAA Club, and of course the wider community of Glenroe and adjoining parishes.

What is impressive about the listing is that you have given a little insight into how they support the extensive range of activities that you are involved in.

Methods of communication are a mix of the tried and trusted newsletters, notes in the local papers of Limerick County and North Cork plus the varying forms of the ever-evolving social media platforms, and not forgetting the most effective of all word of mouth.

You have a strong involvement with the Glenroe Community National School and the adjudicator is very impressed

with the school's ethos as well as its logo Ag Fás agus ag Forbairt Le Chéile.  
The school is wished well in its first application for green flag status.  
Your involvement with the school will have mutual benefits over time.  
You have chosen PHAB (Glenroe-Ballyorgan Parish Habitat And Biodiversity Project) as your special project and you are wished well with this.  
Thank you for the endorsement of the competition and what it has meant to the parish of Glenroe.  
The adjudicator has already commented on the 5 year plan not in a critical way but just as a suggestion.  
For the work done over the last year, an additional 2 marks are awarded.

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

Some exciting new projects for the community that the Tidy Towns Group have an integral part in making these happen.  
The adjudicator was very impressed with the herringbone stone wall as one came up the road by the newly renovated impressive Community National School.  
This a phenomenal piece of dry stonework and as you state a credit to the masons on the local RSS under the auspices of Ballyhoura Development.  
The recesses in the stone wall for the underground wiring were noted.  
The area further up from the School on the same side will be commented upon in another category.  
Thank you for answering last year's adjudicator's query about the need for high netting at the school.  
This adjudicator would concur with your findings on it being retained for safety reasons.  
One also took note of your comment about the screening of the oil tanks for the Church and Hall.  
These were commented on in last year's report but maybe there was some confusion as regards the location!  
The Church of Our Lady of Ramson, surrounding grounds, and the graveyard were all maintained to a very acceptable standard.  
The adjoining single-storey community hall looked as if had been recently painted and this was also well presented.  
It would be remiss of the adjudicator if he were not to give praise to the people who are entrusted with the upkeep of these public buildings.  
Glenroe GAA was the next port of call and this is a fine complex set in an idyllic rural setting with ample parking and a perimeter walkway which has the bonus of being lit up during the winter months.  
The new AstroTurf facility, which had a number of co-funders, will be for the benefit of all the community.  
Credit is due to the drivers of this project as it shows what can be done with proper due diligence and a cooperative approach to bringing it to fruition.  
The improvements to the Keale Walk were indeed noted and the adjudicator was tempted to walk it from the Ballyorgan side later but time was at a premium.  
Another time hopefully.  
Again well done in giving credit to local farmers for their cooperation.  
Some of the projects that you have listed under maintenance have been commented upon favourably at the beginning of this category.  
The adjudicator got a little confused with the map and the location of the refurbished cottage but eventually, it was located.  
The open evening in Darragh was a very novel way of getting locals and newcomers to the area to get to know each other and to get stuck into tasks that needed doing.  
The work tasks mentioned crossed over into other categories as well this one.  
Well done to all involved.  
Finally, the quality of road surfaces was very good and the name, speed and directional signs were visible and clean and the traffic calming measures gave warning to children in the immediate area.  
Overall the standard was very good and worthy of an increase in marks.

### **Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:**

First off well done in aligning 4 of the 6 SDGs in this category to your work activities.  
It is noted from the previous category that you wish to plant trees in the Graveyard and that it is on the agenda for the committee's next meeting with LCCC.  
Many new projects are detailed in this category and all were visited by the adjudicator bar the revamped flowerbed at Darragh cottage which was inadvertently missed during the process.  
The adjudicator was surprised at the level of maintenance needed to maintain all the existing spaces, permanent planting arrangements as well as stand-alone fixtures like hanging baskets in such a spread-out area.  
So top marks to all the volunteers that pitch in to give a hand.  
Presumably the club members look after the maintenance at the GAA grounds.  
The stand-out feature for this adjudicator is the permanent planting arrangement at Glenroe Cross.  
Being familiar enough with Glenroe this permanent planting arrangement has been a constant for many years but it was particularly attractive on the day in question.  
Well done on your commitment to pollinator and wildflower planting the adjudicator noted this during an extensive examination of the area  
Part of the entry form asks the entrants to "demonstrate the year-round impact of landscape works in your community you are encouraged to provide photographs of, for example, Daffodil schemes"  
This you have done to great effect and thank you for the pictorial records which bear this out.  
An excellent approach to hedgerow management and something that triggered further investigation by the adjudicator on the 3 -5 year rotation concept.  
[www.farmingfornature.ie](http://www.farmingfornature.ie) gave detailed reasoning why the reduction of cutting intensity is best as it allows flowers

and berries to flourish.

The wildflower meadow at the school was noted and it is being managed in line with the recommended guidelines which indeed are not too stringent.

Not sure what to make of the comment in last year's adjudication report regarding the use of plant containers as this adjudicator would be an advocate of standalone planters.

One can use standalone planters to mix foliage and perennials such as hostas with some of the old reliable annuals like tuberous begonias or if one wants to be bee-friendly colourful Bidens.

Anyway as I wasn't the adjudicator last year I'm not sure what I was supposed to look for in terms of improvement.

I note your concern about the unnecessary pruning of trees in the well-maintained Graveyard.

Is it something that can be solved by diplomatic dialogue?

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

As with other categories, there is a large amount of pertinent information inputted in your entry form and the adjudicator will attempt to comment as objectively as possible

The key components of this category are

A) Knowledge of local species and habitats in your area.

B) Understanding of the types of protected areas such as Natural Heritage Areas, and Special Areas of Conservation,

It is also important to have a knowledge of Biodiversity and the Law and be aware of the factors before contemplating getting involved in a related project.

The adjudicator feels that as a Committee you have a strong understanding of the principles involved and have benefitted from the direction given by Dr Giaguinto when drawing up the 5-year plan.

Good work is being done in the area of wildlife preservation and its promotion in an overall context

The projects that you have listed are progressive, varied, and more importantly practical

The Parish Habitat & Biodiversity project (PHAB), which culminated in the launch of the Parish Habitat Map in mid-May, was a major undertaking for a small rural community.

Well done to the committee for having the students from the National School involved as participants as it will give them a solid grounding on biodiversity matters that will serve them well into the future.

Credit too to the teachers and parents for their direction and advice.

Griston Wildlife Bog in nearby Ballylanders is a great facility and has outdoor classrooms where teachers and students can learn about nature in safe and unique surroundings.

Children from the surrounding schools are lucky to have such a facility available to them.

The Keale River Walk as you rightly state is a great walk and an amazing biodiversity corridor.

Again well done on ensuring that it is maintained sensitively.

You are wished well with the ambitious Glenroe Biodiversity Corridor project and it was noted by the adjudicator in the 5 year plan

Hopefully it will succeed in reaching its planned objectives.

Good to note Glenroe GAA club have a strong involvement in this category.

The list of maintenance work that you have included has been noted and most of the areas mentioned were visited during the adjudication.

Yes the scourge of the invasive species that has blighted a multitude of areas nationwide has visited Glenroe in the form of Japanese Knotweed.

Engaging with LCCC was the best course of action and getting advice on the proper treatment is critical to stopping it spreading.

The standard in this category warrants an increase in marks.

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

This category is about how as communities we try to minimise the use of all resources so that we strive for a reduction of our environmental impact

Doing more with less is no longer just a catchy phrase it's a necessity.

Aligned to the above this is a category that very much contributes to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The adjudicator notes that you have assigned relevant goals to each of the measures that you have listed.

Some of the projects that you have listed are particular to Glenroe as a community but many are replicated in different formats by groups all over the country.

Rainwater harvesting, community composting, community energy planning, and waste reduction are now commonplace in the majority of entries under this category.

Mind you the adjudicator was impressed with a number of your ongoing maintenance activities that fit into the Circular Economy concept.

Of course, this concept isn't new to an older generation as the repair and reuse mantra was very much to the fore in decades past.

The use of recycled poles to provide structure for pollinator-friendly planting that contributes to biodiversity is something that this adjudicator hasn't come across before.

Well done on running a Farmyard waste plastic recycling event last year and credit to the GAA Club for facilitating it by offering the use of Club Grounds.

In relation to looking for advice for new projects, the adjudicator suggests the following, and indeed much of what follows may be available via Ballyhoura Development.

The first port of call could be the County Environmental Awareness Officer to ascertain what is happening within the County and if there are plans for any environmental-related workshops or seminars during the coming autumn and winter.

To get more out of this sector in terms of creating greater awareness of all things that contribute to a more sustainable environment consider looking at the following websites for idea generation.  
[www.localprevention.ie](http://www.localprevention.ie) (LAPN) [www.origingreen.ie](http://www.origingreen.ie)  
The Circular Economy concept is explained in detail in the following [www.dccae.gov.ie](http://www.dccae.gov.ie) and [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie)  
The idea of what is called a linear economy of "take, make, and waste" is now being seen as not sustainable and alternatives need to be found.  
Finally, the relevant section in the revised Tidy Towns Handbook has a wealth of information and links to a myriad of relevant websites.  
Easy access is to google Tidy Towns Handbook and you get a direct link to the said section  
Again for all the good work that you have done over the last year an increase in marks is warranted.

### **Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:**

What is impressive about your submission under this category is how you have engaged with all stakeholders including Limerick City and Council and members of all sectors of the community.  
It is not an easy task to mobilise everybody in the community to support your efforts and also you have a rather large predominantly rural area to cover.  
The message of creating a culture of zero tolerance for indiscriminate littering and issues such as no dog fouling has been sent out to the community through all forms of communication.  
Well done to all the volunteers that do regular litter picks and these looked very happy in the accompanying photos.  
Good to note that the billboards are removed after all events exceptions being made for the Weekly Lotto and another major achievement that was celebrated with gusto by the community.  
One assumes those billboards will remain for a little while longer and while we are on the subject well done to the local young man who was part of that great success.  
Very little litter, bar a few wrappers here and there, was noted on the day.  
General tidiness was very good and the farmsteads that were viewed had tidy and well-presented premises and yards.  
One negative was the parking area near the school where the shrubbery was overgrown and had been infiltrated with another scourge the dreaded briar.  
It needs to be cut back at the appropriate time.  
Just to be sure of the location for the committee there's a disclaimer sign saying parking is at one's own risk.  
The shrub bed here was a little overpopulated and needed to be thinned out.

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

Residents of Glenroe have a definite finger on the pulse of what Pride of Place means,  
The adjudicator was very impressed with how private residences and farmsteads were maintained and presented.  
It differs from other villages in that it does not have any cluster development which in itself is a good thing as such a development would not be appropriate in such an idyllic rural area.  
Mind you this has not stopped such developments from happening in other similar rural areas around the country.  
You are wished well with the proposed footpath from the Church to the GAA grounds and dare I say it's badly needed for safety purposes but it will be a big undertaking just looking at the map.  
The heritage post box was noted and there is another post box, in present use, embedded into the wall at the junction of the Ballylanders Mitchelstown Road.  
If the adjudicator can recall correctly there was a pub at this cross in times past.  
Both premises here were presented to a very high standard and looked as if they had been recently painted.  
The standard of presentation of farmsteads has been already commented upon in the previous category.  
Some very fine standalone properties were viewed during the drive and walkabout and well done to all the owners for how they are presented.  
The bungalow opposite the church has been there for many decades and it was in top-class condition with a fine well maintained front garden.  
Finally well done to the committee for recognising the contribution of residents in the entry form.

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

The adjudicator entered the village initially from Smiths Cross area which was well signposted and the improvements here were noted although it is suggested that further safety improvements are needed.  
There was a blue name sign here but what it depicted escapes me.  
New landscaping here with a possible sculpture would be a good idea.  
The entrance from the Ballylanders Mitchelstown Junction up by Ballyferode was also well presented with directional and brown signs visible and clean and view of the Galtees as a backdrop.  
Darragh was also visited by the adjudicator.  
Overall the standard was very good with lots of ongoing maintenance work that enhances these entrances.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

The adjudicator would have been well familiar with Glenroe from a past life and it was a delight to come back and see the "village" at its best.  
The amount of work that has been done and that is still ongoing is very impressive.  
The day itself was not particularly good but on a sunny day, this is spectacular countryside.  
It was very nice to see the green and white flying high.  
You are wished well in the years ahead.

