

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Limerick City - Cathair Luimnigh** Ref: **2121**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **344**
Category: **H** Date(s): **01/07/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	47	49
Streetscape & Public Places	80	44	47
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	44	45
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	39	41
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	28	30
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	62	64
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	27	28
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	39	40
TOTAL MARK	550	330	344

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 the 2022 SuperValu TidyTowns competition.

Your Adjudicator was very impressed with your presentation and the use of pictures and images meant that it was easier to interpret the documents that you presented. You are relatively new to Tidy Towns – 12 years and you are now on a mission to make Limerick ever prouder than before! In these 12 years you have made a remarkable impact on Limerick City and together with the City Council and many other State bodies also. The Tidy Towns intervention would appear to have created a population-wide momentum to make Limerick City a better place to live, work and play in. This enthusiasm could not have been done without the Committee of 20 and 100 volunteers. Added to the 100 volunteers are your Community and Business Groups and amazingly we counted at least 75 different groups. You have a very large population of over 100,000 residents. This population cohort and volunteers results in a great co-ordination and generation of enthusiasm effort for your Committee. Well done indeed!

Your submission of 53 pages is well laid out but luckily you have many illustrations that reduce the text volume.

Thank you! You have managed to communicate with a myriad number of channels including, newspaper, radio, TV, and the newer versions like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram – remarkable!

You have spread the good news of Tidy Towns to the Schools, and this is wonderful work that will pay untold dividends in the future. As they say, “Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí”! The collaboration of the LCTT volunteers along with students at the nearby Crescent College Comprehensive in helping the Stryker business with the maintenance of the more than 1,400 native trees is evidence of this. And no doubt there are other examples also from other schools.

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

It is wonderful to see the gradual transformation of the Limerick City Streetscape. We noted the transformation of O'Connell Street and other areas also. This street rejuvenation creates an example that will fuel further demand to make the City a place to be proud of, a city that will have increased trade and a place that will attract people to shop and socialise in.

Unfortunately, there are some things in the city that detract from it. For example, all the multi-story Car Parking buildings have blank frontages that detract from a city that should be attractive to live, work and do business in. We are also wondering why the new street work that has taken place allows for traffic to use it. The examples from other European cities are that the move is to make the street usable for people and that attracts people. We also are disappointed in the lack of Street Trees in the new street improvements. There may be many reasons for this. The planters that have been provided will be problematic to maintain and we suggest having a small number of trees

strategically positioned and that will continue to grow without very invasive works.

It is great to see street markets that bring a vibrancy to the city streets they are positioned in. There are also moves to improve buildings that were once sought after residences. The new plaza area at Con Colbert railway station is very large and will in time add to a new street environment both physically and socially. We would suggest that appropriate trees should be planted and that do not detract from the Station building. There is more open space in Limerick than you would think. Many of them could do with more tree planting.

We noticed many wall murals (Thomond Gate for example) and hoardings that have wonderful, quirky themes that illuminate the street space. In terms of public places Cemeteries have often been neglected and in towns and cities that have made improvements these Cemeteries can be wonderful and reflective places. We visited St Lawrence cemetery – a very large space and somewhat neglected. This is a pity since there is so much history attached to it. This Cemetery should be improved - and without herbicide use - and the Cemetery interpreted in a way that will allow the public to understand the history of the place. The Cemetery should act as a reflective place also.

It is wonderful also to see the construction of new buildings and old buildings being renovated. Unfortunately, many new but relatively older buildings have, like many towns and cities everywhere have not served their places well. And there is some of that in Limerick. We hope that the new Limerick Bus Depot currently under construction at Colbert Station will be one that Limerick City will be proud of. The restoration of several of Limerick's Georgian buildings into residential accommodation is welcomed and will bring life back to the city.

It is good to see that your committee takes such an active role in new proposed developments and you have done so with a building at 58 O'Connell St. And it is also good to see that LCCC is actively involved in Compulsory Acquisition. This is one of the ways that cities can be improved.

We are somewhat dubious about the LCCC mobile mini forest idea. Yes, a good idea in the short term but it might be better to focus on having trees planted permanently – even if the number will be small. Managing a mobile mini forest may also be a burden on the Council staff and resources.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

We noted that The People's Park is well used. It is a park that has history and on the day of our visit we noted lots of activities taking place. The Play Space is being updated and we hope that it will continue to attract parents and children. It is a wonderful park in the sense that the contours are varied and that makes it exciting for both children and adults. It is also well managed, and the planting palette is varied, and we also noticed many bee-friendly plants. The O'Brien Park and that links with the old canal is also a wonderful space with very good trees. Limerick needs more good parks, and it would be great to link them - or some of them - together at some stage in time. One of the reasons for this suggestion is to create a Biodiversity link between the parks, rivers, and canals. It may only be possible in a small number of locations, but it should be investigated. In a similar way, the linking of parks, rivers, canals, and larger open spaces would facilitate people to do both walking and cycling. It is all about connections for both people and nature.

Providing Trim Trails in parks is also one of the important aspects of what parks should be facilitating. But Parks also facilitate more: nature and biodiversity, human interactivity, sport, exercise for the young and the old – and so much more.

Access to Green Spaces is so important but they must be positioned in a planned way and should be linked if possible. So many Green Spaces everywhere are randomly provided and unfortunately very often do not provide the opportunities that people expect.

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

It is inspiring to see that LCTT has been taking an interest in Nature and Biodiversity. This ultimately should be a city-wide interest and like the students from Crescent College Comprehensive in helping the Stryker business with the maintenance of the more than 1,400 native trees it should be replicated in as many schools as possible.

Bringing students to a place outside the school environment, for example the Hunt Museum, can often be inspiring for children and teenagers alike. We noticed much bird life in the O'Brien Park, and this may be linked to the nearby canal. It is great to see Swifts and despite no confirmation that you had seen them nesting, do not give up on this. We are sure that there they will in time. You also have Sand Martins nesting in the Potato Market Wall. You should get expert advice on this but also on the wider connections between Parks, Trails, and Water. The day of having parks as individual units should be a thing of the past. Connections are all important today for both Flora and Fauna and for us human beings.

One of the great "take ups" of recent years is the "No Mow Campaign" as well as a reduction in Herbicide and Pesticide use. Many Tidy Towns groups have provided nest boxes for Bees. And the Bees can be of different types so that means making the nesting areas suitable for each type. Your local Bee Group or Ecology groups will provide information on this.

It is inspiring that Limerick City Tidy Towns attended a conference on "How Local Authorities Can Address the Biodiversity Emergency" in 2022. This is how change can happen. Local Level activity is so important in changing the views of our population – and yes it does take time.

You have a wonderful resource in Westfields Wetlands and in the "heart of the city", as you say. Protect your river, protect your canals and your wetlands. And do, get advice from the biodiversity experts. They are only too welcome to help. Indeed, it is inspiring that LCCC have prepared a Blue Green Infrastructure Plan and that Limerick City Tidy Towns were involved. Information, and planning for the future, are so important and the results and implementation of this plan will be interesting to see in the future.

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

LCTT is obviously keenly aware of Sustainability. You have organised many ideas including Circular Economy workshops and it is good to see that you have connected with University of Limerick to facilitate this. You have so

many ideas on the Sustainability area and as do many other centres also. From Reusable Nappies to Listening Walks, to Say No to Single Use, to Sustainable Gardening and more. From this incentive you are now spreading the Sustainability message. You are spreading the message of Fairtrade and you have 200 students who took part in the Fairtrade Christmas Card Competition. You have a Circular Economy project, and which used items from Brown Thomas for a Ukrainian Welcome Centre.

We are delighted to see the Plans for a new bike lane to connect Limerick Colbert railway station to the Park Canal as part of Limerick's Active Travel Plan. We wish you well on also developing many more Bike Lanes in the future. This will be good for public health and will hopefully also result in the replacement of cars with walking and cycling. We are particularly impressed by the very wide walking and cycling route along the Canal and that links to University of Limerick, 4Km away. This is a Limerick Smarter Travel project and it is inspiring to see it. The only downside to this is the dereliction along the Canal itself and the old buildings adjacent to it. We would hope that this will be improved - and indeed we know that it will!

One of the great ways that you use to spread ideas is the Green Schools Teacher Seminar. This is Sustainability. This is Limerick Tidy Towns in action! And, you have much more. Well done.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

We are intrigued by the TLC (Team Limerick Clean-up)! What a great idea. And what an idea to have over 22,000 volunteers from Limerick City and County involved on Good Friday last. And yes, your Adjudicator does see the results. Doing any new project means sticking with it for a long period of time. That gets results but it is only when people actively become involved will it happen. And that seems to be what you are achieving. We have seen it on the ground. But you have audited it! We must also note the work of 250 Ukrainian refugees in the TLC. Absolutely inspiring.

You have so many great ideas and ideas that are implemented in this Category. Well done.

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

It is inspiring to see the effort to rejuvenate the older housing in the City and we look forward to the results over the next few years. Rejuvenation results in a mindset change and this will make the city a vibrant place to live and work in. The work in O'Connell Street will also create an atmosphere that will make it easier to support the effort to bring life into the City again. However, this is not a single issue item. Renovating housing in the city must also be supported by the example of O'Connell Street and by continuing to make the other streets attractive with trees, cycle lanes, public transport and new parks that are linked to the river and canals.

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

We note your inclusion of two items in the Approach Roads, Streets and Lanes - The Old Barracks Coffee Roastery and the LIDL Ireland new store on the Dock Road. Both look very good in presentation, but we would be concerned with the lack of trees in both sites. Approaching into Limerick City requires significant intervention, particularly in terms of trees. The planting of trees will reduce the negative impact of both facilities on the Approach Roads in particular. You should contact both sites to see what can be done to mitigate the impact on the wider area. It may be that in the meantime both sites have had tree planting.

The Approach Roads in particular, are hugely important in transmitting a picture of Limerick that is clean, liveable, full of people and many who live in it. Approach Roads should present a positive and beautiful picture of Limerick City.

The planting of the Tipperary Road Roundabout makes a significant and attractive intervention to the entrance to Limerick City. In terms of pollinator planting, you should contact your Biodiversity advisor to see if such a busy site with cars and trucks will be of any advantage in terms of Pollinator insects.

Overall, the approach roads, streets and lanes appeared to be tidy and attractive.

Concluding Remarks:

Limerick is on the move! And Limerick Tidy Towns are part of that move and with all its partners. It is also good that Limerick City Council is proactively part of that drive too - to make this city a better place to live, work and play in. Well done and we anticipate much more in the future!