

# Tidy Towns Competition 2023

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Our Lady of Lourdes-Westin Bhaile na Corra** Ref: **2140**  
County: **Limerick** Mark: **241**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **03/08/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	36	38
Streetscape & Public Places	80	32	33
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	30	31
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	16	16
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	14	15
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	50	51
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	27	28
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	29	29
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>241</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.

There is no question but that you have a very active committee and we think you are underestimating your volunteer base judging from the projects undertaken & the turnout for Team Limerick Cleanup. On adjudication day, we visited the Community Centre, Crèche and Café and were amazed at the number of activities and events on offer. You are very active on social media and this communication channel is vital today in order to reach the younger cohort of the community. It would be great if you could include one of your newsletters as part of your submission next year. For the older members of the community, traditional means of communication is important especially if they are not active on social media. Congratulations to the West End Youth Centre on winning IPB Pride of Place in January. Well done on organizing the annual Family Fun Day – great photos on social media from last year's and hopefully the rain will cease this year in order for the Fun Day to go ahead with no further deferrals.

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

Our Lady of Lourdes Church dominates the streetscape given its elevated position, large green areas to the sides and front and the accompanying car park. The church and its immediate environs are well maintained. Are there plans for the resurfacing of the car park? On the day of our visit, there was extensive work taking place at the junction of Childers's Road & Hyde Avenue.

The street that encompasses the Affinity Credit Union, Community Café, Community Centre, Childworld Crèche and the West End Youth Centre add colour to the streetscape and are well presented.

Our Lady of Lourdes National School and Midwest School for the Deaf are well maintained and it appeared the former was undergoing some painting works to the exterior façade.

Derelict or vacant properties are a blight on the streetscape for several estates. Some communities have completed an audit of these properties and then liaised on a regular basis with Limerick City and County Council on potential solutions for the list of homes compiled. This strategy has been successful for a number of groups in Limerick. You have carried out this analysis and have been lobbying for several years. There is no doubt your perseverance is paying off as we note there are 2 sites in Weston on the Derelict Sites Register. Limerick City and County Council are one of the more proactive councils in their approach and are actively compulsorily acquiring derelict properties. The art installations on the utility boxes bring a smile to the passerby. They are a fantastic way to bring colour and interest to a utilitarian facility and it is clear you have no shortage of artistic talent within your youth group. Perhaps you now have the opportunity for more murals e.g. the boundary walls of the church car park, some of the walls at Crecora Avenue and other utility boxes. There may be an opportunity to work with Community Wellness,

Empowerment, Leadership & Life Skills (CWELL) based at the University of Limerick who have completed murals in Garryowen. Another option would be to propose a project similar to Dublin Canvas or Draw Out Limerick to Limerick City and County Council. It is a more cost effective way than addressing graffiti and brightens up an area.  
<https://www.dublincanvas.com/about> <https://drawout.ie/new/>

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

Our Lady of Lourdes Weston is fortunate to have an extensive number of green areas some of which have mature trees. Some of those areas like the green at Ballyclough Avenue have enough space for two playing pitches. Were your group involved in the URBACT Health & Green Space project that started in May 2020 and ran until August 2022? The project covered Limerick City and focused on residential green space and parks in the city. The planters in front of the Community Centre were in full bloom with stunning shows of pink poppies. Well done on persevering with planting here and the children are to be commended on their gardening skills. They certainly seemed to enjoy the break from the classroom in the sunshine judging from the accompanying photos. We note the difficulties there are in ensuring work completed is not disturbed. There are a number of volunteer led organisations particularly focused on working with communities to create mini forests and increase tree planting. Some of these include Pocket Forests [www.pocketforests.ie](http://www.pocketforests.ie) - they want to form small forests in urban areas; Easy Treesie [www.easytreesie.com](http://www.easytreesie.com) - they predominantly work with children in communities and could be referred to both schools and Trees on the Land [www.treesontheland.com](http://www.treesontheland.com) - work with communities and monitor the trees for 5 years. These groups have funding in place for many of their projects. Limerick City and County Council, in conjunction with National Tree Week, distribute free saplings to interested communities.

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

Despite what you have indicated, there are quite a number of areas where nature can thrive e.g. the trees at Garryglass Avenue, on Hyde Avenue and the many residential gardens. Your best strategy would be to source funding for a Local Biodiversity Action Plan which would act as a guide to undertake practical measures for any number of actions e.g. awareness raising, surveys, habitat restoration etc. Your local Biodiversity Officer or Heritage Officer would be the best point of contact on how to apply to the Local Biodiversity Action Fund. In the meantime, there are lots of resources available in order to conduct mini surveys e.g. Flower Timed Insect (FIT) Count – a 10 minute fun and engaging activity for children and families. <https://biodiversityireland.ie/surveys/fit-counts/> The Irish Garden Bird survey commences annually in November/December and is a great place to start. Your social media platform affords you the opportunity to both inform and engage the community. <https://birdwatchireland.ie/our-work/surveys-research/research-surveys/irish-garden-bird-survey/> It appears from their website Our Lady of Lourdes National School have been awarded the Green Flag for Biodiversity. However, we could not determine what year this was received. A brief synopsis from the school on their activities under the Green Schools programme would tie in nicely with your work in this area.

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

The workshop you attended run by the Rediscovery Centre focused on reuse and repair opportunities sounds worthwhile. Have you plans to create micro businesses in this area? Well done on hosting Christmas Tree Recycling and the Electrical Goods Recycling. With your active social media platform you have the chance to share various initiatives run by other volunteer led groups. If you focus on food waste, then you could share the Stop Food Waste campaign that has lots of tips online. Perhaps highlight the Stop Food Waste Challenge that starts annually on March 1st. <https://stopfoodwaste.ie/stop-food-waste-day/will-you-take-the-stop-food-waste-day-challenge> Plastic waste is the focus of Voice Ireland and they have teamed up with Limerick City and County Council on the Cloth Nappy Incentive Scheme. It is a pilot project to promote the use of reusable nappies for families who may not have considered this option due to the upfront costs of purchasing the nappies. A starter kit worth €100 is provided. <https://www.voiceireland.org/cloth-nappy-incentive-scheme> Voice Ireland's other project is Return for Change – a deposit return scheme for plastic bottles and aluminum cans. They have a roadshow that they bring to interested communities and some Tidy Towns groups where the reverse vending machines have been installed are the beneficiaries in the first year of the revenue generated e.g. in Dungarvan. As indicated by last year's adjudicator, there are lots of ideas and case studies on the Tidy Towns website.

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

As displayed in your photographs supplied & on social media, a small army of residents, 75 in total, was on hand for the eighth Team Limerick Cleanup. That is a fantastic turnout and lovely to see the accompanying photos. It seems your group starts volunteers early in their careers as community custodians as some were in buggies! It is fantastic to hear you are noticing a reduction in litter collected, year on year. You are to be commended for your daily litter picks and the area around the Church, Community Centre & schools was litter free. Unfortunately, this was not quite the case on a number of avenues while others were pristine.

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

It is heartening to see many residences and gardens maintained to a high standard on the various avenues. For these residents it is difficult to then see derelict and vacant homes in near proximity. It would be hoped that the local council's move to compulsory acquire these properties will have an impact sooner rather than later.

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

Childers Road presents a wonderful tree lined approach. It is noted that Lidl is where the gap in the avenue occurs and we wonder have they plans to plant maple trees to complete the vista? It was noted at the top of Childers Road junction with Ballinacurra Road there is a grove of ash trees and all have signs of ash dieback, a disease for which there is currently no cure.

**Concluding Remarks:**

Your group and the community are to be congratulated for continuing to come up with new projects that add colour and interest to Our Lady of Lourdes Weston streetscape. It is clear there is a strong community spirit and the number of activities and events on offer within the community is impressive. Like every community, you have your challenges however your perseverance is paying dividends.