

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre:	Patrickswell - Tobar Phadraig	Ref:	1064
County:	Limerick	Mark:	296
Category:	B	Date(s):	31/07/2023

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	36	37
Streetscape & Public Places	80	39	41
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	41	42
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	39	40
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	22	22
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	50	51
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	30	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	32	32
TOTAL MARK	550	289	296

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 did not enter the Tidy Towns from 2012 to 2021. We hope that you are enjoying being back in Patrickswell Tidy Towns and indeed that is what you have written. You have a Committee of 5 and 23 volunteers. Those are good numbers. You have great wider support also - and this is indeed the way that Tidy Towns should work. You have funding from a number of sources, including Limerick City and County Council.

You say that you have the support of Patrickswell Primary School and the Pre-School. Working with the schools is very important and it gives a good picture to the pupils of what should happen in their community. We are surprised that the Secondary School is not involved in Tidy Towns and we do hope that it too will be involved at some stage. The specific project that you have identified as being one of particular effort is enhancing the Cemetery and in particular, providing seats and also adding plants to the concrete boundary wall. This is so important – cemeteries are very often a bleak area, when in fact they should be places of reflection provided by Trees, flowers and a well laid out place.

In your document, you have the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) that are appropriate for each section. However, under these you have a list of numbers and descriptions but, we are not sure if these relate to the SDGs. It is somewhat confusing!

We were also finding it difficult to locate the housing areas that you mentioned in your document. Your map has a Legend with numbered locations. However, these numbers were difficult to read. Please do try to rectify this in 2024.

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

Arriving from the Adare side of Patrickswell there is a magnificent view of the town and there are great views of woodland in the distance and around the town. Your Main Street is currently being reinvented. We do hope that this will make the street a calmer one. We viewed your Main Street on a Friday evening, and it was traversed with constant and speeding traffic. It would seem to this Adjudicator that very few motorists were stopping but were driving on to other towns or villages. However, we had to inspect Patrickswell a few days later and the traffic looked a lot calmer on a mid-afternoon. A town should be an attractive place to live, work and shop in. Perhaps when the street works are completed the street will be calmer. We presume that there will be Traffic Calming measures built into the road as part of the street renovation. In the longer term we would think that a Bypass of Patrickswell may be required. As in every town and village in Ireland, there is housing dereliction, and we are glad to see that your Tidy

Towns is working with Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) to deal with the problem and in a positive move we are glad to see that works have commenced on two derelict sites.

We also noticed that the new paving on one area - directly opposite the other side of the street where the new Community Centre is under construction - has a very severe incline that could cause a problem for a Wheelchair user. Hopefully, this will not be the case. With reference to the Community Centre, it looks a very well presented and interesting building that will add positively to the Streetscape and the uses that will be conducted in the Centre itself. Arriving from the M20 into Patrickswell, the roundabout is wonderfully presented, and it helps to make the town an inviting one. On the opposite side and coming from Adare there is a Tour de Force of flower displays and Wildflower meadows. Well done. We hope that the street works will also include the planting of appropriate trees. The stone walls - original and that could be at least 80 to 100 years old - on either side of the road were constructed by Crafts persons and are beautiful examples of how good the stonework was constructed then.

In contrast, the road into the Cemetery is potholed and, the kerbing has weeds. The trees on the right-hand side are good and the metre wide margin between the road and the wall has some lovely wildflowers. The new Cemetery has a very brutal concrete block wall construction but, ironically, an old stone wall field boundary is standing on one side of the cemetery. A Cemetery should be a restful place and a beautiful place. Some trees have been planted but they do not seem to have been planted to a purpose. A previous Adjudicator did recommend the planting of Pyracantha in front of the Cemetery wall. The car parking area seems to have no parking arrangement.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

It is great to see that your Limerick Going for Gold competition has resulted in Patrickswell coming 3rd in it. And it has an environmental based focus. As a result, you have engaged a Biodiversity expert, Albert Nolan to undertake a tree survey of the town. Such a survey is so important and will hopefully eliminate the destruction of areas of trees that might otherwise be felled. You have planted large numbers of Daffodils, Tulips and Crocus bulbs and this is a wonderful sight in early Spring. In 2022 you planted Apple, Cherry, and native trees. We would make a comment on these - if the young plants are only a metre high and with good root systems, it is not necessary to provide a stake and indeed, it is probably better to allow the grass and wildflowers to grow around them. And indeed, you have a "Don't Mow, Let it Grow" area. Talk to other residential areas to see if you can extend this idea over a wider Patrickswell area. Perhaps, it would have been better to have the Apple Trees planted in a parkland setting? We hope that the proposed Walk and Talk pathway idea around the GAA grounds will become a reality in 2024.

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

It is great to see that you have undertaken with an expert in the field, a habitat/biodiversity survey of Patrickswell. This is crucially important - to identify important nature and biodiversity areas and to protect them if they are of importance. You have Bird Boxes, Bat Boxes and Bug Hotels in Patrickswell. Well done. And yes, it is crucially important that you get expert opinion and plans on how to protect the Barnakyle River. On another construction site, we noted the name An Tobar but we would ask what protection will be given to the stream in this building area. This stream and indeed, all watercourses should be protected and have a wide margin to allow for flooding, for Biodiversity protection and for areas for walking. In too many towns and villages throughout Ireland, streams have been "squeezed" or, worse culverted.

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

You are active in composting, and you have provided bins in areas of the village, you have water butts, you segregate litter, you have a shop that allows customers to use their own reusable coffee cups. Can you do more? We think yes. But saying that is easy and doing it is the hard part. What many other centres do, is to engage an expert on Sustainability and who will do a presentation to enhance the knowledge of this subject. This is best undertaken during the Autumn/Winter. Doing that will enhance your knowledge and you will be amazed at how many different things you can initiate or do. One example is walking or cycling. Yes, we know that many people must commute to work but it might be an idea to use the local bus service - if there is one. Could children go to school by walking or cycling? Your Main Street is being reimagined but has anyone considered safer walking and cycling routes and safe crossing points? Do get a Sustainability expert to come to your village for a presentation and discussion on what you can do. To make this even better, invite several Tidy Towns centres in your locality to come to Patrickswell - it is much better to attract many people and that will stimulate discussion and ideas and it will also get rid of some myths about Sustainability. Maybe, your new Community Centre will be able to hold this meeting?

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Your village, even with the road works, looks clean and tidy and, yes, there are black spot areas. The suggestions in your presentation of using the opportunity that has presented itself during the road works, is a good one. Think now of what needs to be done and before the road work is completed. How often do we all think about what should be done when the work is completed? You have suggested "blocked pathways, redundant poles, unsightly overhead wires, making paths accessible for the disabled and buggies and wheelchairs". You are involved in National Spring Clean and Team Limerick Clean Up.

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

It is good to see new housing under construction and in the village area too. The housing is generally very well presented, and many have large open space areas also. It is great to have a National School in the heart of the Community, as well as the GAA and Soccer grounds.

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

Your Approach Roads, Streets and Lanes are extremely good and very well presented, in particular the entry from the Roundabout off the M20 and the approach from the Adare end of the Village. The Ballyveloge street as you enter to the Village itself is in a changing state now, with the new housing construction. It would be a good idea, if not already done, to have a discussion with the Council on how to make this area fit for purpose and attractive.

Concluding Remarks:

Patrickswell is undergoing a change in Main Street, and we hope that this will be positive for everyone in the community. There is an optimism with the remaking of Main Street and the new housing construction currently started. You have wonderful trees and make sure that you keep them!