

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: Scotshouse - Achadh na hAbhla	Ref: 1218
County: Monaghan	Mark: 294
Category: B	Date(s): 06/06/2023

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	44	45
Streetscape & Public Places	80	41	42
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	36	37
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	30	31
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	18	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53	54
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	35	36
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	30	30
TOTAL MARK	550	287	294

Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Thank you for your well-documented entry form, accompanied by a clear map and numbered legend helpfully indicating your list of projects. The photographs accompanying your application assisted the adjudicator. Your work program was clearly outlined under each category heading and was easy to follow. Your committee has obviously been successful in securing help and support from many other interested organisations and groups, including Monaghan County Council, Leader and, indeed, your local school and associated youth groups. Well done to Saint Enda's National School for their achievement in retaining their Green Flag. The promotion through the use of social media, including Facebook and Twitter, is very positive and obviously effective, as are your visits to your school to update children on Tidy Towns activities. The 'ONE Specific' project, the replacement of Ash trees, which was carried out in partnership with Monaghan County Council, is a fine initiative. Well done on the successful planting of semi-mature replacement trees. We note your application to Leader for funding with a view to producing a biodiversity plan.

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

Both Connolly buildings retain good quality traditional shopfronts. Connolly's pub has a pleasant colour scheme and good quality hand-painted lettering on the fascia. Hand-painted signage is a feature fast disappearing in Irish towns and villages and is therefore worth preserving where possible. Similarly, at Connolly's Grocery, now closed, all the original architectural features of the frontage remains intact. It is to be hoped that this building can be saved in the long term and regenerated for new uses. It would be a well worthwhile exercise to carry out an inventory of empty buildings of character, in your locality, with a view to recording and preserving their architectural qualities.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The Community Park, now substantially developed, creates an important focal point in the village centre. This project, carried out under the Town and Village Urban Renewal Scheme, in partnership with Monaghan County Council, is a significant achievement and hugely enhances its location. The school consultation on design was somewhat novel. Hopefully, this will encourage the young people involved in the process, to stay involved and monitor progress in the park in the years ahead.

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

It must have been devastating to lose 12 mature Ash trees in your new Community Park. Well done on your resilience and perseverance in successfully pursuing funds, advice and support from various local and government bodies. You now have a mixture of semi-mature Mountain Ash, Alder and Beech replacing the diseased trees. It is

good to hear that the outdoor gym equipment is popular as this is a great amenity. Your new biodiversity plan produced by Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants contains many very exciting suggestions which will guide the community through the next few years. I particularly like the suggestion of allowing a goat to eat back the Butterbur, but from personal experience, you need to ensure the goat is well tethered!

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

The biodiversity plan suggests perhaps a herb patch at the community centre which would benefit pollinators but would also be useful for seasoning, cooking and maybe even medicinal purposes. This adjudicator will remember the visit to Monaghan primarily for the wonderful hedgerows and mature trees lining the roads. There are a few areas within the village core where the planting of native hedgerows would further provide screening, enclosure and a visually unifying effect, as well as improving diversity in habitats. The installation of low energy and low impact lighting at the Community Park is noted. Carefully regulated composting and water harvesting are other possible projects under this agenda. Plans to create an Active Travel path providing access to the school from Cavanreagh housing estate through the Community Park will be a wonderful achievement.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The plan for new housing within the village core will strengthen the built environment here. The restoration of the stone wall at Chapel (10 on your map) as shown in your photographs is an excellent illustration of definition and enclosure. The village was clean and tidy on the day of adjudication, the only untidy aspect being the overflowing clothes bin at the recycling centre. Repainting of the Community Center was admired. The 5 year plan suggests cleaning the stream at the back of the Community Center and this will further advance your aims to create a robust ecological corridor throughout the village.

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

New planting was noted at Scotshouse Close and will, on maturity, significantly contribute to the visual appearance of this entrance area. Housing estate greens were well maintained and the reinforcement at the laurel hedging was noted. Well done to all concerned with presentations here.

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

Approach roads were again well maintained and also litter free. Managed mowing to green areas to encourage wildlife was noted in many areas throughout the village. Last year's adjudicator recommended that this controlled method of maintenance would benefit your approach road margins.

Concluding Remarks:

It was a pleasure for this adjudicator to visit Scotshouse and see the improvements your community have undertaken in recent times. You are obviously working hard as a group and have developed some very positive plans to sustain your future.