

# Tidy Towns Competition 2023

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Boyle - Mainstir na Búille** Ref: **290**  
County: **Roscommon** Mark: **308**  
Category: **D** Date(s): **26/06/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	43	44
Streetscape & Public Places	80	39	42
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	43	45
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	33	34
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	15	15
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	52	53
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	40	41
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>308</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 your entry form and the additional photographs of the works of Abbey Community School at The Lawns. There is a notice board at the for the community at SuperValu and this might be good place to maybe advertise for volunteers or to put up a poster about your Spring clean.

You have a strong committee and a really good number of volunteers to help you with your activities. You have worked closely with different agencies and bodies such as Boyle Chamber of Commerce, Boyle Town Team, the County Council, local businesses and the community and voluntary groups registered with Roscommon Public Participation Network. This is all important to advance your work. Have you a suggestion box? Perhaps as your long-term plan is coming to an end you can solicit ideas from the community.

Your Facebook page is full of great pictures showing the efforts of all your volunteers over the 12 months. Thank you for continuing to update this.

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Thank you for your entry form and the additional photographs of the works of Abbey Community School at The Lawns. There is a community notice board at SuperValu and this might be good place to advertise for volunteers or to put up a poster about your Spring Clean. It is a good idea to add 'start and end' times on any activities so people know exactly how long they are needed (or when they can leave).

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Your Facebook page is full of great pictures showing the efforts of all your volunteers over the 12 months. Thank you for continuing to update this.

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

We were delighted to see the transformation of the building by the bridge in Boyle. The three-story period building

has had its lime plaster and wooden sash windows restored, the side access to the river re-opened and a park area in development at the back with lovely circular seats. It's just perfect to see such a strategically positioned building so nicely restored and we would like to highly compliment everyone involved with this initiative. And if you look back at Google Earth at the images of the former Royal Hotel you can really appreciate the transformation.

We observed many lovely operational buildings such as the Boyle Credit Union and the Bank of Ireland. These buildings are very nicely maintained, and the former has a lovely modern extension which ties in very nicely. You are working with An Taisce and the Council to address the issue of dereliction and old signage on other buildings. This is to be commended. Whilst there are properties that need attention, it is hoped that the current restoration of buildings will cause a ripple effect and more will be enhanced. It was good to see three large properties now recently sold and we look forward to their enhancement.

Don't forget to tell people about the 'Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant'.

We applaud the businesses with lovely window displays that really makes Boyle a nice place to walk around even when shops are closed. Displays at Taylor's and Marians and Boles and WJ Sloan looked well for example. We liked the seasonal window displays in shops such as 'Better Buy' and in the evening, the lights in the windows of 'The Book Lady' attracted us to view their window display. The Arts Festival has created many lovely window displays in premises as well, cleverly using these empty spaces as showcases.

St Joseph's Church was really nicely cared for, and the grounds are lovely. Perhaps now the large yellow covid notices on the front of this building could be removed? The nearby school also was very nicely presented with shrubs and planters all softening the areas making for a nice setting. The 'Results' fitness centre had a nice bed of flowers planted up and the cafe and food trucks next door had some lovely flowers growing in planters. This car park has great potential and perhaps in the summer could be offered maybe for campervans parking with the nice views across to The Abbey when the school is closed? There were some bits of old litter at the rear that need to be tidied up please.

There were nice bilingual name signs in the town and on Green Street.

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

The town clock and landscaping around it was really lovely and made for a nice focal point in Boyle. Indeed we liked it so much we took some pictures to submit to the Tidy Towns unit. Have you ever sent in pictures of your work for the newsletter? Many buildings had window boxes and hanging baskets and we particularly admired Sloans for their first-floor floral displays and The Bazaar with attractive window displays and flowers. The photos of your volunteers planting up the self-grown flowers in hanging baskets is applauded.

The maturing trees and the grounds were nicely managed at Abbey Community College - we believe the college is celebrating 50 years based on the commemorative plaque observed by the entrance - Congratulations.

Near to Abbey Community College is a nice area called 'Students Corner' so perhaps the students could work with some volunteers from the community to give some TLC to the area?

Coming out of the train station and turning left there is a nice little raised stone bed with trees planted but unfortunately weed killer was sprayed all along the wall here which is just not necessary. We noticed a few other places where weedkiller had been applied such as under the limestone conkers by The Abbey and opposite the entrance to Station Road and the Civic Amenity Centre.

Street furniture with clean and we particularly liked the limestone features including seats, tables and the limestone conkers on the approach road. The post box on the Main Street is inscribed with the letters 'VR' indicating it's from the reign of Queen Victoria and it looks very well. Sadly next to it is an out-of-order phone box that inside is quite grotty and it is suggest it is removed. In your long-term plan please add an action for the County Council, as the streetlights need to be painted. There was no public seating observed on Main Street and one elderly gentleman was seen resting on a utility box.

But around the corner, by the bridge, is a lovely civic space with the gorgeous backdrop of The Gate Lodge Café. Michael and Donie have done a great job sanding and painting the water pumps – what is the black box by the bridge – does it measure water levels? Overall, it feels that you are turning the town's focus towards the river and this is to be applauded.

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

Thanks to the Abbey School for their biodiversity planting at The Lawns. The school is to make some bird boxes so they are recommended to follow the designs available on the website of [www.birdwatchireland.ie](http://www.birdwatchireland.ie) and they can find the answers to many other questions about birds. The wildlife information signs at the Bridge erected by the Arts festival were admired.

There are some magnificent horse chestnut and copper beech trees around The Abbey area perhaps an idea would be to grow saplings from acorns of local trees to give to school pupils when they graduate.

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

The train station is nicely located near the centre of Boyle. There are some lovely plants at the front of the station house and on the platform itself. We were surprised that there were no EV charging points available in the car park. It would also be good to have bicycle racks or bike lockers here to encourage people to cycle from the different residential areas. With the cycle path cleaned up from The Harbour it would be good to think about the cycling infrastructure all around the Boyle and consider how it could be improved. Perhaps your local Sports Partnership could help with ideas for this and you can add elements of this into your long-term plan.

This category also considers waste prevention so shops such as The Book Lady and the hospice shop are important to support with regard to promotion of the circular economy.

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

Your Facebook page has great pictures of your volunteers in action tidying and picking up litter. A special mention to the Boyle Scouts for their help. As mentioned, the car park beside the school needs a little attention as there's some old litter around here and old council road signs that need to be cleared up.

The bottle banks at the back of St Joseph's Hall need a good clean as the dirt on these do not really encourage one to recycle here. It is suggested that the sign behind it is removed and maybe the students could help create a nice welcome sign here?

There are quite a number of roadside weeds in the streets around Abbey Community School we wondered if the purchase of a 'weedex' machine by the Tidy Towns could be an idea to help this?

Despite butt bins and metal buckets for putting finished cigarette butts into, some premises had a lot of discarded cigarette butts immediately on their doorsteps. It is suggested that just before closing up they are asked to brush-up up outside their doors. The Council's Litter Warden should be able to help advance this and contact the businesses in question.

Watch for old flags becoming a little tattered such as those on some of the public buildings. Can we have height warning signs in metric please? This could be part of your signs audit planned for 2023/24. Walking down from Patrick Street through the alley to Bridge Street there was not much litter here so well done on your efforts tidying up. Do continue to have this lane as part of your litter patrol route.

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

It was great to read in your entry form of how all the different residential estates across Boyle have embraced the competition this year and a really working together to enhance their homes and areas.

The road surface as you drive up lower Marion Road needs to be addressed. In Marion Road there's a nice park and playground and a lovely garden in the corner with brightly coloured giant stone ladybirds. This is the first place this year where we have seen raspberries and blackcurrants growing in a community garden, so this was lovely to see and taste! Many homes in this area were really nicely presented such as numbers 5 and 15 on Church View. Tree straps should be loosened as the trees grow in this area. Across town, homes on Hanley Avenue all look really well with some lovely planting in front gardens.

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

It is lovely arriving from Sligo and seeing the historic elements of Boyle including Kings House and The Abbey. Arriving from the south there's a lovely new name sign with the picture of The Abbey and nearby a raised stone bed for perennial planting. There is good continuity of pavement right up to the N4 on the Carrick Road.

We had quite a few observations on signage which should be useful for your signage audit which is planned for 2023 and you need to work with the council on this. For example on the Carrick Road, there is one very faded brown sign and another which is no longer legible and perhaps it could be removed. Next to the school an old rusty yellow and black post needs to be removed. There are other road signs and directional signs that need a very good clean but maybe it's tree resin and it might not clean up that well and it will need investigating. Can the council also help to remove the dead roadside cherry (?) tree that has died on the Carrick Road.

Across the road from the St Joseph's church is a beautiful set of wrought iron field gates and their enhancement is recommended.

Some of the plaster is coming off the boundary wall by the Community Centre. On Cootehall Street the enhancement of the four garage doors could really brighten this area.

We really like the mural of Una Born visible driving back up the Termon Road near the lovely copper beech tree good. New road surfacing was appreciated up Green Road to the Church of Ireland which also looked very nice and forms part of your heritage trail. You are a town bursting with Heritage!

### **Concluding Remarks:**

We enjoyed learning about the heritage of Boyle and it was a delight to see the ongoing transformation of the town centre. King House, the Bridge and Gate lodge and now An Ríoga are lovely elements making this a lovely town to

explore, shop and enjoy. Thanks to the volunteers and residents of Boyle who have worked hard over the last 12 months, and indeed 20 years of entering this competition.