

# Tidy Towns Competition 2023

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Portrunny - Port Reanna** Ref: **2224**  
County: **Roscommon** Mark: **292**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **04/06/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	45	46
Streetscape & Public Places	80	41	42
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	40	42
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	28	30
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	19	20
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	54	56
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	25	25
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	30	31
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>292</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 the map and entry form outlining your work over the last 12 months. You are a relatively new group but have a great work ethic. Photos showed you working hard – perhaps if you get some funding, you could get some hi-vis vests with your name and logo on it. Perhaps you can have a competition for a logo? You have worked closely with neighbouring communities. Also you have provided inclusive amenities for all abilities to enjoy Portrunny.

You are applauded for also organising community events such as the biodiversity, water protection and appreciation day you held in August 2022. This was an interactive event held at the shoreline facilitated by an Ecologist, Leave No Trace Ireland and included a Water history lecture. Are you registered with the PPN and on the mailing list of the Council's Heritage Office and Environment Office? If not, we recommend you do as they provide useful advice and updates.

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

The amenities and trails around Portrunny were lovely. The toilet and shower block provided by Waterways Ireland looked well and the stone walls and iron gates here blended nicely into the countryside. On adjudication day the area was busy with many visitors out on a sunny, holiday weekend – and not a surprise they were in Portrunny as it was simply lovely here.

Information displayed about your Heritage Trail was great to have and it allowed us to locate the old graveyard through the wrought iron pedestrian gate. Are there plans to sell Shannon View Lounge? It is a shame for it to deteriorate in this way at such a lovely spot so the Council should be approached for help. Who is your local Councillor?

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

Your choice of seating is really nice with benches that angle toward each other so you can both enjoy the view, and also chat. The raised herb beds at the lough shore were appreciated- though they, like all plants, needed some watering over the very hot weekend of adjudication.

We visited the new playground and congratulations on getting this project completed this year. We'd never heard of a roundabout suitable for wheelchair users. We walked up an bothár mór to see Saint Diarmuid's Well. This is a

nicely built area but had a lot of rags here which were beginning to look quite dirty and messy.

You hope to install a water butt. We would recommend, if possible, this is located near your planters, so you don't have to carry water too far. Maybe attach it to your new shed? You offer the first grass cut of the season to local farmers – a great win: win situation. We are sure they are delighted with this free cattle food, and they help you grow grass long early in the season when pollinators emerging from hibernation most need the nutrition.

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

Your entry displays a strong understanding and appreciation of local biodiversity. You even organised a water festival day – the photos showed a lot attending. Perhaps you can devise a shoreline wildlife trail for visitors to enjoy. This could be simply on laminated sheets available from a closed dispenser. Then it could be saved on-line also.

Driving into Portrunny we were greeted by beautiful views of reedmace/ bulrushes and new copious yellow flag irises flowering. Grey herons were flying over this beautiful landscape over the waters of The Shannon. Sadly the entire length of the stone wall over which we were looking, had been very liberally sprayed with herbicide. For over 100 meters this was sprayed, and it seems excessive with chemicals that could leach into the water where people were swimming or impact wildlife. Perhaps they are unaware of the impact of over-use. Portrunny has some of the most special habitats in Europe. Indeed the waters and shoreline are so special they are afforded protection by their designation as a Special Area of Conservation for the habitats and mammals found here including otter, and also a Special Protection Area: Lough Ree SPA (for birds including whooper swans, lapwing and many other wetland and water birds). We recommend that you reach out to the local NPWS staff who are very helpful.

Well done to linking up with the trails and lovely walkways around the boglands of Kiltieven.

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

You have listed many ways in which you promote and support the circular economy – prevent waste and reusing and repairing items. The new street furniture of made of recycled plastic. Grass is mulched to recycle nutrients into the soil. The TidyTowns handbook has some great ideas for this category of the competition also.  
<https://www.tidytowns.ie/competition/handbook/>

In such a rural environment, maybe cycling is popular, or car sharing? Do you share details of grants to promote energy savings in homes?

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

As the playground bin was overflowing your volunteers had cleverly put up an additional black bag for collecting litter over the busy sunny, bank holiday weekend. We read how the playground fencing was specifically chosen so that any litter could be easily seen. What forward thinking!

Elsewhere in Portrunny you had picked up litter and black bags full of this litter was discretely stored for collection after the weekend.

Well done to your litter-pickers.

You also used a non-toxic vinegar and salt mix for weed control and this seems to have worked well. Due to the popularity of the area for dog-walkers, the issue of dog waste is closely monitored, and dog waste bags are provided. If there is a particular black spot in this regard maybe some children's posters could be erected temporarily at the site.

Where are your nearest bottle banks? Would it benefit to have smaller bottle and can recycled bins in the summer months in the community?

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

All homes in Portrunny had lovely gates and entrances and it really felt as if they were blended in very nicely into the countryside here. The cottage next to the Old Graveyard had a lovely garden full of fox gloves and provide lovely colour. So did farmhouse on the left as you go down from this top of his hill. Do many homeowners plant pollinator-friendly flowers? The website [www.pollinators.ie](http://www.pollinators.ie) provides some great details including plant lists for hanging baskets and landscaped beds; and simple actions to benefit pollinators.

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

It was lovely to read how locals and farmers are all helping to keep Portrunny tidy. Plastic from silage has been removed from field gates and litter in front of private homes is now quickly picked up. Not only does this improve the look of the community, but it also prevents damage to wildlife through ingesting or getting caught up in discarded plastic and cans.

Arriving into the area you see the nice "Managed for Wildlife" area at the junction for Shannon View school. This is very nicely maintained. Do please remove or loosen all the support straps from the native trees here as the straps are beginning to damage the bark. It was nice to see that you are not cutting all the grass here in keeping with it All Ireland Pollinator Plan.

**Concluding Remarks:**

You are a small group of volunteers with great ambitions, and you have worked hard to great dividends. Pictures provided showed young and old all participating in events and activities. You had the place shining on an exceptionally busy bank holiday weekend so well done for your efforts in June, and throughout the year. It was a joy to explore Portrunny - what a gorgeous part of the world.