

# Tidy Towns Competition 2023

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Roosky - Rúscaigh** Ref: **554**  
County: **Roscommon** Mark: **328**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **01/07/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	38	39
Streetscape & Public Places	80	41	43
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	46	48
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	33	35
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	21	21
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	67	69
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	33	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	38	40
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>328</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.

It was good to read in your entry form of how the various groups and bodies in the village all work towards the same aims. For example, we were pleased to learn that Kilglass Gaels GAA are retaining and working on a new native woodland area. Well done to all the volunteers of Rooskey.

Communication is important so we were delighted to see your noticeboard and your name and logo displayed throughout the village where you had implemented projects. Maybe a notice at the harbour could invite visitors to join your weekly litter picks? Special mention to the 5th and 6th class pupils at the National School for their lovely artwork on display outside the old factory. Thanks also to the Men's Shed whose premises looked well, and we could see their handicraft throughout the village.

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

Many premises on the main streets of Rooskey had been freshly painted and looked bright, crisp and clean and it was lovely to walk around your village. We took our time looking all around and enjoyed seeing the seven chimneys on the corner building. This is one of several Rooskey buildings listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The map viewer at the website <https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/> allows you to view details of them all. The nicely presented buildings and the newly constructed pavements made for a lovely sense of place.

The Garda station looked fresh, and the newly refurbished Community Centre was a lovely amenity. You have a lot of classes and activities happening here which was great to read. The set-back area in front of the premises had a poor road-surface, but we suspect this was still to be completed. Hanging baskets at Centre looked well and the newly reopened garage had people sitting outside on their new benches enjoying the views over the Shannon.

The fencing around The Shannon West Hotel looked poor and it is hoped the situation for this premises is quickly resolved. You have lovely amenities in Rooskey. On a sunny afternoon, visitors were enjoying cycling along the new cycle path, playing in the playground or enjoying the evening rays at the Wier Lodge.

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

We liked how the volunteers in Rooskey concentrated their landscaping efforts to make a big impact. The fountain

at the Church and school carpark makes for a nice impact as you arrive from the West. There was a lovely bed of carpet roses near the pier on the Leitrim side of the village. Opposite the old factory space you had compost bins in a nicely maintained area with lovely pollinator planting in old concrete pipes that looked lovely. Opposite Coxes, the pink wall and fabulous hanging baskets make a great impact. In front of the factory itself you've made a lovely central focal point to the village with newly planted trees, benches and clever bottle top artwork, what a lovely new space you have created here. It is suggested that you recruit a couple of volunteers to specifically look after newly planted trees near their homes. In the first few years of growing trees need attention such as watering in the summer on support Staffs need to be loosened as the trees grow.

We were excited to read that the school is developing a new sensory garden. We look forward to learning more about this. We have seen some lovely ones such as in Black Rock Community Gardens in County Louth (a bit far from you guys). Not only do you see and smell wonderful plants, clever planting allows you to feel various textures such as the soft petals of lamb's ears, or taste mint or listen to the sound of grasses sway in the wind – a garden where all your senses are stimulated.

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

You have worked with the local ecologist and put a lot of effort into this category of the competition considering planting native trees and shrubs and pollinator friendly flowers. It is suggested you provide some information on the flowers selected so that visitors and residents alike can replicate your efforts in their own homes.

It was lovely to see the six new fruit trees planted on The Lock Road on the east side of Rooskey. We noticed your newly created bug hotels in place in Rooskey. These are a good educational tool and serve to provide a diversity of organisms into a small space. Where you put these on trees do ensure you don't damage the trees themselves and always use stainless steel nails or ideally cable ties that can be loosened as the tree grows. Positioning them high up ensures it is out of reach from cats, dogs, mice and rats. Have you ever completed a census of the insects you can find in your village?

The new Waterways Ireland cycle loop path is a lovely amenity. At the trailhead two empty information boards are crying out for information and your nice biodiversity posters showing the wildlife of Roscommon could be ideal here. We suggest your creative school pupils compile a wildlife scavenger hunt for this route. Laminated sheets could be provided in dispensers at either end of this loop for people to enjoy and look for things as they explore this lovely corner of Roscommon. Indeed it could also include built heritage items also such as 'How many chimneys can you view on Mount Carmel house'? Another idea would be to have wildlife explorer packs available to borrow from the shop that would include magnifying glasses and butterfly ID sheets.

Could the bird box on the metal post by the school car park be removed as it's not really of a great design and we don't suspect it's been in use for many years? There is great information available on the design and positioning of bird boxes at the website [www.birdwatchireland.ie](http://www.birdwatchireland.ie).

The pollinator map works well in the village were planters join up lines of hedge rooms to make it easier for forage and wildlife to move throughout Rooskey. Perhaps you could encourage homes to plant native fruit trees to provide more pollinator-friendly food sources to help fill up any gaps.

We were excited to read that you are planting willow whips along the new canal path. Perhaps some could be planted into a fun tunnel by the local children?

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

As mentioned, we loved the artwork in the seating area on the Main Street. The use of recycled bottle-tops not only looks well but helps get across the message of the importance of recycling. The green flag was flying proudly in front of the school. No doubt this was well earned. It is suggested that you put in a raised bed growing herbs in some of their communal areas so that the community can help themselves and benefit from your planting efforts.

The timetable for the local bus link was displayed clearly on your community noticeboard. It was good to see you have a number of routes available to towns in the area. Rainwater collection butts were noticed in many places strategically placed where the water collected could be easily harvested to service your planters.

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

We would like to commend the female volunteer who was walking all along the Leitrim side of Rooskey picking up litter on a sunny Saturday afternoon. She was picking up fresh litter of which there wasn't much as you have a dedicated group of regular litter pickers – thanks to them all.

Your village looked very clean during adjudication with bottle banks and street bins clean and in use.

The West side of the Shannon had a nice amenity area – the bollards etc could be painted. The metal bars in place at the end of parking spaces were bent and damaged and should be removed. Maybe some more of your colourful art bottle-top work could be positioned by the bottle banks?

Watch out for a couple of tattered flags attached to posts and a number of cable ties were also observed on a post near the garage. Where boats were tied up on the Leitrim side of the Shannon there was a post with no sign

attached that possibly should be removed. The harbour toilets were open and clean and a great amenity to have in the village. Whilst not very modern at least it is great to have these available. We note you are hoping that Waterways Ireland would upgrade these, and it would be a great enhancement to this area.

Barbed wire along the top of a wall near the lovely campervan park had a lot of plastic debris attached to it. We applaud the provision of parking in Rooskey for campervans - this is a growing leisure pursuit in Ireland that you have embraced.

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

Another volunteer was noticed during adjudication tending to the lovely planting at the top of Shannon View homes. Lavender and other shrubs planted here are good for pollinators whilst also make for a lovely welcome into the estate.

Homes at Portroose were nicely presented with a nicely planted line of shrubs as you drive into here. Montbretia (*Crocsmia crocosmiiflora*) was planted here and a few other places in the village. It is important to keep this plant contained as, like mint, it can spread quickly. Indeed Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) has it on their invasive species list. It was nice to see homes with solar panels and PV panels in place. Shamrock Lodge caught the eye with its nice hanging baskets and across the road was a nice old traditional farmhouse with sash wooden windows. Homes on the Main Street all presented to a high standard.

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

A large carpet of butterbur was growing on the Dublin approach road into Rooskey. The large leaves of this net of plant were used in the past to wrap around blocks of freshly churned butter. Before this, as you come off the N4 there were some advertising hoardings that were obscured by trees, just behind the large triangle of mown grass – this could be a place to reduce the amount of grass mown, leaving a central stretch long to benefit wildlife. Road works were ongoing during adjudication, and it is hoped that upon completion the finish is to a high standard.

And the new pavements have been finished very nicely with grass separating the road from the pedestrian path. Currently they've been planted with grass in most places. Ideally you would allow ox eye daisies and other attractive perennials to grow here. There is great information at the website [www.pollinators.ie](http://www.pollinators.ie), under the resources section. There is one section across from the school where the stone areas separating the pavement from the road had been allowed to grow long and contains a lovely array of native hogweed and other plants. It would be important to ensure the nutrient levels are kept low here by cutting back at the end of the growing season and removing the growth. We suspect there may be debate for this type of planting but if it is explained that it is to benefit pollinators and wildlife, it could help promote understanding of this management regime. There is good continuity of pavement now throughout the village and the new pavements provide access to places such as the camper van park.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

This is your 22nd year in this national competition and we were delighted to read how all the residents are helping out and managing communal spaces near their homes to enhance their village for public enjoyment. Rooskey looked so well during adjudication and seeing volunteers out and about picking up litter, and tending to flowers, was testament to the pride of your community in your village. It was lovely to explore Rooskey.