

# Tidy Towns Competition 2023

## Adjudication Report

Centre:	<b>Tarmonbarry - Tearmann Bearaigh</b>	Ref:	<b>743</b>
County:	<b>Roscommon</b>	Mark:	<b>356</b>
Category:	<b>C</b>	Date(s):	<b>02/06/2023</b>

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	48	50
Streetscape & Public Places	80	47	49
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	46	48
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	38	40
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	22	24
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	62	65
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	35	35
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	44	45
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>356</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, your detailed maps and your Five-year development plan of Tarmonbarry. The latter had some really good projects included most of which were physical projects such as providing seating or bike stands or extending the sculptures. There are many great aspirations in this and we wish you well as you progress. Indeed a lot of the actions have been completed. We recommend you have actions to improve links and offer input from the community as well. This could be an annual fundraising activity or an online survey to collect ideas from the Tarmonbarry community. Another suggestion is to work with one other community group a year to advance an action. This could be a creche or Scouts group for example.

Communication is important so we're delighted to read that you are setting up an online presence and do provide the address for your social media sites so we can check it out next year. In your entry form you have highlighted how your work links with the UNs Sustainable Development Goals and we were pleased to read this.

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

We were delighted to read that finally your sustained efforts mean that you now have the old Garda building under your management with a 99 year-lease. We are excited to read about your plans for this building including the running of our local crafts market at the rear of the building. Well done on your hard work and sustained efforts to make this happen. This is one of a number of properties that you have identified with alternative reuse plans and this is important to be pro-active and maintain a sense of vibrancy in a village centre.

Keenan's enjoys a prominent position and really makes for an attractive building enticing passers-by to stop. Its balconies were all brimming with gorgeous window boxes planted with pollinator friendly flowers, all looked really well.

Across the road, The Shannon Bridge pub also attractive with its funky mural playing on the theme of the village emblem.

The Montessori creche in the village was also bright, attractive and had some great planters. We didn't understand why there were crash barriers with bunting in front of this building though. The grotto was nicely maintained and makes for a lovely focal point in Tarmonbarry. Street furniture in the village all looked well – nicely positioned and clean.

Your major piece of work this year was the funding received through the town and village renewal scheme. Through this funding you have had a lot of work completed to enhance the village including upgrades of pedestrian crossings, parking area etc which is applauded. On adjudication day, most of the pavement enhancement works had been completed and looked well.

In the competition we like to see that communities are aware of their heritage. Your entry shows a strong knowledge of the built heritage of Tarmonbarry. From the old postbox, to your bridge constructed in 1830 – you have put effort into maintaining these features appropriately. We checked out the on-line maps at <https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/> to review other historical features of the village. We read that a weir in front of the harbour was granted to a Mr Patrick Fox in 1607!

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

Landscaping in the village is clever in that you have pockets of beds where you have focused your efforts and this works very nicely.

On the Main Street floral baskets have been placed on the railings separating the pavement levels at Keenan's and The Purple Onion. They were stunning... were just a beautiful array of shops and flowers top marks for this. It is suggested you provide photos of these to the Tidy Towns Unit for their newsletter. The re-design of this roadside works very well and it creates a safer, lovely outdoor space./

As mentioned, there is some wonderful pollinator-friendly planting in the village. You are encouraged to share plant lists and even seeds with the community so private home owners can replicate your efforts. Do you collect seeds at the end of the season? Maybe you can set up a seed library?

Public and historical information boards are good to see – we didn't know there was a St Barry!

You advised us that new trees, hedging and shrubs have been planted on the roads to the harbour. Are they native? Silver birch and rowan are always great in built-up areas as their leaves are not too dense. The line of roses separating the main road from the GAA pitch looks lovely - well done to the GAA for this. Here the gates and signage looked well.

Finally, you continue to maintain trees in Tarmonbarry and their light pruning, and removal of suckers, meant they appeared to be in good condition- well done for all of this work.

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

The walkway along Harbour Road from the bridge towards the marina was lovely to explore. It is hard to imagine that 28 bollards have been removed – they would have really cluttered up the place.

The wildlife information board told us of wildlife we may encounter during our visit and it all felt very peaceful here. We noticed the relocated and additional bird boxes. You have chosen good designs such as those recommended from [www.birdwatchireland.ie](http://www.birdwatchireland.ie) where you can get great advice about when and what to feed wild birds, and what design of nest box to make. They have templates you can follow if you wanted to encourage families or TY students to follow your example. Do you organise any guided walks or talks?

Perhaps you can run a competition for the first person to see a swallow each Spring? Or to join in with any of the citizen science projects at [www.biodiversityireland.ie](http://www.biodiversityireland.ie) Hopefully following the meetings with the LAWPRO staff you will have a community outreach project that could be developed here? Another suggestion would be to reach out to the ecologists at Waterways Ireland to develop in tandem with them an appropriate biodiversity project for Tarmonbarry. If the proposed extension of the Greenway is advanced, they will probably be doing a lot of survey work in the area and part of this could incorporate outreach activities.

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

We were excited to read that you are at the start of plans to apply for funding to provide a cyclepath from the village to the Royal Canal Greenway. This should bring a lot more visitors to the village, keen to rest their weary legs in the village. Under active travel you now have a new footpath in place from the village to Whitehall National School. Has the school/ or yourselves advanced any cycling proficiency classes or incentives to encourage 'Walking on Wednesdays' or supporting the development of a school walking bus?

In this time of climate concern it was good to see a number of initiatives that you were advancing to address this. For example you have been promoting energy efficient upgrades in local homes. Best of luck in your endeavours to have an EV charging point installed in the village. We noticed solar panels on homes in Tarmonbarry.

We would like to applaud the work of the National Schools in advancing their respective Green Flags – Cloonfour and Whitehall schools. The more you can support them (where feasible) in their aims, the better. You do have two school liaison personnel and there might be opportunities for them to work with you on suitable projects. Businesses support the use of removable cups – do they offer discounts when used? Have you a reusable cup – we suspect the many visitors and seasonal residents might enjoy purchasing a Tarmonbarry-themed cup. Perhaps you can apply for a grant for this in association with local businesses?

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

Your entry form provided pictures of the great effort of your volunteer and daily litter pickups. We would like to thank all these people for their sustained efforts especially during the summer season. You should be particularly rewarded for your efforts on a busy bank holiday weekend when we adjudicated. Apart from one or two small areas there was just a few pieces of fresh litter observed from the many visitors enjoying the sunny weather.

You have done great work on the bridge freshly painted green which looked really nice. The seating area to the side of the bridge makes for a lovely sun trap to enjoy watching the passing boat traffic. Farm gates have also been painted green ensuring good uniformity of colour throughout. The scraping of the cobblelock by the CE workers is applauded- preventing the use of herbicides so close to such a special aquatic environment. Perhaps an on-line promotion of the safe way to dispose of chemicals could be advanced. Where is the nearest Civic Amenity site where you can safely dispose of hazardous chemicals?

On the Main Street there's an old post and frame for a sign that no longer exists so maybe this can be removed?

The dispensers for the dog poo bags were empty but to be fair those seen walking the dogs seemed equipped to manage their toilet actions, and there was no such litter observed during adjudication. So it seems your awareness campaign about this was paying off.

The posts holding the local information signs need to be repainted. The bring-banks were clean. There was some fresh litter here but it was to be expected over a glorious weekend, and no doubt it would be tidied up very quickly. In contrast, whilst not the responsibility of the Tidy Towns, the public toilets at the harbour were in a very poor state during adjudication. This really needs to be addressed and bins provided for sanitary items, and provision of a cleaner on what would one of the business bank-holiday weekends.

On the main road near the GAA grounds were two notice boards with county maps which are quite faded and may need replacing.

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

Homes in your village, whether on the Main Street, or in housing estates were presented to a high standard. Barry's Court and Avenue had lovely mature willow trees. It's worth remembering that younger growing trees need water in the summer months. All of the homes here looked very well and what a neat and tidy estate. We also liked the fact that the lawn was cut, but not too tightly, and that there were still dandelions providing food for our butterflies and bees and even some birds.

Homes around the marina, which we assumed were holiday homes, were nicely presented and we particularly liked the grass mowing regime here. There is a large expanse of grass but a distinct area of this was left to grow longer and we were able to see red clover, ox-eye daisies and other flowers growing having just been left uncut for a short time.

To strengthen links with each estate, perhaps you can help organise a Spring Clean in each, lending equipment and offering a prize to the best estate? This could be a great way for neighbours to meet each other and help strengthen links with the Tidy Towns even more.

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

As you arrive on the main N5 there are lovely stone beds and sculptures indicating that you have arrived somewhere special. Some of the planting in these beds works well as the shrubs and taller flowers attract the eye of the faster moving traffic. However you have spent money planting annuals and low-level plants just at the 50km limit and they just don't make an impact here. It is suggested that you focus on perennials and taller shrubs in these beds. The lovely stork sculptures are nicely positioned above a name stone on this approach, however the writing is faded and this needs to be repainted, and the shrubs immediately in front of the name stone need to be cut back so you can read it clearly.

All of the approach roads had wide expanses of grass tightly mown. You do leave tracks of unmown grass in places in the centre of the Village. It is strongly suggested that you also cut the grass here at two different heights - only half of the grass is cut at the current level and the other is cut on a 12-week cutting rotation. This would save you a lot of time fuel costs and is better for wildlife and also pollinators.

At the T-junction by the garage the road surface is poor and need some attention.

You manage the Riverside path to the north of the bridge but as a visitor it was difficult to find the access and we felt we were walking on private property. We suggest that some signage is provided so people know how to access enjoy this part of the village as well.

The new County Council welcome signs showing pictures of Tarmonbarry looked very well.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

It was a delight to kick off our adjudication for the national Tidy Towns competition in Tarmonbarry. Despite it being a busy bank holiday weekend the village looked lovely and your efforts over the past 12 months to maintain the village, enhance the village, and to plan strategically for the future, are applauded. Congratulations to your

committee, your volunteers and all the residents and businesses in your lovely community.