

# Tidy Towns Competition 2023

## Adjudication Report

Centre: <b>Burncourt - An Chuir Doite</b>	Ref: <b>2257</b>
County: <b>Tipperary(South)</b>	Mark: <b>279</b>
Category: <b>A</b>	Date(s): <b>10/06/2023</b>

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2022</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2023</b>
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	41	42
Streetscape & Public Places	80	36	37
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	36	38
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	31	32
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	31	32
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	30	30
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	31	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	36	36
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>279</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.

You have a healthy committee size of 8 with a band of 16 volunteers to aid in your works. This encouraging considering Burncourt has only been in the competition for two years, an infant in the Tidy Towns family! We hope you will flourish and grow as your participation in the contests continues. That you have become involvement in this National Competition has allowed for an increased awareness of the positives in your lovely village. It has also increased interest in sustainability, biodiversity and how to develop your fabulous existing amenities in your beautiful rural setting. You seem to communicate well with your residents and, as a new group, we would encourage you to reach out to all young and old for any ideas for projects around the village. Through Facebook page or your other communication channels. Even a suggestion box in the post office or community centre can be a great way to get ideas and input. This will also gain you support and appreciation for your work. How great to see that you have a Liaison Officer from the group who visits the local school. Thank you for your comprehensively completed entry form. As a newcomer to the competition, we would encourage you to develop a village plan based on a 3-5 year framework. This will be a great help to allow you have a clear picture of what your committee is trying to achieve year by year, how you are going to approach each project and who the supporting agencies will be. This need not be professionally prepared but can be a simple list of your aims and objectives and a clear timeline for projects. Consider working on this over the next year as this will help focus your activities and also gain you additional marks in this category.

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

It was the adjudicator's first visit to your community, and I very much enjoyed my visit around your village. The school was again well presented with its clean and neat boundary wall, and we noted the solar panels to the roof. You are obviously a very active farming community with the number of farms situated right in the village core, this has its own charm for the community. Road surfacing and finishes were good. Some signage might need a review as some such as the animal crossing signs, are looking a bit tired. The school children sign by the national school also needs to be straightened out. Your "Galtee Mountain Boy" sculpture at the junction opposite the church, is a lovely feature with a seat providing a resting spot, enhancing this micro public space, and helping support age friendly living. The Lotto jackpot sign is very prominent here and could a more discrete place be found for it. We look forward to seeing the map by your local artist installed here and thanks to Sheehans Sawmills for their support in providing the new signage and information board. The community centre in your old national school was a hive of activity and the day of the adjudication and good luck with your expansion works here. Window boxes enlivened the

bright yellow façade of the Olde Shanbally pub with the hurling influence clearly visible. The post office was a busy colourful focal point in the village and Ryans bar looked well with its pink hanging baskets a foil to the grey frontage. Tidy Towns Groups can play a very important part in designing, improving and maintaining public spaces and they are encouraged to approach their Local Authorities with suggestions for enhancements. Have you considered approaching the Local Authority regarding new lighting for the town? Wirescapes overhead distract somewhat from your lovely village. Underground wiring could be an issue you bring up with them to be considered if there are any future road works planned.

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

A planting programme and a plan for regular maintenance of planted areas should be an integral part of your works and build on the local expertise at Pine Nurseries to help you develop this. One approach is to have a different location selected for planting each year, or a priority-based plan depending on which areas are most in need of planting. The planter with lavender to the community centre was admired, this is a lovely resource for the community. The galvanised planters were a nice touch by the water pump to highlight it. Good luck with your planned landscape works to the entrance to Hillview and again draw on the knowledge available to you from The MacGillacuddy Family to ensure new planted areas in the village are pollinator friendly. And we hope to see progress on planting in and around the Church as part of its 70th Anniversary next year. The school field was indicated on the map as an area for judging in this category, but it was not mentioned in your application, so we were not sure if this was a new or maintained project.

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

The honey bee is an important resource for the area and as you say a number of honey producers are present around the village. As you are aware, the key to this category is knowing what habitats exist in your area and where they are. Have you considering doing a simple habitat survey of Burncourt? It would be a great help to fully address this category and your local Environment or Biodiversity Officer may be able to help with this. For further ideas have you investigated 'Make it Wild', the Irish Wildlife Trust's (IWT) national programme inspiring people to take action for wildlife in their local area? They also help communities produce Local Biodiversity Actions Plan through their training programmes. Or look to the Heritage Council's Guide to Habitats in Ireland (free to download). It is about improving areas like gardens, green spaces and verge areas to create enhanced wildlife habitats.

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

The use of water harvesting at the Community Centre is to be admired and was especially useful, we are sure given the exceptionally dry summers we are having. We visited the residents garden at the Open Space to the very top of Hillview. Is the hose here used much or are their opportunities to place water butts either around the village or in residence homes which would allow for more sustainable way of watering this vegetable patch. Practical low cost ways to address this category such as the lending of crockery to discourage the use of disposable ware is a great idea. To encourage more sustainable transport is there a need for a bike rack in the village to cater for both locals and touring cyclist? Your Burncourt Pumpkin Festival sounds great fun and allows local kids pick their own pumpkins and is part of the Seed to Maturity initiative. The Organic Egg house was such a delight in the village flanked by pretty pails of cosmos. Build on these initiatives, including the tomato plant seedlings, to investigate how you can make Burncourt a model for edible landscapes and a leading centre for community food learning in the competition. Community cooking programmes could follow on at key harvest times in the village for example. Look to opportunities along the supply chain to reduce waste and improve biodiversity. This is an area Burncourt could lead the way and really gain marks going forward in a number of competition categories.

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

Small amounts of litter were noted under the magnificent line of mature copper beech trees, this no doubt was recent roadside litter and will be caught by our next litter pick. You say that you do a continuous audit of village items which can add to general untidiness. Do an audit of roadside sign to make sure all are clear and legible and remove any redundant poles. Do you take part in An Taisce Spring Clean? This is an annual sponsored litter event that you could consider taking part in next year? It is Ireland's nationwide anti-litter campaign which takes place during the whole month of April. Register your interest on their website to get more information.

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

The application states that your group works with local Residents Association in order to encourage all to continue with their efforts and to help those less able to do so. Well done in this. Look to the tidy towns handbook for a useful checklist for Residents Associations. The residential properties in the village were presented to a good standard so well done to all your residents. The name sign at the entrance to Hillview was well maintained as were gardens in this pleasant estate. Window boxes to village homes did much to enliven the main street and were very nicely presented. The importance of well-kept individual front gardens cannot be overstressed as a contributor to the visual enhancement of streetscape / townscape.

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

The black and white village signs were well-maintained with the milk pail giving an indication of your rural setting and active farming life. Some lower limbs of the copper beech trees by the egg house opposite the Post office, could be raised a little as the adjudicator is relatively tall and had to duck when walking along the foot path. Generally, approach's to the villages were appropriately maintained. A raised planter beneath the black and white

village name signs may draw the eye to this gateway element if planted with a strong bed of colour. Similar to the circular stone bed at the Clogheen Road junction. Footpaths from residential estates to community facilities such as your school, church, community centre and sporting facilities should be maintained in a good state of repair and be sufficiently wide to accommodate baby buggies and wheelchairs without the need to step off onto the road.

**Concluding Remarks:**

Burncourt has a lovely rural charm and we are glad to hear that participating in the competition has been so fruitful for your community over your short 2 year history with us. Although a relatively newcomer to Tidy Towns, given the long history of the competition, the progress you have made thus far will ensure, we feel, that you have the potential to go far both regionally and nationally. Aim high. All involved with this year's entry are warmly thanked and congratulated for their efforts and we look forward to seeing your progress in 2024.