

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dunmore East - Dún Mór** Ref: **1008**
County: **Waterford** Mark: **326**
Category: **C** Date(s): **19/07/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	49	51
Streetscape & Public Places	80	47	49
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	46	48
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	32	34
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	15	15
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	55	55
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	39	40
TOTAL MARK	550	316	326

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.

While you have a relatively small committee based on the population size of Dunmore East you are so integrated with other local community organizations that your volunteer base is much greater than stated in your application. By recognizing that all community members core interests lie in the same place & the amount of overlap is significant, it ensures areas of commonality are tackled as a group rather than as individual entities thus strengthening your position. This strategic community thinking has served you well when collating & submitting a town proposal to the new County Development Plan. We will be interested to receive updates next year on the proposal by Waterford City & County Council to initiate the establishment of Dunmore East Regeneration & Development Group that no doubt all local community groups, including Tidy Towns, will join. The addition of 165 new housing units over a two-year period is significant & as you state, presents both opportunities & challenges. It would be hoped that through the proposed new Development group these matters can be raised & short, medium & long term planning commenced to ensure Dunmore East can meet the community's needs all year round. The establishment of new relationships with both, Coastwatch & An Taisce is important for a seaside location. There is little doubt that your ongoing collaborative working relationship with both the Hall Trust and the Woods & Park Trust is essential for the enhancement of Dunmore East.

Many communities have produced Welcome Packs for new residents & in all centres it is greatly appreciated. During the summer, you have a wonderful opportunity to invite them to the Sunday Craft market to meet existing residents & hear about all the local activities & events. There may be other regular events that can be used in a similar manner.

It is heartening to see so many sporting, youth organizations & residents assisting in the various projects you have undertaken to date. The sustained future of Dunmore East involves everyone taking responsibility & lending a hand. It would appear you have all communication channels covered & it good to see you use the social media platforms to keep the community informed & also ask for assistance.

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

The hill location & historic core of Dunmore East create a wonderful vista for the visitor. There are notable architectural & photogenic features of the town – terraces along Dock Road, Wellington Terrace, Post Office Lane, Queens Terrace & Curraghmore Terrace; The Haven Hotel; St Andrews; Fisherman's Hall; Pier; Lighthouse; Pilot Station & so much more. The local conglomerate stonewalls add greatly to the character of the town & in the main are well-maintained.

Derelict or vacant properties are a thorn in the side of many a Tidy Towns group. Some communities have completed an audit of these buildings & then liaise with the local council on potential solutions. This strategy has

been successful for a number of groups in Waterford. The Derelict Site levy & the Vacant Home Improvement grants are two initiatives also having positive outcomes for many towns. Therefore, it is fantastic to see refurbishments taking place in the terrace opposite the Garden of Remembrance & some recent work has taken place at residences on Post Office Lane. Well done to those property owners maintaining the architectural style of their homes or new owners restoring properties to their former glory. At the commercial building presently marked for sale, The Ocean Hotel, there was façade cleaning underway during the visit. It would be hoped that new owners would undertake significant improvements to the site. Are there any plans for the derelict building beside The Strand Bar? It would be a great location for a Remote Working Hub as has been created in a number of Waterford locations.

On adjudication day, work on the façade of Fisherman's Hall was in progress. Therefore, it would be hoped that next year's adjudicator would see the finished project in all its glory. The public buildings – Garda Station & Health Centre – are well kept. The newly renovated wide path linking Stoney Cove to Island Road with the use of local stone interlinks the areas & presents one with a grand panorama of the Adventure Water Park. The streets & lanes are maintained in good order & the heritage signage on some streets adds interest. Is it planned to have these signs on all streets & lanes in time? The street lighting again has a heritage style & there is certainly a difference in standard between those painted on Harney's Hill & those on Park Road.

The mural at the gable end of Power's Bar is visually impactful without being obtrusive, quite the art installation. The Fisheries Harbour Authority is to be congratulated on the standard of the port & its environs. The colourful mural, matching door & the planted boat on the clover green enhances the space & the memorial located further along is well maintained. Xeriscape landscaping at the memorial site should be considered thus eliminating the need for containers here. The Pier Walk offers incredible scenic views. Are there plans to link the Pier Walk with the access walkway to Shanooan car park? The area between the two walkways visually detracts from the overall vista in its present state. In the centre of the port, there is what appears to be a construction site cum storage area, is this due to be developed? Do update us on any plans.

As a new visitor to Dunmore East, directions for parking are poor whilst, when located, the car parking facilities at Shanooan & at Counsellor's Strand are excellent. However, it was noted on adjudication day the number of visitors who were unsure if the entrance to Counsellor's Strand car park was actually a parking facility. There is no signage indicating a public car park simply a height restriction barrier. If the local council could be prevailed upon to complete a few maintenance jobs here, it would certainly enhance one's first impression – remove vegetation from the boundary between the road & stonewall on left hand side to fully appreciate the stonework; repair the seating, finish the surfacing around the base of the bollards to prevent silt & vegetation build up, remark the disabled parking spaces, paint the framework of the signage & place an information board to the side of the Bottle Bank as is normal practice. The views from this location are stunning & it seems a shame for easily remedied items to detract rather than enhance the facility.

The clover greens coupled with the wild perimeters at Shanooan car park soften the hard surfacing. The sheltered memorial seating is well placed. Perhaps consideration might be given to planting sea thrift/pink around the curve of the back of the wall thus negating the need for containers. As was witnessed on the Cliff Path walk, this plant thrives in this location, adds colour & provides nectar/pollen. Next year's adjudicator can look forward to seeing the refurbished navigation buoys mounted on the stonewalls at the entrance to the car park.

The pedestrian crossing outside Tír na nÓg is welcomed although was not yet programmed for use on adjudication day.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The Fisherman's Hall garden is a magical space tucked away as it is with stunning views of the ocean. The various levels, paths, seating areas and attractive planting schemes add interest to what is a relatively small space. On adjudication day, it appeared to be in use by a playschool whose base was inside the Hall – akin to a nature school for the children attending.

The People's Park is an astonishing amenity in the town especially as the views from all areas within the Park are simply spectacular particularly on a rare sunny July day. It was fantastic to see families picnicking, tennis matches in play, children enjoying the playground facilities & older residents walking the circular pathway – a well used community facility. You reference the onerous task of maintaining the grass areas – has consideration been given to leaving some areas in long meadows with paths mown through to reduce the work involved? What replacement fencing will be used in place of the present netting- an edible/native hedge might work there? The perennial planting along the footpaths with the reinstated laurel hedging creates a lovely panorama for the walker. The access steps to the various coves are a wonderful surprise for the visitor. It would be best to remove, where possible, cut vegetation & branches. At one of the seating areas, there are three bay trees with shrubs & flowers planted underneath encased in a wooden ring – an unusual planting scheme in this location. Is it envisaged that all seating in the Park will be painted in the one colour scheme, as there are a variety of seating styles? All the seating is well positioned to avail of the views & well done on the work to date. Where there are tree trunks left after a mature tree has died, are there plans to replace these over time? It is great to see new tree planting & it would be good practice to check tree ties & stakes regularly in addition to removing suckers so the trees thrive. There is an enormous empty concrete container near the front perimeter wall that appears redundant & could be removed. The Trust who maintain the Park & those who assist them are to be commended for the standard to which the Park is maintained.

The Garden of Remembrance is a beautiful landscaped space carved as it is in at the conjoint of two roads & stretching back down Harney's Hill towards the beach. The mainly perennial planting with some nectar & pollen rich flowers like cosmos & poppies present a great show of colour in a space surrounded by hard surfacing. The cabbage palm trees & giant bugloss are akin to a tropical backdrop as one walks to the Strand.

There are some lovely small landscaped pockets e.g. entrance to Counsellor's Strand car park – the pink hydrangeas were in full bloom. The red geraniums there certainly provide colour although the annuals have virtually no nectar in comparison to the hardy variety. A coordinated colour scheme here would have an instant visual impact. The planted areas in front of some houses on Wellington display wonderful pops of colour from perennials.

It is always a delight to receive compliments on a landscaping theme as in the case at the High Road – hypericum, choisya & viburnum provide abundant benefits. The small park in front of Harbour House looking on to the Port would benefit from a similar landscaping treatment in due course. The clover greens, coupled with the seating & stone fronted walls are a lovely carved out space in this area. The self-seeded pot marigolds have produced a riot of colour.

The Health Centre has a lovely space for an apothecary garden. The National School's colourful mural creates a charming entrance with the expansive lawns. They have space for a mini forest & it would be best to remove the dead trees. A brief synopsis of the school's activities would be good to include in your submission.

As there are a number of access routes to the coves from the town itself, it would be advisable to remove, where possible, cut vegetation & branches. We look forward to seeing the impact of your planned planting scheme for Stoney Cover pathway.

The flowering laurel hedge bordering the road to Shanooan car park & Harbour House is a rich feeding source for insect & birdlife. It would be fantastic if it was continued & allowed to screen the green fencing panels & provide some privacy for residents. The grounds of Harbour House have great potential for tree & hedge planting.

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

It is certainly concerning that an unidentified source of pollution upstream is entering the sea at Lawlor's Beach. Your involvement with Coastwatch & their referral to the EPA & Inland Fisheries Ireland has highlighted the problem. Well done on being part of the group working on resolving the issue through regular water sampling. It would be hoped that this ongoing issue could be rectified in the near future. A day to mark your Marine Heritage & Biodiversity is an extraordinary opportunity to engage & inform the community of the marine ecosystems on their doorstep in particular the discovery of a honeycomb coral reef. It would be hoped that this heightened level of awareness would encourage citizen scientists. We look forward to hearing a brief synopsis of the day's events in next year's submission. The National Biodiversity Data Centre has some fun & engaging "Explore Your Shore" surveys in addition to Irish Marine Biodiversity projects. It would be great to see the completion of some of these surveys by community members in addition to the schools & Sea Scouts. <https://exploreyourshore.ie/> Your engagement with the council on securing a protected status as a Natural Heritage Area (NHA) in Coxtown for the Cliff Path walk is praiseworthy. There is a significant body of work involved in securing that status. Your engagement with the newly appointed NPWS ranger on arranging a talk on the Cliff's birdlife is a great way to highlight what walkers can expect to see. They, too, will provide best practices on how to assist the declining kittiwake colony. The planned erection of wildlife interpretative signage on the path will educate both locals & visitors alike.

The range of pollinator friendly perennials here was fantastic to see as well as perimeters that were allowed grow naturally. The teasel was attracting plenty of interest from goldfinches.

Your inclusion of hundreds of nectar rich spring bulbs in various locations throughout the town is most welcome & do ensure you include pictures of these in bloom in next year's submission. The early insect life will be most grateful to dine on their nectar & pollen. Well done to the Sea Scouts for maintaining the insect accommodation at Fisherman's Hall garden – no shortage of space for all!

At the descent to Badger's Cover, there was plenty of birdlife feeding on the sloes in the hedgerows. It is heartening to see so much edible hedging throughout the Park – large rose hips were abundant & blackberries were ripening.

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

Your decision to move away from hanging baskets was timely given Ireland experienced the warmest June on record. The substitution of these with street banners displaying historical pictures is an apt alternative. However, on adjudication day, there were very few erected. When, where & how many are planned to be flying?

The planting of apple tree in estates instead of ornamental trees is a wonderful idea & a number of other communities have undertaken it over several years. Many have used the harvest time to hold an annual Applefest, demonstrating the many & varied ways in which the apples can be used – juicing, fermenting into cider, dehydrating slices, converting into jams, jellies, butters & chutneys. It has proven an excellent community day for all residents with the opportunity to showcase traditional skills, engage residents & have fun. Perhaps the prospect of such a day might colour residents' views on planting apple trees over cherry blossom trees!

It was good to see the composting bays clearly visible at the Fisherman's Hall garden. Your plan to build on this with the installation of a community composter at Ard na Coille is an excellent strategy. As other residents associations see it in action, they too might be encouraged to install them locally.

Dunmore East is very fortunate to have an active gardening club with a sustainable ethos. Their seed saving, plant cultivation & sharing is of immense assistance to your group as well as the residents associations. Their knowledge on the plants suited to the climatic & soil conditions of the locality is invaluable.

It was heartening to see the EV charging point on Park Road in use as well as a noticeable number of electric vehicles. While seated in the Park it was noticeable the numbers of tennis players arriving by bike for their respective games. However, there was no bike rack located close by so bikes were attached to the perimeter fencing. There were very few bike racks visible in the town.

It was noted that some residences have solar/PV installed. As your group is part of the Sustainable Energy Community (SEC) network, have you plans to develop community energy awareness programmes? In light of the high energy costs presently, it would seem to be a topic that would generate a lot of local interest. The use of your social media platform for the sharing of energy tips or an energy conservation campaign under various headings might be of interest to a local Transition Year student.

There are a lot of ideas for this category in the Tidy Towns Handbook. [https://www.tidytowns.](https://www.tidytowns.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Sustainability-Doing-More-with-less.pdf)

[ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Sustainability-Doing-More-with-less.pdf](https://www.tidytowns.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Sustainability-Doing-More-with-less.pdf) ChangeX is a platform for ideas & funding in this area & worth checking out. <https://www.changex.org/ie>

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

"Picking for Pizza" is an excellent initiative – litter picking is not the most interesting of activities however the draw of fresh, hot pizza slices to be enjoyed with friends tips the scales in its favour. Congratulations to the business establishments for funding the initiative. The purchase of 100 junior sized pickers is indicative of the level of involvement from Dunmore East's youth. Well done on organizing regular litter picks with the assistance of seasonal workers within the town in addition to the beach cleanups. The cooperation of the Harbourmaster in maintaining the harbour & car park areas is most welcome. On adjudication day, there was a considerable amount of litter on the pathway at Convent Road opposite businesses serving food. When you reference annual cleanups, do let us know if you partake in the Clean Coast's Big Beach Clean each September & An Taisce's Spring Clean each April. Well done on using dog fouling stencils instead of adding more posters & hence clutter to the streetscape.

Some of the town signage needs attention, take for example the signage at the junction of Dock Road & Harney's Hill, it is barely legible. The information signage is generally of a high standard & maintained well. It would be hoped that on completion of Fisherman's Hall, the bilingual signage presently on the gate piers would be replaced with an appropriate heritage sign.

An annual audit of street furniture is a good strategy & once done, only requires minimal effort to update each year. On completion, you can then decide where you need input from the local Council & what the community can undertake themselves. Items to consider are the painting of bollards, a uniform colour scheme for street furniture, lighting standards, seating, clear street gulleys, discarded safety equipment, redundant signage etc. There are a number of remnant cast-iron lighting standards or vents. In some cases, the innards are filled with rubbish. Are there plans for these pieces of street furniture?

Some communities have engaged with their local councils on a cohesive commercial signage theme for an urban centre. In locations where it has been adopted, the impact on the tidiness of a streetscape cannot be underestimated. Additionally, engagement with commercial enterprises on the use of decals in their windows has seen them move from advertising to local heritage scenes or photographic exhibitions.

It was disappointing to note the amount of litter at the Horsequarter Roundabout, from the pump down to the planted beds. It also appears a vehicle damaged the road signage here.

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

The residential areas of the town are, in the main, very well maintained & some have exquisite gardens. Ard na Coille has a lovely entrance with a fine boundary of mature trees & a nicely landscaped green area to the front. There is space on the boundary green strip for additional tree planting to reduce the road noise & add colour.

Shanakiel have made good use of the green area to the left of their entrance. It is wonderful to see a united residents association amongst coexisting estates as in Airfield Point, Ard na Coille & Shanakiel. They have great plans in place that we look forward seeing come to fruition. In future submissions please do mark clearly where these new projects are located within the estates.

Harbour Village is a sizeable estate & a lot of work has gone in to landscaping there. The utility boxes displaying wildlife scenes converts a utilitarian item into an art installation. However, the widespread use of herbicide on the boundary mounds & within the communal areas was most disappointing.

The Woods has a sizeable, if slightly austere entrance. Again, the boundary of mature trees presents a stunning backdrop as does the meadow to the left of the entrance drive. Here again, alongside the hedging bordering the pathway, herbicide use was apparent.

Pine Cove has a lovely tree lined entrance & the mounded hills in the communal green with the grove of trees of add interest.

At The Hermitage, it was a delight to see mown paths through the long meadows on the entrance green. A fantastic opportunity to add interest to a vast green area & reduce maintenance.

There is certainly plenty of space for additional tree planting throughout the residential estates. There are a number of volunteer led groups working with communities, residents associations & schools to plant mini forests. Some of these include Trees on the Land <https://www.treesontheland.com/> Easy Treesie <https://easytreesie.com/> & Pocket Forest <https://www.pocketforests.ie/> Many of these groups can provide trees free of charge or assist with funding. Additionally, each year during National Tree Week, Waterford City & County Council make trees available free of charge to registered interested groups.

Well done on assisting residents associations with their applications for small community funding streams. The Garden Competition is a great initiative. It would be preferable to see a coordinated approach to estate signage however we understand there are varied points of view in relation to this idea.

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

The sea views that await the visitor as they approach Dunmore East is one the most memorable aspects of the visit. The rural environs with thriving hedgerows, mature trees, stone walls & pasturelands creates the most wonderful panorama. The entrance to the town from Passage East is enhanced with the planting at the Horsequarter roundabout. There was a great show of colour from the many perennials. The location of two pedestrian crossings in the vicinity here is essential given the large residential area. The Coast Road from Tramore is well serviced for all residential areas with accessible footpaths. The mix of hedgerows, hedging & residential entrances lend an interesting vista.

Concluding Remarks:

It was a pleasure to visit Dunmore East after a long hiatus. A lot has been achieved & it is encouraging to see all the community groups work together for the future of the town. As new residents arrive, you will be surprised at the additional skills they will bring to the community, talents you can tap into for future projects. We will look forward to

seeing the refurbishment of Fisherman's Hall, the erection of all the street banners & hearing the outcome of the proposed Regeneration & Development Group in the next 12 months & in the future, the occupation of vacant premises & the involvement of new residents.

Here are a few observations in relation to this year's submission. Some of the projects marked as new are best categorized as future projects e.g. the placement of navigation buoys at Shanooan car park and some marked as maintenance are in fact new e.g. newly excavated & planted areas at Shanakiel & Ard na Coille. It would be a shame to lose out on potential points. The map accompanying the application created confusion as some of the projects were marked incorrectly e.g. N1 Fisherman's Hall Garden Project in 3 separate locations on the map, similarly for N2 & M2. It is always advisable to have someone not familiar with a locality to follow the map & accompanying legend in order to test its ease of use.