

Tidy Towns Competition 2024

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Birdhill - Cnocán an Éin Fhinn** Ref: **587**
County: **Tipperary(North)** Mark: **372**
Category: **A** Date(s): **12/06/2024**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2023	Mark Awarded 2024
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	54	56
Streetscape & Public Places	80	47	48
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	51	53
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	42	43
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	28	29
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	65	66
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	34	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	42	43
TOTAL MARK	550	363	372

Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara SuperValu don bhliain 2024. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo. Adh Mór....

First time to visit Birdhill but was delighted to get the opportunity. You do have good numbers involved in your committee and lots of others willing to help in your community. Wishing you every success with your recruitment campaign. It's always good to get some new blood and ideas into a group and keep things fresh. Such a great idea to have a welcome pack for new residents and using this as an opportunity to get them involved early. I'm sure it really makes them feel welcome and with helps their integration into the area. In your application you detail many great community activities and multiple connections to all the local groups. It is clear that community is the life blood of Birdhill and indeed the Tidy Towns group. Well done on keeping your focus on building an integrated, inclusive and thriving community. The fact that all your work is without the help of state employment scheme employees makes your achievements even more impressive.

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

All three building in the village area were looking well maintained. Coopers bright and colourful with a lovely pot display. Matt the Trashers looked superb after its refresh. Those large planters are impressive. The exposed block on the Old Barracks is such a lovely colour and the surrounding garden and seating area so well presented. The roof of the creamery is hanging in there, but you do your best to keep this building looking visually interesting. Well done. It will be wonderful when the works are complete on this area. How exciting to have such an ambitious plan for an Interpretative Centre for Lough Derg, Visitor Experience, Café and Retail, Playground and Golfing Greens. I'm sure it will be worth the wait. An abundance of street furniture some of it recently added give lots of choices to sit and admire the many interesting aspects of your village. Love all the artistic features in our streetscape. The famine pot is well positioned with the turf underneath and the signage. The hardship that pot would have witnessed was brought to mind. A great addition to your collection. The school looks well with nice bright colourful window boxes. The lovely old water pump near the school has nice planters, but the pump and surrounding fencing need some maintenance and the seating needs repair and a tidy up.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The orchard looks super. Well managed with nice areas of unmown grass and all the clearly labelled trees and fruit bushes have been given a lovely mulch of leaf mould. They are thriving in these ideal conditions with lots of fruit coming on. Impressive work.

The Literary Trail was truly a delight to visit with the dappled sunlight through the beech and horsechestnut giving

the space a magical feel. The thought-provoking literary quotes and detailed labelling making this lovely space hold the interest of the visitor.

The Green beds and all the extensive beds and planters throughout the village were putting on a great display and so thoughtfully planted with the right plants in the right place to provide a very long season of interest. A rich, diverse range of perennials that subsequently will support diverse population of pollinators. Congratulations on your effort. The flowers will last the season and can be lifted overwintered to reuse next year or left in place.

The pond in the community garden is a lovely tranquil spot surrounded completely by native plants with the flag iris ferns and cow-parsely looking particularly well. The pond itself looked a little overgrown and in need of a clear out.

Pollagh Trail was also visited and is another treasure with birdlife abounding, amazing vegetation and an atmosphere of peace and wildness. It's no surprise it is popular with a both locals and visitors alike.

There is an extensive amount of Winter Heliotrope on the Newport Road and it is clearly outcompeting native species. This is detrimental to the ecosystem of the area.

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

As mentioned above, your planters and beds have such a wide range of home-grown pollinator friendly perennials. This is also true of the wide range of mature trees throughout the village and in all the greenspaces you manage. Diverse planting supports diverse wildlife, and you demonstrate that your group and community support of biodiversity in all that you do.

As you shared on your application your local nature enthusiasts are actively posting in the Notice Nature section of the Tidy Towns website. Have you considered participating in Citizen Science campaigns or even just casual sightings on the National Biodiversity Data Centre? There's lots of resources and learning tools on their website and it's a fun easy project for all that helps us better understand and assist Ireland's biodiversity. A nice project for the local schools perhaps.

Although great for producing honey, we must point out that adding new honeybee hives to the landscape is not currently considered a biodiversity action. Having too many honeybees in the landscape can exacerbate problems for our struggling wild bees as they must compete for scarce resources. See all Ireland Pollinator plan website for more details regarding this.

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

Great work with your social media campaigns covered the following topics: Sustainable Gift Ideas (Christmas)

Energy Saving tips around the home and use of public transport

Selling sustainable gifts and supporting local businesses at your Christmas fair is also a very good way to promote waste minimisation. Well done

Great to hear you are raising your own plants for your planters and to see that you are doing such a good job in the process. Such an effective, sustainable way to create a very impactful visual display.

You have impressive compost bins and spread your leaf mould. That's great. We are wondering just how successful though your grass clippings only compost bin is? Good compost requires a 50/50 mix of both green and brown waste. Grass clippings is green only. Try mixing other waste such as leaves, twigs, hedge pruning, shredded tree trimmings, straw, bark or even cardboard, shredded paper or coffee grounds from the local businesses? With a compost bin this size you should be able to make enough compost to fill many of your planters and reduce need to purchase compost.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Birdhill was generally weed free, neat and tidy during the visit. There's annual washing of signage and street furniture and all looked very well on day of adjudication. Perhaps those on the Pollagh trail could do a bit of a clean also. You can see there are regular litter picks as there was minimal litter visible throughout the streets of village. Unfortunately, there was some fly tipping evident on the way to the bottle bank and under the trees behind Coopers bar. The bottle bank was full on the day of the visit and bottles were left in piles in front of the bank. There were plenty mutt mitts available at the various locations but there was still a lot of dog waste evident on the Pollagh walk.

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

The house and gardens around the village are very well maintained. There are some very attractive gardens with fabulous mature trees on the right side of the Nenagh road as you exit the village. It might be worth encouraging a little less mowing by your residents. "Don't mow, let it grow " is the number one action we can all do to support pollinators as per the All Ireland Pollinator plan as well as the added benefits of reducing fuel use and giving us more time to relax.

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

Roadside margins are maintained on all approaches and clear of clutter. The Bus stop sign on the righthand side from Limerick still needs an update as it's quite faded. Your verges as you approach the village are managed well with large sections left unmown. Birdhill has good accessibility along all routes with educational information everywhere to make your walk around even more interesting. The road surfaces, paths and road edges are well maintained.

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you for the opportunity to visit your village and see all your wonderful work. You are doing a great job supporting the natural surroundings and making Birdhill a beautiful place to live. Keep up the good work and best

wishes for the future.