

# Tidy Towns Competition 2022

## Adjudication Report

Centre: <b>Coachford - Áth an Chóiste</b>	Ref: <b>1109</b>
County: <b>Cork(West)</b>	Mark: <b>249</b>
Category: <b>B</b>	Date(s): <b>21/07/2022</b>

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2021</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2022</b>
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	33	34
Streetscape & Public Places	80	33	34
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	30	31
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	22	23
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	14	15
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	50	51
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	30	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	31	31
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>249</b>

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

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu don bhliain 2022. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo. Adh Mór.

Welcome to the Super Valu Tidy Towns Competition for 2022. We thank you for your entry, and wish you all the best in all your future work. Good luck.

Coachford Áth an Chóiste, a mid-sized village – has entered the competition for the last 7 years and has a committee of 10 members with support of another 6 volunteers.

- The committee meets every 2 months or more often if needed. You have representatives of your group on wider community committees such as the Community Council, Sports clubs and school boards. A Whats app group is used to plan and organize work.
- Support is received from a wide range of national and local agencies including Cork County Council, local businesses, Future Forests, National Tidy Towns, Coachford Greenway, UCC, Irish Water, the National Rowing Centre, local Schools and Coachford AFC.
- Your Facebook page, articles in the Parish newsletter and a local free advertiser are used for communications.
- There is good engagement with local schools and you work with the local primary school on litter picks and providing biodiversity advice.
- The voluntary work undertaken by Coachford Tidy Towns as part of the competition allows you to focus your efforts to do better and to concentrate on what is important e.g., in the areas of biodiversity and sustainability.

The simple hand-drawn map provided with your Entry Form was very clear, showing the main features of the village and was very helpful to the adjudicator in assessing your village.

The quality of the application form was very good and the photos provided on a separate document showing some of the projects carried out were informative. The use of bullet points and numbered map references made the document very easy to read. The adjudicator's assessment is based on a recent site visit and the contents of the application form, which is suitably concise at 13 pages long - well done.

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

- You have implemented a number of projects under this category including the planting of native trees along your local Greenway as part of our village's 200 anniversary celebrations.
- Recycled plastic benches have also been installed in your local graveyard and you have organized a car treasure hunt specifically for new people coming into our community, so that they could become familiar with the area and your group – a very worthwhile initiative. There have been ongoing improvements to the Millennium Park

including the planting of an oak tree for the Coachford 200 celebrations.

- Your adjudicator visited Coachford on a cloudy but pleasantly warm morning in July. The centre of the village was a hive of activity. The village centre has an interesting layout with curved and wide sweeping streets, fronted by a range of commercial and residential properties and a mix of new and older type buildings, exhibiting different styles and sizes. There is a significant throughput of traffic within the central part of the village and for this reason it would be good to advocate for a Village Improvement Scheme to be prepared, which would look at issues such as the need for traffic calming measures, the widening of footpaths, designation of car parking areas and the introduction of tree planting, where this is possible. The removal of poles and undergrounding of power lines could also be considered as part of any future scheme, as these currently detract from the overall presentation of the village streetscape.
- Murphy's Centra shop looked well but the window sticker displays do not enhance this facade and perhaps a more traditional type window display might be considered here. The storage of galvanised field gates on a prominent site facing the road in the centre of the village also does not enhance the road environment and perhaps an alternative location for the storage of these items can be found.
- Coachford National School was visited and the adjudicator admired the new pollinator friendly wildflower bed created here. The entrance to the school grounds is generally maintained to a good standard but it would be good to re-paint the railings along the front boundary of the school, as these now need freshening up. The Tír Draíochta school garden looked well and the potatoes and vegetable plants here looked just ready for harvesting. Consider providing some tree planting on the grass strip situated on the boundary of the car park in front of the school, which would greatly enhance this general area.
- The site of the Magourney Church and burial ground was visited and this site is generally presented and maintained to a good standard. However, there was some evidence of the use of herbicide here and significant littering was found inside in the old Church building. St. Patrick's Church grounds was visited and the boundary wall which is nicely painted, enhances the road environs and streetscape here. The Olive Loughnane Olympic sculpture feature has suffered some damage and perhaps this can be repaired and the sculpture relocated to a more prominent spot in the village.
- The bottle banks and bring centre were nicely presented. There is a wide footpath extending from the bottle banks to the GAA grounds and it would be good to introduce some tree planting in this area, to soften the impact of the many buildings and concrete boundaries found here.
- St John's Cemetery was visited and the new recycled plastic seating installed in this area was positively noted. The concrete block boundary wall fronting the car parking area could be enhanced with suitable tree or wall planting. The white metal gates at the main access to the cemetery have rusted and would benefit from a freshen-up with paint

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

- It is noted that you have secured a license from the ESB to develop waste ground on the approach to your village to create a wild garden and biodiversity area and you have planted native trees there in April, plus native shrubs and heathers.
- The Coachford Greenway was visited and there was some evidence of the spraying of herbicide along the approach roads, leading up to this a wonderful amenity. Well done to all concerned with this amenity initiative. Unfortunately, there wasn't sufficient time to walk the entire path along the river. Nevertheless, the wonderful views across this wide stretch of river were particularly enjoyed and hopefully it will be possible to revisit the Greenway in the not-too-distant future.
- The adjudicator called to Millennium Park and noted the new oak tree planted here for the 200 anniversary celebrations. It would be good to consider for the future an area for the development of a wildflower meadow in this park, perhaps under the trees, in order to encourage biodiversity.
- Well done on improving your planters to include more pollinator friendly plants. Reducing reliance on annual bedding schemes for your floral displays is an important initiative to consider further under this category. Colourful perennial and pollinator friendly plants e.g. Alstroemeria spp. can be used to very good effect as an alternative to the flamboyant but labour/energy/water-intensive annuals, such as Begonias and Petunias.

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

- The purchasing of 200 native trees which were provided to households in your community as part of the Coachford 200 celebrations was a great initiative and it would be good to know how well these trees are establishing.
- The talk by a local ecologist about water quality of the streams running through the village is exactly what is required under this category. No doubt this has created greater awareness as to how locals can help to improve the quality of local surface water by being more vigilant about what they flush down drains and dispose of generally.
- Well done for taking part in the Coachford 200 Village walking tours, including a community walk on the local Greenway. This walk appears to have been successful in introducing local residents to the biodiversity of the river and its environs and in explaining how local people can contribute to the improvement of river water quality and protection of wildlife.
- Your committee is no doubt aware that the New All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (AIPP) 2021-2025 has now been launched and it is particularly concerning that one third of bee species in Ireland are now threatened with extinction. As well as this Plan, useful guideline documents are now available to Tidy Towns committees to increase the numbers of pollinators in your local area, including guides which are specific to local communities, farmers, councils, transport corridors, sports clubs, businesses etc. Different 'How to Guides' are also available showing how to establish pollinator friendly planting schemes, pollinator friendly roundabouts, use of 'Managed for Wildlife' signage etc.
- This year the AIPP is focussed on gathering survey data to assess the impact of all the good work groups

such as the Tidy Towns are carrying out across the country e.g. at the ESB Biodiversity Area. The National Biodiversity Data Centre has developed a new app to make this survey work easy for groups through the use of 'Fit Counts'. FIT stands for 'Flower-Insect Timed Count'. FIT Counts are very simple and useful tool for TT groups to measure change in their local biodiversity, especially when they have taken action already for pollinators. By carrying out FIT Counts throughout the year and across future years, it will help track the impact of your actions on insect numbers and diversity as well as providing important data for the National Biodiversity Data Centre ([biodiversityireland.ie](http://biodiversityireland.ie)). It would be good to get local schools involved in these counts. Please follow this link for further information Flower-Insect Timed Count (FIT Count) - National Biodiversity Data Centre ([biodiversityireland.ie](http://biodiversityireland.ie))

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

- It is very good to note that Coachford Tidy Towns has joined with other communities along the river Lee to carry out an extensive cleanup of the river bank and the river itself at the Greenway.
- When considering further new projects under this category it is worthwhile first of all considering how the proposed project will align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The information provided in the Tidy Towns newsletters is very informative in this regard.
- You might in the future consider installing a rainwater harvester or community composter in the village. These are useful and provide a supply of water or quantity of mulch to use on your planted areas, which will ensure rapid establishment of the plantings.
- Other areas worthy of consideration by Coachford Tidy Towns for the future under this category, which is in keeping with the Sustainable Development Goals, include the development of small electric microgeneration schemes for Wind, Solar and Hydro in partnership with the Local Authority - these may also attract suitable SEAI or Leader funding.
- You might look at the provision of public e-car charge points and bicycle parking facilities in the village, and where none exist, suggest suitable locations where these could be provided in the short term.
- The Committee might also consider in the future initiating membership of the Sustainable Energy Communities programme run by the SEAI which includes engaging in learning networks, preparation of energy masterplans and local energy action plans etc. The following are useful links in this regard.  
<https://www.seai.ie/community-energy/sustainable-energy-communities/><https://www.codema.ie/sec>

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

- We note that you have ongoing weekly litter picks of the village carried out every weekend and the local community is involved in the annual An Taisce Litter pick, which extends the cleaning along roads to a 5-mile radius of your village.
- There were no issues to report regarding littering in the main part of Coachford village, although it is always good to pay particular attention to the ongoing quality and cleanliness of road signage.

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

- You have not provided any information under this category this year but it is clear from the general presentation of private homes and gardens in Coachford, that the local residents are fully engaged to ensure their properties enhance their general surroundings and the overall quality of the streetscape in the village.
- The Vicar's Glebe housing scheme, which is a new development on the Glebe Road, was visited and the attractive entrance to this development with good wall planting, was particularly admired.

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

- Along the Farnane's approach to the village, the nicely maintained roadside margins and good quality tree planting were admired. However, there was some evidence of the spraying of herbicide along the earth banks adjoining the road. It would be desirable in the future to undertake screen planting along the roadside boundary of the GAA grounds, which is quite prominent along this approach to the village.
- On the Mallow approach to the village, which has good road surfaces and markings, the roadside is characterised by attractive natural hedgerow boundaries, which enhance the road environs. It would be desirable to plant a native hedge along the existing concrete post and rail fence situated along this section of road.
- On the approach to the village from the Cork/Blarney direction the roadside environment is characterised by attractive hedgerows and natural vegetation with good road surfaces and markings. The 50 km speed limit signs on this approach need cleaning.
- The Macroom approach to Coachford is characterised by very well-presented private dwellings and gardens adjoining the road. The signage associated with the Dripsey Coachford Water Supply Upgrade Scheme needs cleaning and perhaps these signs are now redundant. The Grotto along this approach looked very well and the boundary walls to the Childcare Centre premises could be enhanced with a fresh painting scheme.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

Coachford is intrinsically a very attractive and vibrant village with significant recreational amenities in the surrounding area and you continue to maintain its important features to a good standard throughout. Keep up the good work.

