

Tidy Towns Competition 2022

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Manorcunningham-**
Mainéar Uí Chuinneagáin Ref: **2064**
County: **Donegal** Mark: **276**
Category: **B** Date(s): **11/06/2022**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	38
Streetscape & Public Places	80	36
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	38
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	29
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	16
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	51
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	34
TOTAL MARK	550	276

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

Fáilte chug Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu don bhliain 2022. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hionrála a chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo. Mainéar Uí Chuinneagáin. Welcome Manorcunningham to the 2022 SuperValu TidyTowns competition. Thank you for the completed entry form and your hand annotated village map. For next year it would be helpful to note any particular new projects you wish to bring to the adjudicators attention on the map. You have an active Tidy Towns committee of 8 members and seem to receive assistance from 6 supportive members / volunteers on a regular basis, so well done in this. We appreciate that as a small rural community it can be difficult to sustain regular volunteer support. Keeping links with your volunteers will be key to your on-going success and the larger your available workforce the easier it will be to complete tasks. We wish you luck with establishing links with your new local Foroige group. It is appreciated that given peoples busy lives it can be hard to spare extra hours but establishing links with your younger generation will be a great way to combine your resources to attempt larger projects. You draw support from Donegal County Council, local councillors, JJ's, The Lagan Inn, Brown's Gala, Mc Elhinneys XI store and Toner Construction. Your recent Christmas collection in 2021 demonstrates your ability to raise funds for specific projects. If not already in place, we would encourage you to develop a village plan which can give you 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. A plan will help focus the group on its long-term goals and not build up false expectations of quick success. After a while, when results do appear, the plan will serve as a reminder as to how far your group has come since starting 8 years ago in the competition. Consider working on this over the next year as this will help focus your activities. We are glad to hear that participating in the competition has created a sense of pride in the village.

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

This was the adjudicator's first visit to your village and despite its proximity to the busy N13 it retains its own special identity. When travelling around the village we were very much distracted by the fantastic views across to Lough Swilly from the upper roads. Your Church is a fine feature in the village however a task might be to clean or repaint its gate piers to enhance its appearance from the path side. The wall which forms a backdrop for the farm display opposite would also benefit from a power wash. The Lagan Inn was a busy spot and well maintained. We noted several benches around the village which are very useful given the local topography. And we note more are planned. The bench by Abbey Park with its trellis and memorial bench was a nice set piece. Thank you for the images of your Christmas lights included in your application. These were we are sure appreciated by old and young and the Ho Ho Ho signs a nice touch. Ensure all Christmas lights are removed once the festive season is over as at other times of the year they can become clutter. Ray graveyard was visited and it's a very historic spot with some fine memorials and rural views. You do not say if your groups look after the Manorcunningham viewing area. This

was a busy spot, and we enjoyed a cup of coffee here while admiring the lower levels views over the Swilly. The Lagan Harps ground takes a prominent spot in the village. Do you liaise with the teams on joint projects? The timber fence here is broken in places alongside what seems to be a newish footpath. Would a native hedge here be a better long-term choice with the added function of improving biodiversity in the village? This will help create a strong landscape structure for your lovely rural setting.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasá agus Tírdhreachú:

The variety of incidental planting beds in the village were all maintained to a high standard, and all contribute to enhancing the setting of your village buildings, roadside open spaces and residential areas. The flowers to the bed at the base of your Failte Manorcunningham sign especially caught the eye. The effort you put into your summer displays is appreciated and we know the time and effort it takes to achieve this result. From the raised planters at the entrances to the village from the N13 to the quirky Goodyear clock and tyre feature all were well presented on the day of the visit. Have you looked to the All-Ireland Pollinator plan to increase the value of your seasonal displays by including plants that supply food for our native pollinators and indeed your own bees? Are there opportunities to plant more trees around the village in areas which won't impede views or impact on overhead wires? Keep in contact with your local horticultural expert who may be able to help you focus on finding spots for more trees or native planting and so help you establish a strong landscape structure in the village.

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

You have a wealth of habitats surrounding you which have so much potential. We hope to see much progress in this category for you given your rural position on the edge of Lough Swilly. This is a category where you can really gain marks. The efforts you have put into installing nesting boxes for bees is noted. Well done. The purpose of this category is to help towns and villages promote and understand why their habitats are important and helping local residents value them. We would urge you to look at the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan to further your aims here. This excellent document has advice for practical ways groups can alter their landscape management practices making them as pollinator friendly as possible in very practical ways. An important part of this is to try to eliminate the use of pesticides in Manorcunningham. Several areas were noted which seem to have been sprayed. Perhaps use your facebook page to spread the word and reduce this harmful practice. Strimming is a much better way to keep road or boundary edges clear. Given your numbers of homes look to the village and its resident's gardens for habitat enhancement opportunities. Distribute the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan guide for gardens to all residents or again via a link on the Manorcunningham Facebook page. No matter how big your garden this guide has easily implementable advice for all your residents. The guidance is already being followed in the wildflower bed opposite the Lagan Inn.

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

It is good to hear that you are using recycled materials for your raised beds and your new bench is made from recycled materials. This category can be a difficult one for many centres to tackle. For further advice we would encourage you to consult the Tidy Towns handbook and also to visit <http://localprevention.ie/tidy-towns/>. The Local Prevention website have added a specific 'Tidy Towns' page to their website so you can see what waste prevention projects have been done by other similar groups around the country. There are various case studies to learn from with practical tips, advice, free downloads of brochures etc. this is a great resource to gain advice on how to address this category. Other simple ways to advance in this category is to encourage your community's participation in for example earth day or cycle week, nationally promoted programmes that you could take part in. Given the hot and dry summer we are having have you considered focusing on rainwater harvesting. Could a water butt be installed on one of your community buildings to promote this activity in the village? These can be simple and effective ways to get the message across and will gain you points in this category for next year.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhairleacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The standard here was high with very little litter evident in the core areas. We note in your entry that you have regular litter patrols in conjunction with your CE scheme workers. Our thanks to all who take part in this. Also do you take part in the An Taisce Spring Clean to coincide with your annual tidy up with the help of local children? Do you have composting areas developed or how do you deal with green waste from communal areas and weeding? Some mown grass was dumped in a visible location near the village turn off the main road. Was this to be removed to a compost site that you use? Some waste bags were noted by the raised circular feature at the triangular open space near the church. This may have been green waste waiting to go to a compost area. The standard here was high with very little litter evident in the core areas. We note in your entry that you have regular litter patrols in conjunction with your CE scheme workers. Our thanks to all who take part in this. Also do you take part in the An Taisce Spring Clean to coincide with your annual tidy up with the help of local children? Do you have composting areas developed or how do you deal with green waste from communal areas and weeding? Some mown grass was dumped in a visible location near the village turn off the main road. Was this to be removed to a compost site that you use? Some waste bags were noted by the raised circular feature at the triangular open space near the church. This may have been green waste waiting to go to a compost area.

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

The standard of upkeep of resident's areas was very high during the visit so well done to all involved. The neat beds and benches at Higgens corner were very well kept. This slope seems like an ideal place to have a reduced mowing regime or wildflower area as it is so prominent and must be difficult to maintain with regular mowing. More trees to join the copper tree here would be lovely and they have space to grow. The nicely scripted stone at the entrance to Churchland's is a feature and the open space here was admired. Shrubs to the estate signs for Abbey Park and

Abbey Villas could be trimmed back so that the text is visible. We would hope you can add to your pool of volunteer with any new residents. If houses are for sale, you might ask local estate agents to add your details to the new homeowner's pack. Joining Tidy Towns is a great way to encourage newcomers to take an active role in the upkeep and environment of their new village and helps them create new linkages and friendships through volunteering.

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

Approach roads were well maintained with the village signs neatly maintained and easily read. The stone gateway sign is particularly visible and nicely located. The new footpath and speed bumps will we hope make the village more attractive for pedestrians. The empty unit opposite Greenhills is unsightly and we hope it may have a new use soon. Would it be possible to plants some trees to the roadside space at the junction here to screen it? Talk to your area engineer about possibilities for enhancing some of these incidental roadside spaces. Do you know if there is a need for bicycle racks in the village, either for school children or passing tourists on cycling tours? Improving the village for residents with your new paths could be followed by improvements to encourage cyclists.

Concluding Remarks:

All involved with this, your eight year of entry, are warmly thanked and congratulated for their efforts and wished well in 2023. No matter how small a project may seem on the ground, they all add up to promote a sense of pride in the community enjoyed by both residents and this visitor. We very much look forward to our return visit for next year's adjudication.