

# Tidy Towns Competition 2022

## Adjudication Report

Centre: <b>Harolds Cross - Crois Aroild</b>	Ref: <b>2253</b>
County: <b>Dublin</b>	Mark: <b>237</b>
Category: <b>E</b>	Date(s): <b>18/07/2022</b>

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	35	36
Streetscape & Public Places	80	36	37
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	30	31
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	7	12
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	6	10
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	52	54
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	28	29
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	28	28
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>237</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 2022 SuperValu TidyTowns competition and thank you for your completed application form which included photos, maps (including heritage map), plan and heritage trail. Your map is poor – there are no street names so someone from another part of Ireland not familiar with Dublin would have been completely lost. Please give street names and also mark the boundaries of your area – an arc on the road is adequate. You also marked 'landmark locations' but not the location of your projects, which is what we require. Please amend your map for the 2023 application to assist the adjudicator. We also recommend that the photos are inserted into the relevant categories in the application form which will make the adjudicators work more rewarding as we don't have time to scroll up and down through application forms.

Your committee of five has an additional fifteen to twenty-five who volunteer when a project needs extra hands. We see that your committee members also take part in other voluntary groups – this is commendable. We were delighted to see that you have a dedicated email account but we recommend that you open a Facebook page and Twitter account at some stage as social media is important in spreading information about your activities. You list businesses and local community groups who support you. This is your third year to enter the competition and we are delighted that your involvement in Tidy Towns has given you 'a sound footing enabling us to focus on key areas and gives us clear goals on which to concentrate our energies'. But don't forget to also enjoy the experience of interacting with your community while undertaking the enhancement projects.

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

You have a great mix of streetscape – vernacular one, two and three storey businesses and residences with new-build three and four storey apartment buildings. These together with Harold's Cross Park and the road junction with spine access roads to Terenure and Kimmage make up your streetscape. There are a number of walls and utility boxes which would benefit from having murals painted. We suggest that you select a topic which has historical relevance to Harold's Cross – perhaps some famous/well-known artists/celebrities or some historical occurrence might be a suitable topic for the murals. The playground was busy and we admired that areas are designated to the different age groups so that the small children are safe while those age 6-12 are still catered for. You have a number of unoccupied buildings and we assume that these are the subject of the planning applications of which you informed us. You are correct to monitor these applications as the Local Authority rely on residents to assist them in their decision-making powers. Permission can only be granted if developments comply with the Development Plan. We loved that you have an historic post-box - Victoria Regina - which is still in use. We spotted

one but maybe there are others? The restoration of the SVPs is admirable. You have new business outlets and we are delighted that the village is vibrant and hopefully will continue to be so. The large murals on the R817 were noted.

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

You have a number of green spaces – the triangular feature of Harold's Cross public park, the grounds of Harold's Cross Hospice with its rose garden and Mount Argus Park with its pond and great mature trees. You mention that you have a problem watering all the containers and that you recently recruited more volunteers. Planters should only be used where permanent planting beds cannot be installed. We suggest you do an audit of your area with a view to building permanent planting beds. Select areas which will give maximum impact and then you can possibly eliminate some of the temporary planters. It is good to plant for spring and we note that you planted hyacinths and spring flowers which feed our early pollinators when food is scarce. We noted that there is a distinct lack of trees in some of the residential streets. The main structural elements in the landscape and one of the main structural elements in a streetscape are trees. Trees are known to have a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing. By planting and caring for trees, you help reduce pollution, improve your surroundings, improve the appearance of your community and increase the value of your property. In addition, they provide shade for humans, food for insects and food, roosting sites and nesting sites for birds.

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

Being an urban community, your green spaces are limited but there are many habitats for our insects, birds and small mammals so we have no doubt that in Harold's Cross you have your fair share. It is good to see that you have placed more emphasis on planting for pollinators, including bees and the addition of hives in the Hospice Garden is a welcomed addition. Appreciating your local wildlife resources is vital in order to achieve under this category. In this regard researching and raising awareness is more important than 'doing' at the early stages. We suggest that you encourage the private residences to stock their planter boxes with pollinator friendly plant varieties and we recommend that in your planting beds and planters you too grow pollen rich plants on the streets. You can also focus on gathering information about the wildlife in the area. This information can be fun to gather and can involve the schools or other interested parties. Raise awareness through holding events such as tree walks or bat walks. Contact the Irish Wildlife Trust for more information. Also have a look at Heritage Council (2004) Conserving and Enhancing Wildlife in Towns and Villages – a guide for local community groups, where you might see something you can do to raise awareness of local wildlife. Are there any water hens in the water feature in the Park? We didn't see any on the day we visited. What a lovely project to have undertaken – planting pollinator friendly bulbs in the 26 planters around Harold's Cross so that our early spring pollinators had a source of food. We commend you and the gardening club.

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

You are involved with the Educate Together Transition Year students and have assisted them in their Green Flag project on Litter and Waste. We loved the idea of swapping foliage so as to provide a variety of foliage for everyone to then make their unique Christmas wreaths for their doors. This is true sustainability as no products were bought and a swap occurred locally. We commend whoever thought of this idea – hopefully to be repeated annually. Slugs are a problem in most gardens and we see that your local gardeners now have used coffee grains supplied by the local coffee shops to deter slugs. There were many webinars during Covid on subjects relevant to this category and the Harold's Cross Grow project organised a series of Gardening Talks by holistic gardener Fiann Ó'Nualláin. Have you recorded this so that the community who could not attend on the days can still see the talks? You have planted some heritage apple trees in an attempt to recreate the heritage orchards noted on the historical maps. Where did you learn about the varieties that were planted in the 18th century? We read with interest your links with a group of students in UCD's Design Thinking for Sustainability postgraduate course. We look forward to this being advanced and to reading about the final result of their study. We note the re-purposed used antigen tests as labels. Hopefully antigen tests will soon be a thing of the past. The book swap in the Park was noted.

There are many other ways to advance in this category and we suggest that you examine the website <http://www.tidytowns.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Sustainable-Waste-and-Resource-Management.pdf> which may give you some ideas. Also contact the environment officer in Dublin City Council who will tell you on events/ talks which you could attend to learn more about Sustainability – doing more with less.

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

We encourage you to involve the community in Team Dublin Clean-Up Day and in An Taisce's 'National Spring Clean' as this will let them see the amount of litter, weeds and fly-tipping that accumulates over a winter and hopefully encourage them not to throw litter and to report all fly tipping and graffiti as soon as it is noticed. Unfortunately, litter attracts litter and graffiti attracts graffiti and so vigilance is crucial to discourage people from continuing to do this. You are a busy area with a constant flow of commuter vehicles and pedestrians passing through and therefore it was no surprise to see some litter along the streets and footpaths. Weed growth was also noticed in quite a few areas which detracted from the area. We read that you now use foam instead of herbicides to control weed growth which is admirable. We also recommend that you ask the volunteers to removed weed growth the base of walls, footpaths and along kerbs, in addition to picking up litter. If they bring a hoe or wire brush with them every now and then, weed growth is easy to control. We didn't see any bring banks in your area ... are there any? The bushes from the Park are beginning to encroach on the pavement to the west and should be cut back.

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

You have a mix of single storey, two and three storey houses some with access directly onto the street while others have gardens behind walls and wrought iron railings. In addition, the new residential developments are apartment complexes where residents have communal open spaces in addition to small individual balconies. We read that there are a number of active residents' associations in Harold's Cross which provide an additional resource to the Tidy Towns Committee. These groups maintain their individual estates and streetscape. The support of the residents' associations is crucial in a large community and we are delighted that you have built up a good relationship with these groups. Many of the houses with gardens had an array of colourful flowers and shrubs and some had planted ornamental trees which were an added bonus to the streetscape. Have you thought about having a Best Floral Arrangement competition? This might encourage residents who don't have gardens to grow flowers and grasses in window boxes or planters which will help our pollinators.

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

You are on a commuter route and so your main roads have a constant flow of traffic. In addition, Mount Jerome Cemetery is within your area and this too draws additional traffic on a daily basis. The main roads, the R137 and the R817, were in good condition although road markings are beginning to wear and will have to be repainted shortly. Road signs were clean and informative. Roads in the residential streets are in poor condition in quite a few areas with edge breakup, potholes and uneven surfaces. Footpaths have been repaired in quite a few locations and we noted that dipped footpaths to cater for wheelchairs and buggies have been provided. We were delighted to see cycle parking bays in various locations which were well used. We admired the 'Welcome to Harold's Cross' sign. A planter in front with low colourful flowers would draw the visitor to the sign – we almost missed it.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

We enjoyed visiting Harold's Cross and seeing the success of the work undertaken. Please take note of our comments regarding addition street and road names to the map, putting project numbers on the map and inserting the photos into the relevant categories within the application form – all to help the adjudicator to have a pleasant and rewarding visit to your community. Thank you for entering the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2022 competition.