

# Tidy Towns Competition 2022

## Adjudication Report

Centre: <b>Ringsend - An Rinn</b>	Ref: <b>2279</b>
County: <b>Dublin</b>	Mark: <b>226</b>
Category: <b>F</b>	Date(s): <b>20/07/2022</b>

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2022</b>
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	33
Streetscape & Public Places	80	30
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	34
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	16
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	10
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	45
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	28
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>226</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 a map and photos. We are delighted to welcome you to Tidy Towns and we hope that you enjoy yourselves and that our reports are of help to you as you plan your projects and activities. We see that you will update the map and that you also hope to prepare a 5-Year Plan. This will be helpful for you. While it is helpful to get some professional advice to prepare a plan, it is important that the community has ownership of it and is familiar with the various action plans that it will contain. Hopefully by next year it will be completed and give you goals with a time frame attached. Don't make it too onerous – just a few actions under each category that you can achieve in the time allocated and add partners who will assist/advise you.

Your committee of five has an additional twelve who volunteer when a project needs extra hands. We were delighted to see that you have a dedicated email address, Facebook page, and Instagram and Twitter accounts, as social media is important in spreading information about your activities in addition to traditional methods of posters and newspaper articles in the local press. You list a number of state and semi state organisations in addition to businesses and local community groups who support you. Don't forget to make contact with the various sections in DCC – environment, heritage, conservation, sanitary services, roads, as well as the area engineer. Politicians are also a good source of help/information too. We see that you are a 'committed group of volunteers in our community who aim to improve, enhance and make our community a better and cleaner place to live, work and play.' We encourage you with these aspirations.

See Concluding Remarks for advice on filling in the Tidy Towns Application form and referencing your map.

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

You are an historic part of Dublin with Ringsend developing as a port in the 17th century. Since then, the streetscape has changed considerably and now we see a bustling community in neat rows of terraced housing or apartment blocks amongst commercial and business premises. In addition, St Patrick's RC church, St. Matthew's Cofl church, St. Mary Star of the Sea, Irishtown Gospel Hall, and Ringsend Library add to the architectural merit of Ringsend. The recently cleaned William Ashford Monument looks good. The wall with the shells in St. Matthew's Cofl church is a bit of fun and reminds us that you are a seaside community. We admired the many wrought iron and cast-iron railing and gates in Ringsend which add merit to the architectural streetscape. Please commend the Merry Cobbler on the presentation of their property – beautifully painted and the window boxes and street planters added to the streetscape. We noted the other projects which you have undertaken – well done. The 'Door is Always Open' was admired.

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

You have great parks in your area. We admired the beautiful Ringsend Park with its football pitches, tennis court, basketball court, athletics track and playground in addition to great mature trees, large tracts of grassland and wide paths for the pedestrians. Sean Moore Park is smaller, but its location close to the sea and with its playground and mature trees, makes it a great amenity for your community. We admired the planting in the new Garda Building – a row of mountain ash and ground cover set behind the stainless-steel railing. The green area where the William Ashford Monument is located was admired. Its location at the junction of two roads makes it a feature and we loved the backdrop of trees. The planting bed had insects buzzing all around due to the variety of pollinator friendly planting selected. Could a few seats be added, as sitting under the trees would be quite pleasant? We appreciate there is one close by, but that faces the road. While we are not in favour of planters, we compliment you on the strategic locations which you have chosen for yours – we refer in particular to the bicycle and pink planters at the crash barrier at the junction of Sandymount Road and Oliver Plunkett Avenue. Many of the roads in Ringsend would benefit from tree planting. 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. DCC have planted trees along residential streets successfully around Dublin – it means losing one or two parking spaces but the benefits to the community far outweigh this loss. We like the planted boats – strategically located for maximum effect. The Pocket Forest was also noted.

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

The aim of this category is to encourage people to recognise, engage and celebrate the biodiversity and richness of the wildlife habitats in their surroundings. To promote biodiversity, we need to manage habitats in such a way that we provide food and shelter for our fauna and a place to grow and thrive for our flora. Often this simply requires us to manage the land in a different way than we have become used to. There is a rich natural area surrounding your community and it is important to promote an awareness of its many traits and to map these habitats. 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. Try to list the plants and animals to be found in Ringsend and recognise their significance (native, protected, or alien invasive?). 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, bat walks, costal walks, river walks etc. Contact the Irish Wildlife Trust for more information. We see that the local girl guides have started a biodiversity garden in the local park – great. We noted that you organised a talk by an expert in Biodiversity in Ringsend Park. We encourage more events like these as everyone learns a little when attending these events. We also suggest that you look at the booklet 'Heritage Council (2004) Conserving and Enhancing Wildlife in Towns and Villages – a guide for local community groups'.

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

This is a category where many communities struggle but truthfully it is just about being aware of how we use the resources of the planet so that we cut down on our waste. This category is about tackling the growing waste mountain that is creating problems of pollution, unwanted land use, and the use of dwindling resources. It is a global and a local problem. To save the Earth we need to move quickly to a zero-waste society. Educating both young and old in Sustainability – doing more with less is crucial. As a committee starting off, it is recommended that you get the basics right and focus on simple but effective measures. For example, you could make your own compost for use in your landscaping schemes as this avoids all of the associated packaging and other waste that comes with shop bought fertilisers. Growing your own pollinator friendly plants, harvesting your own seeds or sourcing donations of plants from keen local gardeners is recommended as this also avoids the waste associated with shop bought varieties. Consider harvesting rainwater in order to avoid using treated water when maintaining your planters. This is a simple process which involves placing a water butt on a downpipe to capture rainwater. Using waste or surplus products (like timber) to make planters are other items like bird boxes and seating benches is also encouraged. Avoiding chemically based pesticides in favour of weeding by hand or naturally based alternatives should also be considered. Undertaking all of these actions will enable you to avoid generating waste in the first place and allow you to lead by example in your community. We see that you encourage residents to recycle their Christmas trees – but we suggest that you keep some and shred them and use the bark mulch for your planting beds to suppress weeds. Mulch reduces the need for watering, protects the bare soil, creates new soil over time and creates a habitat for many important creatures. We notice the herb garden and see that you encourage residents to come and help themselves and cut a spring or two for their cooking. This little garden might encourage residents to grow their own herbs so that they are readily available to them. 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. Do you know if the National School is involved in the Green Schools programme? Contact them and maybe help in a project.

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

We wonder if you encourage the community to become involved in Team Dublin Clean-Up Day and in An Taisce's 'National Spring Clean'? Involving the community in these two annual events 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. You are a busy area with a constant flow of traffic and pedestrians and therefore it was no surprise to see some litter along the streets and footpaths. We were delighted to see that you tackle weed growth along the base of walls etc. but we did

notice some along road edges and we suggest that you arrange for the road sweeper from DCC to visit more often so that the weed growth along the roadside is removed. It is difficult/impossible for voluntary bodies to maintain the long lengths of road weed free, so help is required. Weeds can be sprayed using organic weed killer or with a mix of salt, vinegar and washing up liquid. Please commend the litter pickup team and weed removal team for their work. We recommend that you remove the timber boards and gravel from the base of trees. Grass/ weed growth can be trimmed in these locations and the timber surrounds represent a trip hazard for the visual impaired. The railings of Ringsend Park are badly in need of painting and in some instances, repairs are required. With regards to dog fouling, we suggest that you paint 'Clean up after your Dog' on pavements where dog fouling is a problem. We have been told by communities that this works better than signage on poles. The big litter bins were noted – these are crucial in an area where there are lots of pedestrians and take away food premises.

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

We admired the many rows of terraced well maintained houses in Ringsend - Oliver Plunkett Avenue, Dodder Terrace, Dermot O'Hurley Avenue, Rosary Terrace, St. Patrick's Villas etc. The standard of presentation of individual houses was generally very good and we applaud the many home owners and occupiers who clearly take pride in their place and keep their front facades, road frontage, gardens and boundary walls well-presented and neatly maintained in support of your work. Those with gardens had shrubs, colourful floral displays with great varieties of pollinator friendly planting, and some had trees which added an extra beauty to the streetscape. The recently refurbished 'flat' complexes on Oliver Plunkett Avenue presented very well and we loved that these 1950's housing units have been retained. The communal spaces in the courtyards were inviting and we hope that the residents enjoy them. Don't forget to encourage the community to grow pollinator friendly flowers from now on. Have a look at the website [http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Gardens\\_actions-to-help-pollinators-July-2016.pdf](http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Gardens_actions-to-help-pollinators-July-2016.pdf) for ideas for the garden. The green space facing Aikenhead Terrace is very pleasant and we loved that residents here have taken ownership and planted pollinator-friendly flowers along the boundary. The planting bed along the wall at Rosary Terrace is very beautiful but don't add too many decorations to the wall as the plants themselves are sufficient.

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

You have three distinct approach roads to Ringsend – one from the west (from the centre of Dublin) and the other two from the south (from the beach and from Sandymount village). We loved that there is a large, pedestrian-friendly, paving area in the centre of Ringsend – around the library and across from the church. We noticed that quite an amount of the bollards near the library had been hit by motorists reversing etc and we question if traffic management in this area needs to be revised. The library area could become an area more pedestrian friendly with seats and picnic benches which might encourage new food businesses to open here. Maybe also introduce a footpath along the buildings to help deter motorists from damaging the bollards. Sometimes shared surfaces just don't work! We admired the painted utility box on the road from the Dodder Bridge – has this some significance to Ringsend? We also liked the one near the library – the fishermen. The pedestrian plaza area across from the church also needs a redesign – your planters have made it pretty but really it is quite confusing in the levels and barriers. We noted that motorists were driving quite quickly on some of the small residential roads so we were delighted that DCC have installed some ramps to slow down speeding motorists. The walkway along the River Dodder is very pleasant with some sections having a tree lined boundary. There are quite a number of bicycle racks along the streetscape which were being used when we visited - do you need more? Some recent repairs have been carried out to the pavements but more needs to be done, as we noted an amount of badly cracked paving with weeds growing through the cracks. Carry out an audit of pavements and submit the findings of pavement and road repairs which are required, to the area engineer. The work to Ben's Lane has transformed the area. Your 'Welcome to Ringsend' signs are very pleasant with the planters beneath, which attract the eye with their colourful flowers.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

We have visited Ringsend many times, but this time, as an adjudicator, we had a more critical view and thoroughly enjoyed what we saw .... well done.

In terms of your Tidy Town's application form you will have seen that we requested that applicants would number their projects as, new projects (N), or improved/maintained projects (M) and all 'future' projects should only be included in a 5-Year Plan and NOT in the Application Form. You are to give each action/project a number as New (N1, N2, N3 etc.) or Maintained (M1, M2, M3 etc). This same numbering system to be used to indicate the locations of these projects on a map – N1, N2, N3 etc and M1, M2, M3 etc. This is to help the adjudicators to negotiate their way around your town and see the various projects or locations of projects. Needless to say, attendance at talks etc. will not be marked on a map. We wish to state that this is not a criticism of your work but to explain to you that as adjudicators we rely on a clear application form and accompanying map to inform us of your projects and make our visit rewarding. We would appreciate it if these points could be taken into consideration when preparing your 2023 application.

In addition, put a boundary line around the extent of the area you wish the adjudicators to visit.

Thank you for entering the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2022 competition.  
We popped into the corner shop – E. Lawless – a pleasure.