

# Tidy Towns Competition 2022

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Allenwood - Fiodh Alúine** Ref: **2205**  
County: **Kildare** Mark: **245**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **13/07/2022**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	31	32
Streetscape & Public Places	80	30	30
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	29	31
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	21	22
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	13	15
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	49	51
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	29	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	34	34
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>245</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.

Thank you for including your Long-Term Plan and also your Biodiversity Action Plan. These are useful in that they help you to focus on your work and plan for those projects that cannot be completed within 12 months. The detailed map of Allenwood was useful as it was your adjudicator's first time visiting the area. The clear legend and annotations meant that we could easily find the projects you referred to in your entry.

You have a strong core committee and have different subgroups to work on various projects such as the development of a playground. It was nice to read in your entry form of the close links that you have with local businesses, agencies and Bord na Mona. Others have helped – of note The Scouts and The Men's Sheds. You have an active Facebook page - maybe you can try and increase your followers so more can see the notices of events, and the great pictures you share?

With many new estates in the community maybe you could consider a range of activities to directly involve new residents? Remember to gather contact details so you can share with them details of future events (subject to GDPR rules of course). You never know – there could be a great artist, baker or gardener happy to help with some of your activities. The ultimate aim would be to have at least one representative in each area with whom your committee can liaise and vice versa.

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

This year you hope to see construction commence for your community playground and park. Congratulations on this - what a great achievement for all involved and for the wider Allenwood community.

One of your other key projects has been to enhance the utility boxes to make them more attractive. This has worked very well. The images selected to put onto the boxes have been of local wildlife which also raises awareness of the natural heritage of the area – how clever.

The Chapel looked well with nice planters in front of the lovely entrance gates. Pictures of local volunteers cleaning around this area as part of your April Spring Clean were noticed on your Facebook page. At the rear of the Church there were some attractive, bright colourful murals. This is a great example of how bare walls can be enhanced.

It was particularly nice to see photographs in your entry form of activities throughout the year such as the Christmas

tree and the crib. Also it was good to see the defibrillator available in the very centre of the community. Other premises caught the eye including The Credit Union and Burke's Pharmacy with nice signage and attractive window boxes.

Some of the signage and presentation of businesses around the centre of the Village could be enhanced. As mentioned later on, a review of the presentation and layout of the village core/ crossroads could be beneficial. Other villages or towns have provided nice 'parklets' or re-positioned picnic benches to better define the shared space. Maybe ask the Community for their suggestions?

The GAA club house was very nicely presented and the boundary walls were freshly painted. It was nice to see the line of trees inside this boundary wall as well. As this is located quite far from the centre of the village perhaps some cycle parking could be provided? This road could have some cycle warning signs erected to try and encourage motorists to slow down on the narrow stretches? Could a long-term aim be to research the opportunity of an off-road path to the amenities in this area? The community building was freshly painted and presented well also. It's located within a business park with lovely planting and maturing trees that was also very tidy.

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

Well done for receiving funding for a community art project in the new Community Park, once it is constructed.

Planters should be positioned where they can make a strong impact. For example they work well at road junctions or in front of old tired buildings that need some enhancement. It is recommended that you look at the position at some of your current planters and relocate them where necessary so that they can make a strong statement.

Floral displays in front of many businesses looked lovely. Those in the wooden planters outside Glennons funeral directors caught the eye and looked very well. At the crossroads of a more lovely displays including old tree trunk beautiful planted up. Indeed this was so nice, your adjudicator wondered if it could be pulled forward so more could see it?

Across the road there are some lovely stone planters with shrubs in them that looked well however, it is felt that the welcome sign here was a little bit lost and blocked by the commercial signpost in front. Planters and welcome signs on the Newbridge Road looked very well.

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

Raising awareness of local wildlife and habitats, and actions to enhance them appropriately are important. As such it was good to see you have your own biodiversity action plan and you are advancing many of its actions. It was great to note you have been successful in getting grants to plant native trees etc at the entrance to estates.

Thanks to the local Men's Shed for growing in a polytunnel many of the plants that you subsequently use in your public planting schemes. Maybe there could be scope for a community orchard or fruit and nut garden by the new playground? The Men's Shed may be able to help with this.

Or a workshop to plant a living willow sculpture by the community could be an idea also?

It is good to see that many of the new pavements in Allenwood have got grass strips separating the pedestrian from the road user. In some communities these have been planted up with pollinator-friendly flowers or even the grass has been allowed to grow on a 6-week mowing cycle.

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

This category of the competition is also about looking at reducing our consumption, so we were pleased to read that the Scouts have submitted a grant application for LED security lighting and other community groups are copying their plans. This should reduce the electricity they use for lighting.

There is a great rainwater collection system installed at The Men's Shed. Can they share details to other groups on how this is useful? Have you water-butts near any of our planters so you can easily water them?

You also shared details on your social media of a car boot sale organised by the local school's Parent Association. It is great to grab a bargain, and promote re-using items through support for car-boot and re-use shops.

You have bus stops and bins provided adjacent to these. Have you displayed the times and fares? Fares have been reduced nationally so perhaps you can encourage more to use the bus for day trips if the timetables are suitable? If not - why not campaign for better times.

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

Thanks to all the different volunteers who have helped out with your Spring clean. It was good to see pictures of so many enthusiastic volunteers at this, many of which also help in your weekly litter picks.

Last year after concerns about dog litter, you did a big campaign to try and address this. You have been delighted with the results.

Watch out for the use of old tyres as planters as they contain heavy metals will continue to degrade and this results in the introduction of microplastics etc into water bodies. Some cable ties were observed as were some bits of litter

in corners. There were some posts without any signs on them - can these be removed?

Does the community know where to ring if they see any fly-dumping in the area?

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

Homes throughout Allenwood looked well. The homes in newer estates caught the eye such as at The Willow and Woodland.

Homes in Grand Canal Wood also looked very well. Their entrance display contained lavender that smelt lovely and is a great plant for pollinators. Can the advertising hoarding be taken down here quite quickly once the building is complete?

We wondered if resident's might be encouraged to 'adopt' the trees - including many of the ones you have recently planted with them. The appointed volunteers could ensure that they receive plenty of water in their early years and eg. check that support straps are loosened and there is a large uncut or mulched area around the base of trees. Already a couple have been damaged by strimming.

Well done to the volunteer who is keeping on-line maps updated as Allenwood has grown in size. It is important for on-line data to be up to date – so we applaud this. The new census figures for the area will be interesting once published.

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

It was commendable to read that you've set up your own committee to address road traffic safety. We would also concur that the speed of traffic through your community is quite alarming. The one area which we felt needs the most attention was the central crossroads. There was a feeling of a lot of clutter consisting of bollards, posts, various lights and CCTV.

This is the one area where we feel some good planning is needed. It is hoped that following your research and recommendations that you can get support and action from the County Council. The redesign of this area could help create a strong sense of place and in turn contribute to a reduction in traffic speed. You are recommended to read through The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) which provides some ideas and examples of appropriate traffic calming measures in different Irish communities.

Arriving on the R403 from the northwest some of the warning signs and bus stop signs are very dirty and grubby and worn.

It was disappointing to see that the pavement provided at the new housing development, Grand Canal Wood is beautifully finished in front of the estate but there is no continuity. Any residents have to walk on the road for about 10 m before they can join a pavement again. How does this help with sustainability and encourage people to cycle and walk into communities? Continuity of pavement should be a key consideration in any planning applications.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

Well done to the volunteers of Allenwood on many initiatives to enhance your community. You have worked hard over the past 12 months and every small project all contributes to the making of a lovely community. Thank you for your submission.