

Tidy Towns Competition 2022

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Clane - Claonadh** Ref: **368**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **344**
Category: **E** Date(s): **02/07/2022**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	56	58
Streetscape & Public Places	80	40	41
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	47	49
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	39	42
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	18	20
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	57	58
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	38	39
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	36	37
TOTAL MARK	550	331	344

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 your entry form which was full of pictures of your activities over the last 12 months. You also provided an entry form, a map and your long-term plan. The latter demonstrates that you're focused on your work. It is suggested that perhaps the document is edited to allow for you to mark your progression on individual actions. We were delighted to read that you have a Biodiversity Action Plan, which we will refer to later in this report.

You also contributed to other plans and at the time of your submission you were collating a piece for the County Development Plan. You have already been involved with the consultations of the Clane Public Realm, and the Local Development Plan for the area. This is important and ensures you have a voice for the long-term development of your community, and county. This has meant you are able to monitor planning applications which have been out of kilter with the agreed planning considerations for your area.

Communication is important and therefore it was good to see that you have a fairly up-to-date Facebook page with lots of photographs of your volunteers in action. Information boards on the main street from Clane Tidy Towns were noticed and welcomed. For example, on adjudication day, you provided good advice on ways in which people could conserve water, as well as advising them about the residential estate's competition.

Finally you have a great number of volunteers on your committee, with subgroups to work on specific categories of the competition. With such good numbers, you have good links, and hence support from sports clubs, businesses, schools, and youth groups. Congratulations to all the volunteers across Clane – their contribution to the enhancement of the area is applauded.

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

We visited a church and enjoyed reading of its restoration by the community – the grounds were lovely here. And we did smile when we realised this was the Abbey Community Centre, what a nice meeting venue for the residents of Clane! Congratulations on this, and for securing a grant to further enhance this.

The chapel is a lovely place with a well-maintained outdoor area.

Parliament Street businesses had certain businesses with attractive displays and signage such as 'Wild Poppy', 'Bob & Kate's' gift shop as well as 'Diamonds and Pearls', the latter still has the original floor tiles at its entrance.

Pictures of the town over Christmas looked wonderful. Do you know how much money you have saved by switching to local energy lights?

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Thank you for directing us to visit the Garden of Remembrance. This is a lovely oasis, and it was great to read that Christianity was here before St Patrick thanks to St Ailbe!

The community playground is in a lovely corner of the town and was very popular. Here there are many maturing trees that looked lovely and provided a sense of place. It is wondered if more trees could be planted on the main street to provide continuity. We loved the aerial pictures of your wildflower labyrinth! The planned construction of a sensory garden is a lovely idea so the public can touch, listen, smell, and even hear flowers and grasses as they move in the wind.

The landscaping outside the Catholic church was really nice and the new modern lights blended well. The Ukrainian displays and the sunflowers a poignant reminder of the horrors going on in Europe.

You have cleverly used some attractive climbing plants to camouflage ugly streetlights and telegraph poles by the Church of Ireland. Planters were made from half barrels and their pretty colourful displays of flowers were admired. You could encourage more to replicate your planting scheme by distributing the pollinator bookmarks available at www.pollinators.ie

You also use your home-made weedkiller. Around some flower beds at children's establishments we noticed some application of weedkiller – but we don't know if it was yours or some industrial strength chemicals! If the latter, care would be needed.

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

As mentioned, you are working through a Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) to enhance and raise awareness of the biodiversity of Clane. One action was to publish The Winter and Summer Wildlife of Clane posters. Who has received these? Have all schools been given a copy? Or attendees at the May 2022 Biodiversity Week walks and talks received them? They looked great.

Other actions include creation of a fish pass, growing of Irish yew trees, replacement of hedges damaged by developers, and working with Birdwatch Ireland to specific bird surveys. Are you training up more volunteers with these survey skills? Have you had any residents in your swift boxes?

The trees were admired at Scoil Bhríde, and a lot of work has gone into planters at Scoil Mhuire. The outdoor classroom was admired at the former. Maybe a tarpaulin could provide some shade here? At Scoil Mhuire, some perennials within the planters could help. Unfortunately, your adjudicator couldn't get in to see the 40 native trees planted by the transition year students here but well done on this.

You are also in discussion regarding the long-term management of Liffey Park as you have been involved with the management of brambles and dogwood for example here. Perhaps the local Volunteer Centre could help with staff s from larger businesses elsewhere in the County?

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

You should make your entry form available to the public of Clane. It is full of actions and projects to help reduce your impacts on the environment and to become more sustainable.

For example, in your inputs into development plans, and your reviews of planning applications, you have pushed for more cycle paths, and ensuring routes are sensible for pedestrians and cyclists.

Clane Sustainable Energy Community continues to identify and promote initiatives in the community that minimise or reduce the impact on the climate. We would love to read more about their prescriptions.

You have advertised workshops on your Facebook pages for bike repairs. This and promotion of bus transport is important with rising fuel costs. Have you organised any cycling proficiency classes?

You also promote recycling – we note that like many communities, you are re-using tyres as planters. They do continue to degrade and contain a lot of heavy metals so despite this great work perhaps you should refrain from this?

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Clane United FC and Clane Rugby Club are some of the groups that have helped you with litter picks and Spring Cleans. Thanks to all of your volunteers – there was a small army of them pictured helping out.

There is a great number of bottle banks provided at the recycling centre at the rear of SuperValu. Well done in providing this and the nice information sign explaining that if the bins are full, please do not leave your bags behind. Unfortunately, on adjudication day your advice was ignored.

Cigarette butts are a problem, despite provision of butt bins. Ideally these should also be emptied more regularly. It is recommended that establishments are asked to sweep outside on a regular basis as it is apparent where the issues lie.

The grassed area of Aldi had a few bits of debris and cigarette butts in the grass outside.

Signage in Clane village is a bit loud in some places, especially on some gable walls. Perhaps some guidance or other support could be provided for business owners? For example, can they be encouraged not to have signs in red, block letters?

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

Clane is surprisingly large with many residential estates. The new estates being built in Clane include cycle-friendly paths, enhanced pedestrian permeability and dedicated rainwater-collecting landscaping.

Warner Estate off Maleficent Road was visited, and it was lovely to see so many younger residents enjoying the communal amenity areas here. Pedestrian access routes were noted with the pavement having been lowered – a simple step to encourage more cycling and walking. Some of the straps on the trees in this area need to be loosened. There was no obvious name for this residential estate on site or even on Google maps.

Oatfield Park had an abundance of trees that give a really special feel to this attractive, residential area. Opposite homes in Otomy estate were also nicely presented and well done to them for winning one of your estate awards.

Cleverly positioned planters stop illegal parking on access road to Beech Court. Maybe some bee-friendly flowers could be planted here by these residents?

Finally, as observed on your public notice boards you relaunched your estates competition. It is good to note that prizes are given for sustainability and biodiversity actions.

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

Arriving into Clane from the Celbridge road, the garage has nice welcome signs and planting. It was nice to see the first roundabout sponsored by SuperValu.

Following three traffic accidents at Alexandra Bridge, the walls have been repaired but you have included this in your long-term plan as an area to be re-designed.

Prosperous road was very busy, even in the summertime when the schools aren't open. Perhaps cycle lanes can be fitted, or walking buses? We visited Nancy's Lane- this is one of the lanes and routes you are opening to encourage safe walking and cycling around Clane.

The newly refurbished landscaped bed on Carragh Road was appreciated. There are some lovely plants here, though maybe avoid too many cordylines as they provide little for native wildlife.

Concluding Remarks:

This was adjudicator's first visit and they enjoyed exploring and finding about the history of the area. Next year will be your 50th year entering this competition. Gosh – what an achievement! Your volunteers have worked over decades and generations to better the community, so you are warmly applauded for your notable contribution to this over the last 12 months. Your entry form is packed full of ideas and suggestions from which other contenders in this competition could learn.