

Tidy Towns Competition 2022

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Borris-in-Ossory - Buiríos
Mór Osraí** Ref: **408**
County: **Laois** Mark: **308**
Category: **B** Date(s): **14/06/2022**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	46	47
Streetscape & Public Places	80	33	35
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	48	50
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	20	21
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	18	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	65	65
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	30	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	41	41
TOTAL MARK	550	301	308

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.

Thank you very much for your submission, it was very helpful to me whilst I was judging. Please submit a 3-year plan, my fellow adjudicators and I like to see it under this category. Keep the plan simple and relevant and have a few projects under each category listed. There is great information in the TidyTowns Handbook on how to do this. Likewise with your map , the best ones, in my opinion are hand drawn with the location of the projects along with streets and local landmarks clearly identified on it.

It was great to read that you kept the committee going during Covid, hopefully you are back together again this summer undertaking works. I am also pleased to see that you have such strong ties with a variety of Statutory Agencies. Often the most important work a TidyTowns group does is lobbying and consulting with these agencies on behalf of their Community.

There is no need to have a Junior TidyTowns if you can work with the Youth Club on an ongoing basis, try and organise a few events a year with them. I am sure their leaders will be pleased to help. In my mind, engaging with young people outside the formal education system is much more powerful, so please build on this and let us know how you are progressing in next year's submission.

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

Fantastic news that the Court House is to become a remote working hub, congratulations to all involved. Not only will this transform a once derelict building into a useful space it will improve that end of the town immeasurably and bring economic activity into the area. Likewise, with the hotel, hopefully this too will be returned to use sometime soon. I think in general Borris in Ossory has a very nice broad street scape with many attractive buildings, some with lovely features, especially door entrances. There are also some very fine commercial buildings such as Sheeran's and Kelly's Machine Services to mention just two. The three-storey residential development was I thought a very nice addition to the streetscape. The school was excellently presented, well done to pupils and staff. There are a few trees dotted along the street, maybe you could consider planting some more. I thought all the public places such as the very fine Church Car Park were well presented. I couldn't gain access to the Hurling Field at O'Keefe Park as it was locked. More and more GAA clubs are adding walking tracks to their facilities and making them available to the public, something for them to consider. Finally, best of luck with the fundraising for the much-needed play park. We look forward to hearing about this in the future.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasá agus Tírdhreachú:

I think Omny's Garden is a lovely addition to the town, nicely laid out and accessible to all. Great to see you have a left an area for pollinators, this shows a good understanding of what is now required in this competition. The interpretive sign was still empty on the day I was there, so hopefully this will be rectified soon, le do thoil , make sure it is bilingual. Across the road I think the area around Millennium Fountain needs a little bit of attention. The fountain is no longer working, and the trees are obscuring it. Seek professional advice on pruning back the trees and open this area up again. Mrs Peggy Kirwans memorial in this area is a fitting tribute to her. I missed all the daffodils you had planted but thank you for including the photographs. I noted the few planters you had dotted around the town. The Handbook gives great advice on how to make a much bigger impact with planters, for example, these should be clumped together. One other area to note was up from Kelly's that has some vintage agricultural pieces, this in my opinion is an area you could develop further, if you have permission to do so.

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

I can see that you are beginning to move towards more pollinator friendly planting in Onny's Garden, keep up this good work. Your planters should also contain more pollinator friendly species and in your design for the play park please consider adding a biodiversity element to the landscaping. There are some great simple projects to try in the category such as leaving areas to grow wild along the approach roads by just trimming the outer verge. Have a look at what other towns in the County are doing through the Laois Tidy Towns network.

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

The water butt and compost area in Slieve Bloom view were noted, let us know what you use the water and compost for. I am pleased to see that LED lighting is being installed in the Town. I saw a poster on the wall declaring that Borris in Ossory was Laois Hurling Country. Why not consider doing a hurley reuse project with the local GAA club. Kids grow out of their hurleys and it would be a great idea to pass them down to the next set of juveniles coming through. A new grip is all that is needed and with ash in such short supply it would be a great reuse project for the community.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhairreacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

I think Borris in Ossory is very neat and Tidy with no litter evident. The area around the bottle bank was very clean, always a good sign to me. It is great to have the CE Scheme operational in your town and it would appear they are doing a good job, keep it up. Thanks too for getting involved in Clean Up Laois week with the youth club, it's not easy to pick up after others but it can be a great community event. The mutt mitt bins are welcome just make sure to keep them stocked.

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

There are many fine residential buildings on the main street and as I noted previously, I thought the 3 storey development fits in well with the street scape. Ossory Court was looking good on the day I visited, and I look forward to seeing the new housing development across from Slieve Bloom View completed.

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

I think both the main entrances to the Town are kept well. You might consider engaging with Laois County Council to plant up the roundabout with pollinator friendly species, this has been done elsewhere and I think it makes a great first impression

Concluding Remarks:

It was great to be back in Borris in Ossory and to see it looking so well. Walking around and seeing so many familiar sites brought back very fond memories of travelling through the town many times as a young child on the way from Dublin to the family "homestead". The Church's large bell tower was a landmark for us, once we passed it, we knew we would soon arrive at our destination (in reality, it was still at least an hour away). I think the town has benefited in a lot of ways from the construction of the motorway, so keep up the good work and le cúnamh Dé beidh mé ar ais arís am éigin.