

# Tidy Towns Competition 2022

## Adjudication Report

Centre: <b>Ballyhaunis - Béal Átha hAmhnais</b>	Ref: <b>506</b>
County: <b>Mayo</b>	Mark: <b>315</b>
Category: <b>C</b>	Date(s): <b>16/06/2022</b>

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	42	43
Streetscape & Public Places	80	44	46
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	45	46
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	36	38
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	19	20
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53	54
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	31	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	34	35
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>315</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 Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your excellent entry. You have been entering the competition for many years. Your entry with 15 pages of a word document (including 1 page for the map), an 8 page collage of photos and a 3 page 3 year plan with 5 items listed. This gives a detailed overview of the excellent central role Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns (BTT) has in leading the wider Ballyhaunis community towards higher standards of environmental awareness and excellence. Note that the strict application requests that these be incorporated in one document - keep it in mind next year,

The map is very clear with 21 individually numbered projects listed over the various categories, recording the consecutively numbered projects on the map showing their exact locations. You continue to enhance your communication across the community in many ways. You use Facebook as a communications channel with 584 followers and rather uniquely have a local radio station Mid West Radio as well as using the weekly church/community newsletter to inform the community. The Facebook pages gives a clear record of your activities and you should aim to expand the number of followers, comparatively small for a town with a population of 2366 (2016).

You have an impressive list of 12 supporter groups which support BTT.

The 3/5 year plan referred to in the new Tidy Towns Handbook is presented as a concise project list of 5 items, if you had more defined timelines and assigned responsibility for specific project implementation, then the plan could be more easily reviewed when objectives are measurable and time-bound.

Your core committee of 18 supported by 40-45 volunteers climbing higher for special tasks such as Spring Clean. These numbers reflect the outstanding community impact of BTT by a typically small minority of committed volunteers.

As requested in the application form, you have identified a specific project where particular effort was applied since July 1st, 2021 - the finalising of the Biodiversity Plan funded by Community Foundation Ireland.

It would be good to see the relevant references to the UN Sustainable Development Goals indicated for each of the individual BTT projects, this is a useful practical first step in communicating the important goals (for Ireland and all humanity) as a start to Ireland's ambitious plan to achieve all 17 by 2030.

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

The streetscape and public places of the town reflects the unique historical and cultural crossroads and important road hub. The premises on the main street (on the busy N60/N83 main roads and the Knock road) had a pleasing blend of colour and looked bright and neat. Particularly eye-catching was the newly renovated Square, St Patrick's

Church and grounds, the Old Bank Medical centre and the Old Courthouse. Not many towns/villages can boast a town square perfectly situated which depicts the agri heritage of Ballyhaunis so well. The outstanding Friary Grounds and Park is an invaluable community asset so well situated close to the town centre and beside the river Dalgan, an absolute treasure to be in community control for 999 years,

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

There is a pleasant quality aspect to landscaping and green spaces in Ballyhaunis. The care and attention is obvious. There is an emphasis on pollinator friendly planting and a continuing movement to add to the planting of flowers and trees. The grass cutting regime which allows for the growth of much more natural meadows during the year was particularly evident along the Friary grounds Nature walk.

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

BTT have put a lot of effort into this category over the last number of years. The new nature walks are a way of getting people closer to nature and appreciating the natural heritage BTT will continue to enhance and improve this aspect with the Biodiversity Plan as more information, knowledge, and experience is gained.

The publically owned Friary Grounds/park adjoining the town is a unique and priceless asset to further develop biodiversity and enhance nature. The additional interpretive panels, the Dalgan river resource, the very well ordered Community Garden have the capacity to being an extraordinary exemplar of future good biodiversity and nature conservation practice.

The All Ireland Pollinator Plan requests all Tidy Towns groups to include a Flower-Insect Timed Count (FIT-Count). FIT Counts are very simple – you watch a patch of flowers for 10 minutes and count how many insects visit. It is a very useful tool for TT groups to measure change in their local biodiversity. Especially when they have taken action already for pollinators, by carrying out FIT Counts throughout the year and across future years will help track the impact of their actions on insect numbers and diversity as well as providing important data for the Biodiversity Centre.

Flower-Insect Timed Count (FIT Count) - National Biodiversity Data Centre ([biodiversityireland.ie](http://biodiversityireland.ie))

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

You report on 4 measures in your application of which 3 are new covering a range of sustainability measures from rainwater harvesting, reuse of household materials for potting plants, availability of an E-charger point, a bike maintenance workshop, upcycling old materials for use in the Community Hall renovations. .

These are all important starting points in the sustainability journey. For additional ideas, have a look at the Top Tips in page 8 of the Sustainability section of the Tidy Towns Handbook , available on line at the Tidy Towns website <https://www.tidytowns.ie/competition/handbook/>

One suggestion, consider joining as a Sustainable Energy Community: <https://www.seai.ie/community-energy/sustainable-energy-communities/join-the-sustainable-ener/>

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

The town was largely litter free and poster free on adjudication day. Congratulations on keeping busy main roads N60/N83 litter free despite the large daily traffic flow. Voluntary litter pickers were observed on adjudication day and separately aided by Mayo Co Co personnel emptying bins near the Friary Park.

A small amount of new litter was observed beside the new bench close to the church (no. 2 on the map).

The solar litter bins recently installed were spotted and looked like they were working very well.

We look forward to hearing how the planned Big Bins in Nolans Supervalu will work (a minor point, this should not be classified as N but included in the 3 year plan!).

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

The main street looked well and reflected the distinctive aspects of a busy Irish town - your continuing work to improve the visual aspect of the town is commendable. The flower boxes and containers added a welcome splash of colour. The new Abbeyquarter estate was inspected and was neat and tidy. The estates on Hazelhill road were exemplary, Clare Court was well maintained and nicely planted.

Residents with empty front gardens might be encouraged to plant an appropriate species of tree to add visual and biodiversity interest.

The 9 residents Associations in individual housing estates is surely a great support to assist BTT to attain higher things in the future.

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

The approach roads were well surfaced with good signage and verges trimmed appropriately.

The improved footpath and lighting on Doctor's road was noted. The new footpath to the GAA pitch was observed.

The pedestrian lane beside the Church gives easy access towards Supervalu and the Post office.

The complex of main roads coming together puts almost undue strain on the capacity of the traffic in the town to flow freely, motorist's patience is often challenged in the constant bottleneck caused by parked cars - maybe somebody somewhere has a solution!

### **Concluding Remarks:**

Ballyhaunis is a lovely town and an outstanding place to visit. The results of decades of hard work were apparent. The Pride of Place award some years ago was richly deserved. The Friary Grounds and Walk is a unique community treasure to be fostered and developed. This was my first visit and I certainly look forward to seeing the village develop and visiting it again in the future.