

# Tidy Towns Competition 2022

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Boyle - Mainstir na Búille** Ref: **290**  
County: **Roscommon** Mark: **298**  
Category: **D** Date(s): **02/08/2022**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2022</b>
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	43
Streetscape & Public Places	80	39
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	43
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	33
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	15
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	52
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	40
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>298</b>

### Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Fáilte Chuig Comórtas na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu 2021. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo. Lean leis an dea-obair! Thank you for participating in Ireland's longest-running environmental project and helping to make Ireland a better place. We really appreciate all the great work that you do and the effort you put in. We note that this is your first entry since 2019 and it is great to have you back. Covid-19 made everything so difficult for community groups and we understand that you have experienced setbacks. Nonetheless, we are pleased to read that you are staying positive and that things are 'on the up' for Boyle, a town of great heritage and character. Thank you for your entry form, map and photographs.

You have good numbers on your committee and an even stronger number of volunteers that you can call on and that's great. You are still 'emerging' post-covid and that's understood. You use both traditional and social media and you are involved with the Transition Year students of Abbey Community College. You've been entering Tidy Towns for 20 years now and it's brilliant to have Boyle as a part of the Tidy Towns movement for a third decade.

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

Major development of the public areas of Boyle are underway, you tell us. This is great news as it will revitalise your town centre with a new landscaping of the Pleasure Grounds and an exciting new riverside promenade planned. All of this will make Boyle more pedestrian-friendly and walkable as well as offer new opportunities for landscape planting.

Colaiste na Mainistreach looks really well in strong colours. No Green Flag was seen but surely the college is signed up for Green Schools? The halls beside the Community College could look much better with some colour and less grey. The Abbey itself looked amazing on this bright and sunny day. St. Joseph's Hall looked fine. Displaying the Eircode is a good idea. The walking trail plaque here needs to be touched up a little now. Between Boles and the bridge there is a little bit of public realm that the adjudicator doesn't remember from previous visits. It's really pleasant with seated areas and planters and several people were making use of it on this fine day.

There are some lovely shopfronts in Boyle. Boles of Boyle looked as well as the adjudicator remembered from before. The Open Table and the restaurant next door and the nearby Crescent Bar are all appealing up here at the Crescent. The Moylurg Inn was nicely painted and adorned with hanging baskets. The Book Lady is a lovely little shop and Brogan's Pharmacy had just been painted. Several examples of reuse of window space were seen. McDonagh's was the favourite with a little gallery adding great colour to the bike shop here. It's great to see that work is ongoing at the former Royal Hotel. The Rockingham Arms and Conroy's are two prominent empty premises

for the town centre. A very large building on the junction of St. Patrick Street and Main Street is derelict but could be transformed into something positive with a little bit of imagination. The King House was very well presented on the day with some striking sculpture here. The adjacent Tea Room was bustling at time of visit and this is a really appealing space to sit or stroll. The Community Tourism Centre looked great decked with flowers, well done. Not far away, the Family Resource Centre looked good with its wooden planters, a beautiful old building this. So too is the Parochial School and Church Hall. It's also really well looked after and someone is watering the flowers here! A gorgeous mural and Green Flag help complete the dynamic look. Nice murals were also seen in the playground of Scoil na hAingeal Naofa but the front wall here is in need of a little painting.

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

Here you tell us of summer bedding that has been planted at the Crescent, adding to the existing planting here as well as the hanging baskets. This was the first area visited by the adjudicator and indeed it all looks very well. A little bit of weed control was needed around the car parking area but otherwise it was all in good order. The pollinator-friendly planting in front of the Courthouse looks great, well done. The triangular planted area at the clock tower was full and abundant on the day. A wooden planter nearby is in need of repair but really you could do away with this and plant in the ground here instead.

It was great to see new planting and layout of beds in the Pleasure Grounds. These will mature and look so well. We believe that yet more work is intended for here but a sculpture, bike rack and tree-planting were all 'new' to this adjudicator. The dressing of the monument in wool is unusual and it was wondered what the theme of this project was. The park was busy with several different kinds of users on adjudication day, good to see.

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

You haven't listed any projects here this year. That's okay. Many Swallows and House Martins were in the air over Boyle on adjudication day. Over the river their cousins the Sand Martins were finding plenty of food on the wing. If you're not sure what you should be taking on or considering for this category, we suggest that first you have a look at the recent Tidy Towns Handbook. There is a good level of detail in this and guidelines for suitable projects. We'd also recommend that you make yourselves familiar with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. This unique piece of work is nothing less than a how-to guide for pollinator-friendly projects and actions for all types of locations. It's kept updated and there is also an excellent website ([www.pollinators.ie](http://www.pollinators.ie)) that we would refer you to.

One potential project for you occurred to the adjudicator during this visit. The Abbey has probably over an acre of grass that is kept cut short. While this looks very well, it is of scant use for wild species. An adjustment in the mowing regime would change all this. We know that this might well require buy-in from OPW but all good projects start with consultation or at least a conversation.

Nearby is probably your best natural asset – the Boyle River. Learning about this watercourse and what you as a Tidy Towns group could do to help protect it or celebrate it would be another great starting point.

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

Again, we'd refer you to the Tidy Towns Handbook to get inspiration for this category. There are literally dozens of projects that a town the size of Boyle could undertake to gain points here. These could be on Recycling, Grow it Yourself, Food Waste, Composting or pooling of unwanted resources for reuse (e.g. old paint). We'd also suggest that you get in touch with your local authority's Environmental Awareness Officer. This person is an expert in this category and everything related to it and will be happy to assist you. This category is all about resources and our best use of them whether it is water, materials or energy, all of these are things we must save.

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

Well done for arranging and carrying out the clean-up days that may be seen on your Facebook page. There are some tidiness issues for your attention. You could undertake a walking survey of the signage of your town centre. A number of signs and signposts were noted as being in need of cleaning or painting. Commercial signage at the junction of Sligo road and Shop Street doesn't look great. The sign frame of the historic town trail is in need of cleaning too.

Boyle was unfortunately not litter-free on adjudication day. However, for the amount of footfall and traffic, the town centre had relatively little litter. Some car-borne litter was noted on the Carrick on Shannon Road. However, we were disappointed to see so much litter in the Pleasure Grounds. Some of this was aged and quite an extensive area was affected. This is a lovely place but it needs some help from you.

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

You've not directed us to any estates or housing areas within Boyle so the adjudicator visited a number of these as part of the adjudication. A number of mature and long-established estates are neat and well cared-for. Some newer estates will mature well with some good examples of tree-planting noted. Some green areas would offer opportunities for 'low-mow' or other pollinator-friendly projects. In a previous adjudicator's report, reference was made to your involvement in the setting up of residents' associations. This is key to this category. Having voluntary groups like these on your side is invaluable. If at all possible, please renew your links with these and let us know how you are getting on in next year's entry.

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

You tell us here that a new cycleway is open that connects the town of Boyle with Lough Key. What an amazing amenity to have! Unfortunately, the adjudicator couldn't see any signs for this 'on the ground' but no matter. Watch out for commercial signage on your approach roads. Some was noted that was old or in poor condition and these could be removed now. An old Breifne sign for Boyle should be removed too as there is a nice new sign for Boyle anyway.

There is lovely treatment of roadside on the Sligo Road at the Brothers' Sculpture – a really pleasant area. On crossing your main bridge over the Boyle River, we inadvertently found ourselves walking on the road. Would there be a possibility of getting a pedestrian path on both sides of the bridge?

### **Concluding Remarks:**

It was great to be back in your lovely town and once again savour the heritage and history of your streetscape. We were pleased to see several improvements since the last visit some years hence. We'd strongly advise you to draw up a plan to guide your work as you rebuild your group and its actions. Your local authority might well assist you with same. Best of luck and thank you for all your efforts.