

Tidy Towns Competition 2022

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Lismore - Liosmor Mochuda** Ref: **229**
County: **Waterford** Mark: **360**
Category: **C** Date(s): **26/06/2022**
29/07/2022

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	52	53
Streetscape & Public Places	80	46	47
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	49	50
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	41	42
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	24	25
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	63	64
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	35	36
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	42	43
TOTAL MARK	550	352	360

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 TidyTowns competition. We thank you for compiling and sending us your entry, and wish you every success in your future work. Good luck! No doubt it will be helpful to get your new website and facebook pages up and running. These can be invaluable tools for TidyTowns groups in spreading important messages as well as hopefully recruiting a few more volunteers! It sounds like you have a great working relationship with all your local schools – this is great to hear and will hopefully result in some members of the Lismore TidyTowns of the future! Many thanks for referring to the excellent facilities at Lismore's public toilets on your map – these are so important for the comfort of your adjudicator as they will often have travelled far to get to your lovely town.

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

Lismore is graced with so many beautiful buildings with such a wide variety of styles and ages from the castle itself to St Carthage's Cathedral to beautiful examples of Irish urban style such as the Red House and the Heritage Centre as well the many beautiful houses on the residential streets which we very much enjoyed walking. We particularly loved the blue and white door at Greehy's. Businesses are clearly working with Lismore's Heritage Town status with the shop fronts being notably complementary to the buildings rather than letting garish signs detract from them – the Post Office and Centra are good examples as they have clearly made adaptations from their norms seen in other towns. The elegant lamp-posts and lack of wiring on the central part of Main Street is a huge visual asset to what must be one of Ireland's prettiest streets but it would be great if this could be spread a little further along Main Street as ugly black wiring and ungainly street lights were noted down at the western end where they were taking away from the lovely buildings. We hope the Lismore House Hotel will be restored to its former glory in the not too distant future. It is such a prominent feature on the main street. We whiled away a beautiful half hour taking in the history and peace of St Carthage's Cathedral and graveyard. Indeed we were given a walking tour of the graveyard by what appeared to be its resident very friendly little tabby cat! The mowing regime here is to be commended with several graves beautifully covered with gently swaying ox-eye daisies, red clover and Mexican fleabane. The Living wall feature on New Street is beautiful – what a great use of an otherwise blank space. Using the moss is an interesting concept. We are wondering how long will it last – will it be possible to keep the moss nice and green or will it die off in the dry conditions? Is there a special method to keep it hydrated? It's certainly a creative way to keep the message of climate action and the UN SDGs to the forefronts of Lismore's citizens and visitors alike. We nearly missed your cycle parking area it is so unobtrusive but great to see nonetheless and close to the Main Street where it is handy for cyclists be they visitors or locals coming in for some messages! With Ireland's late, great and much lamented queen of cycling travel (and sustainable living before it was fashionable!) Dervla Murphy, a Lismore

resident all her life perhaps there might be some way to tie in her remembrance with a cycling/sustainability project?

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasá agus Tírdhreachú:

Your pollinator-friendly perennial planting schemes in public flowerbeds throughout the town were much admired. They were giving a wonderful show of colour on adjudication day but these great planting schemes will no doubt give a great show throughout the summer and for many more years to come. Planting that is ticking several boxes – most importantly sustainable and pollinator-friendly – as well as saving precious volunteer time! Pots and planters generally seemed to feature annuals with plenty of petunias, busy lizzys and double flowered begonias featuring and although they give a great show of colour, they're unfortunately of no use to pollinators who need all the help they can get from us humans right now. In Lismore you are now perched right at the top of the competition and all these things need to be considered – that said we did note that the hanging pots along the Millennium Park wall were planted with pollinator-friendly Bidens and Bacopas so perhaps the above comment is one that simply needs to be passed on to others as a gentle reminder! We also were delighted to see your pollinator-friendly grass mowing regime across many of the public lawn spaces. The short wildflower meadows work very well in the areas where grass is walked over as at the Millennium Park where there were lots of clovers in flower. There are many interesting reads for the visitor to the Millennium Park – we were very interested to read about the local origins of the Lismore blue anemone. We saw the mural in the Ball alley but we were disappointed to see the grass verge outside it had been recently sprayed with herbicide. This was also visible across the road near the newly planted edible hedge. We know this wasn't carried out by Lismore TidyTowns but it just shows how we have to keep reiterating the message that herbicide use does not belong in these places with its negative health impacts for humans as well as pollinator species – never mind the plants! Also just from an aesthetic perspective these brown lines of dead vegetation are most unsightly. These words are not meant as a criticism of Lismore TidyTowns but hopefully they will aid you in your spreading the word around your locality. We liked the low flowerbed at the base of the wall on New Street. This softens up what could be quite a grey streetscape. It is also good that you are keeping the planting low as it shows off the beautiful stone wall. The planting at the grotto and the library is lovely – there was a gorgeous show of blue hardy geraniums tumbling over the wall at the library. Did you know blue flowers are the bumblebees' favourites? We went in search of your Community Garden listed as Project 18 but were unsuccessful. We came across a fenced off area with playground equipment off Bothar Mochuda but were unclear if this was the spot. You will have to give precise instructions to next year's adjudicator! We visited the Woodland Fairy Garden and liked the idea of the different rocks and stones representing local landscape features. The idea of planting with woodland plants is a nice one – no doubt you will be including some 'Lismore blues'! Make sure to include our native wild garlic and native bluebells too and be careful to ensure that are of native Irish origin being especially careful that the bluebells are not the invasive Spanish bluebells! Some other lovely woodland plants to include would be foxgloves and honeysuckle/woodbine. We look forward to a future visit to this garden when it's finished.

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

As mentioned above your use of pollinator-friendly perennials throughout the town is striking – well done on this. They will provide you with years of colour at a fraction of the monetary and time cost of annuals. You mention the use of wildflower seeds being sown in some areas. The use of commercial wildflower seed is not recommended as a biodiversity action of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan for a number of ecological reasons including the unwitting introduction of species that do not belong to a habitat and sometimes areas of valuable grassland habitat can be cleared in order to introduce the said wildflower seeds. The AIPP has lots of guidance and information about this topic on its website. We visited your community orchards and really liked the signs giving information about the location and heritage of the different varieties of trees there. While adjudicating we noted the presence of the noxious weed Japanese knotweed at a corner site just past the junction of Chapel Street and Station Street. It will need to be dealt with by Waterford County Council (who should be notified) but hopefully it has not spread yet. We noted your description of Himalayan balsam on your old website page. This is an invasive species causing a lot of problems along many of Ireland's waterways. Have a look at the 'Balsam bashing' project being run along the River Suir Blueway. Unlike other invasive species, it is one that could possibly be managed without the use of herbicide. We are delighted to hear that you will be having a Biodiversity Action Plan drawn up for Lismore. There is plenty of scope for the right biodiversity enhancing actions under professional ecological guidance and the raising of awareness locally of the various issues relating to our biodiversity crisis. There will also be plenty of opportunities for some fun community activities such as bat walks and wildflower outings as you have so many wonderful habitats on your doorstep. These enjoyable events can be a great way to encourage a few more volunteers to join your ranks too.

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

Your compost and leaf mould making area in the Millennium Park is super! Featuring it in such a prominent public spot with its instructive signage is fulfilling a really important TidyTowns role where you act as conduits for the correct information to be passed on to the public enabling them to make their own changes towards a more sustainable lifestyle. This is also a good spot to highlight the UN SDGs. We noted the new Blackwater Community School building and it's great to hear that it will be served by solar panels. We wondered if Swift bricks had been incorporated into the building? It's a great opportunity when new buildings are under construction to integrate these bricks into the structure. The area around the public toilets at the Millennium Park is an ideal spot for the water tap and tour recycling initiatives. We also noted the water butts – no doubt a handy spot for watering the various nearby flowerbeds. Your recycling centre at Townparks is the most inobtrusive we have ever come across! We hope it is working well for Lismore. It's interesting – we wonder if its relatively hidden appearance puts people off from dumping boxes of bottles etc. the way they do at other bottle banks around the country?

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The whole town of Lismore was looking spick and span on adjudication day reflecting all the hard work of Lismore TidyTowns volunteers and the CE scheme workers. All the signs had been freshly washed and the newly painted post box on Main St was looking very handsome. You clearly put in a huge amount of work into your litter rotas, road and pavement sweeping, sign washing and all this work carried on throughout the year was self-evident during our visit. We noted the bottle cage at the public toilets building and it's great to hear that it is proving very successful. It's also heartening to hear of your working with two other TidyTowns groups (please tell us who?!) on clean-up projects – this embodies the TidyTowns spirit of co-operation.

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

As noted above, we really enjoyed strolling around the residential streets and lanes off the Main Street. Lismore is blessed with many beautiful examples of Irish vernacular architecture and so many houses are immaculately maintained with lots of lovely heritage colours used. Beautiful bargeboards seem to be a special feature of many houses and premises in Lismore. They deserve some special attention! Perhaps an exhibition or a calendar featuring the many different types dotted around the town? Several are in need of some care and maintenance – perhaps there is scope for a Heritage Council/Architectural project to fund their care especially as they appear to be such a special feature in Lismore. We noticed some of the young trees in a few housing estates appeared to be failing and will likely need replacing soon. Most were scattered as individuals but perhaps when replacing this could be changed slightly whereby small groups of three and four trees are created. This makes life easier for the grass mowers but also it allows for the tree cluster to become a little mini refuge for wildlife in an otherwise 'tamed' area. Also from the landscape perspective a small group of trees makes for a greater impact than individuals scattered across an estate green area. There are some great charities such as Trees on the Land that work with community groups giving free native trees of Irish provenance.

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

The strips of wildflower meadows were noted along the approach roads to Lismore, especially at the Cappoquin Road. We are wondering what was in these areas prior to the sowing of wildflower seeds? The use of commercial wildflower seed is not recommended as a biodiversity action for a number of ecological reasons including the unwitting introduction of species that do not belong to a habitat and sometimes areas of valuable grassland habitat can be cleared in order to introduce the said wildflower seeds. The All Ireland Pollinator Plan has lots of guidance and information about this topic on its website. The simple mowing of the roadside verge on the grass edges leading into the town is the ideal as it looks neat and cared for whilst still providing habitats for our beleaguered pollinators. The beautiful greenery of the many mature deciduous trees on the approach roads to Lismore giving way to the distinctive outlines of steeples, castle and old rooves makes for some of the loveliest approaches to a town in Ireland.

Concluding Remarks:

We really enjoyed our visit to the beautiful Heritage Town of Lismore. It lived up to our many expectations. Many congratulations on all your wonderful work in your clearly cherished town. You are ably minding a jewel in the south-east's crown and we very much look forward to our next visit.

Second Round Adjudication:

The second-round adjudicator would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all involved in this year's submission for the time and effort taken to achieve such a high level of presentation as seen on the ground in our visit to Lismore in this, your 33rd year participating

How great to see a busy main street in an Irish town with a range of business seemingly thriving. As with the first-round adjudicator I enjoyed a lovely lunch, this time in the Bakers Table one of many busy units along the street. The pleached Lime trees here are an excellent example of how clever pruning can allow for street trees even along narrow streetscapes. We hope the hotel refurbishment will be complete for next year's visit, such an important feature building. As with the first adjudication I very much enjoyed your biodiversity friendly approach to your seasonal beds with lots of bees present amongst the perennials at the long bed buffering the footpath from the national road at this busy junction. We look forward to hearing more about this approach with your biodiversity action plan being currently prepared. Is there scope to ask the local Area Engineers to consider a pedestrian crossing here to facilitate the safe moment of people from the car park to the main street? The fern adorned historic water fountain on the journey to the bridge is a lovely feature and a bench might be nice here to provide a resting spot.

Levels of tidiness were extremely high during this second adjudication thanks to your dedicated team of litter pickers. Old Christmas decorations somewhat clutter the visitor centre façade and should be removed once the festive season is over. The waste minimization project by the toilets was immaculate with the water bowl a nice touch here and well used by several dogs on a hot summer day. The discreet UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) signs dotted around the town - the water one here and no15 life on land at the circular planted area at your Tidy Towns endeavour award bed at the mall are a nice way to relate these goals to our everyday environment. The Living wall art piece is your showcase project this year done with support from the Waterford Sustainable Living Initiative. There are so many lovely residences around the town with a range of architectural forms on show, but all were well tended. We loved the inventive garden spaces carved out of just a few metres of frontage as seen along Chapel Street. Finally, we made our way to the excellent bring bank at St Carthages Rest Home. It is great to see that the men's shed, who support your work, are back up an running and some fine green beans were on offer at the honesty box here.

I fully endorse the comments and report of this year's first round adjudicator and congratulate your committee on your partnership approach. Lismore continues to be a high achiever in the competition and their high position is very well merited.