

Tidy Towns Competition 2022

Adjudication Report

Centre: Ballyduff - Baile Dubh	Ref: 122
County: Wexford	Mark: 343
Category: A	Date(s): 20/07/2022

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	52	53
Streetscape & Public Places	80	40	41
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	45	46
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	32	34
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	21	23
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	70	72
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	34	36
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	38	38
TOTAL MARK	550	332	343

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

Fáilte go Baile Dubh 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. We welcome Ballyduff Development Group to the 2022 SuperValu TidyTowns competition. We were delighted to visit your charming village for the first time. You might be a small village but your active committee has ensured a lot of worthwhile projects are underway or have been completed. We might kindly suggest that you move your 'additional information' and incorporate it into the main entry form under the relevant category headings, to make it easier for the adjudicator to navigate your detailed submission. The formatting of this information is excellent so stick with that. The quality photos give us a good picture of your varied activities during the past year. The map was helpful. You have excellent links with outside agencies such as Wexford County Council who support you in terms of litter control as well as training and education initiatives. Communication is strong within the community through your active presence on Facebook, links with other local groups and the use of traditional communications channels such as the newsletter. Thank you for including a copy of your 5 Year Plan, that enables you to monitor and review progress annually. Lean leis an dea-obair. Keep up the great work.

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

Tidy Towns efforts including clever use of landscaping have ensured that Ballyduff gives the impression of a traditional village streetscape. A lot of this is down to the attention paid to the older but attractive vacant properties that would have made up the 'street', including the old shop and the house at the entrance to the village. These buildings including roof features are what gives the village its charm, augmented by your clever use of planting and colour. Perhaps some thought could be given to painting a small timber door/gate and trellis fence in a 'cottage garden' colour that would tie in with some of your lovely gates and other painted features? For best impact, stick to a minimum colour palette throughout the village. The church grounds are beautifully maintained, with the red planters working well against the grey backdrop. Maintenance of St. Columba's Park takes up significant time and effort under this as well as the 'landscaping' category. We note that archways, gate and fences received attention in the past year. Well done to the junior members who assisted with this. The horse cart is looking fresh and beautiful after its revamp as do the kindly donated farm implements at the top of the village. It is good to hear you have the skills available to look after items such as the hanging basket supports and planters. The school looks very well.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Your major project this year has been the completion and enhancement of the new school car park, including landscape design and planting of new trees, shrubs and bulbs. (Much of this was also included in your '21 entry).

This area looks very well and will further enhance the surroundings as it matures. The new commemoration tree is suitably placed here. We are glad to hear that you quickly moved to replacement of two mature trees which had died in church carpark. As we are having frequent dry spells, do continue to keep an eye on them until they are well established. St. Columba's Park is a hidden gem at the top of the village – credit to all who proudly tend to it including the school children and the craft group for their colourful additions. Planters in the vicinity of the school car park and at the church are in excellent order. We note you plant the school window boxes for both spring and summer, with the assistance of the school children. Well done to your group member who oversees all the work related to your planting, care and maintenance programme. It is good to hear that you have moved towards pollinator-friendly planting as well as keeping year-round seasonal interest in mind. We hope that tree pruners have appropriate expertise and knowledge as so often trees are inappropriately pruned despite good intentions. The Oz garden is quirky and adds a fun element to 'Recycling'. The new scarecrow is doing a good job and managed to give this adjudicator a bit of a fright! The planted bicycle and 'rose bed' are add an element of fun and interest.

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

We love the fact that you have resurrected an old roadside stream and now try to incorporate it back into the village landscape. The natural look is definitely recommended here in terms of planting and softening effect. See also last year's report recommendations in terms of making this new feature blend in appropriately. As this area matures, we hope it will be a haven for insects and wildlife, as per your plans. If buying aquatic plants, please do careful research as some such plants are invasive, even when sold in garden centres. Another worthwhile project is the establishment of a new one-acre Native Tree Planted area near the village.

Congratulations to all at Ballyduff school for achieving their 5th green flag for biodiversity actions. It is good to know that both the Development Group and the school are on the same page when it comes to protecting and enhancing your local biodiversity. One way of doing this is the 'no pesticides' approach, which you have adopted and continue to promote amongst your local residents. Ongoing maintenance work at 'The Gulleets' biodiversity area is also noted. We look forward to your learnings from the Biodiversity Training Course being implemented over time. It is fantastic to hear that there is a renewed interest in bee-keeping – this links in with your awareness raising in terms of pollinators generally. Keep up the good work.

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

You are making good efforts to progress in this category and make Ballyduff a more sustainable community. Participating in training initiatives really assists groups and as you say, gives you ideas that might work in your own unique community. The sustainable gardening course ticks so many boxes in terms of growing local, reducing packaging, avoiding chemicals, helping pollinators and so on. Is this information being shared with the school to tie in with their community gardening? We are delighted to observe that the school garden is going strong, well done to all involved. Do provide practical examples of how you share your new knowledge with the wider community. Following attendance by two members at the Communities 4 Climate Action Course in April/May '21 and your registration as a Sustainable Energy Community, your plans to educate both yourselves and the wider community are applauded. Do give us some practical examples next time including a brief update of any interesting findings. You have a number of planters in the village that require significant watering so please do tell us your thoughts on water conservation when it comes to your planting schemes. Do you have a rainwater source for this? Do you consider this (as well as pollinators) when choosing new plants? Keep up the good work.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The village was spotless on the day of our visit, as was the recycling area with its attractive timber 'Banc Buidéal' sign. We are very impressed with your targeted approach to litter prevention and control, for example your campaign to tackle the dog fouling problem and your promotion/use of the Wexford Co Co 'see it say it' app in relation to illegal dumping. Participation in initiatives such as National Spring Clean, Keep Wexford Beautiful and the 2k road clean up further assist in keeping the focus on litter prevention, particularly on the approach roads. We are impressed that you cover 20k of approach roads for some of the above-mentioned initiatives. Well done to volunteers including the students of Ballyduff N.S. who play an important part.

The village presents quite a tidy impression – we complement you for your attention to detail in this regard. The '2k clean up' sign on the entrance to the village (behind the pots) is mostly obscured so should be removed from this location, as should the now-worn 'Ceramic Tiles' sign. We would hope that the new stream area retains a rustic rural village look as opposed to becoming overly manicured over time. Just a minor detail – this adjudicator would prefer to see hanging baskets in realistic positions so as not to block building features, such as the one on the door at the T Junction house – this would also provide a more 'lived in' impression. Well done to all involved.

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

The magnificent floral display at the T junction is truly breath-taking. The standard throughout the village is very high, especially in terms of presentation of gardens. Good landscaping work has been carried outside homes by the new stream project. Presentation of vacant properties must again get special mention here. Well done to all involved.

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

Attractive bilingual name stones along with stunning perennial planting, give an immediate sense of arrival. The relatively new footpath is a welcome addition. Any update on the mooted walking trails initiative? Road surfaces and markings are excellent as is the visitor information signage. Planting native hedging along bare fence lines can further enhance the appearance approach roads and provide connectivity for wildlife.

Concluding Remarks:

It comes as no surprise to hear that the hard work of your group in recent years has brought the community together and put Ballyduff well and truly on the map. It really does appear on the outside to be a cross-community effort. We applaud your measures to maintain an attractive village while continually evolving and learning in order to become a more sustainable community. We wish you well with future projects. Keep up the great work.