

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Adare - Áth Dara** Ref: **440**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **369**
Category: **C** Date(s): **30/06/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	54	55
Streetscape & Public Places	80	47	49
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	51	53
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	36	38
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	23	25
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	65	67
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	38	39
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	42	43
TOTAL MARK	550	356	369

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

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara SuperValu don bhliain 2023. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo. Adh Mór....

“From tiny acorns, grow mighty Oaks”. That’s what they say, and that’s what Adare aspires to be! A mighty Oak, a mighty Adare! The first thing that strikes this Adjudicator is the very clear presentation of what Adare Tidy Towns are doing and propose to do. Your Adjudicator cannot miss what Adare Tidy Towns are involved in.

The second thing is the forensic detail of what you are engaged in. There appears to be no enterprise or community group that has not been listed and that participates in the work of Adare Tidy Towns. It is remarkable to read of the myriad groups that support Adare TT and that then ultimately make Adare a town to be proud of. Everyone from business, sport, and schools, to mention a few, seem to have an involvement in your project. This is a community at its best.

The third thing is the use of images in your presentation to show the Adjudicator what you do. As they say, “A picture paints a thousand words”. And you do! It is also inspiring to see the incorporation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in your voluntary work.

You have broadened your perspective over the years in developing relationships with other communities and other countries. This is learning that will benefit Adare – and it will also benefit the wider Limerick region in the longer term.

You have 12 on your committee and you can call on over 90 volunteers to undertake the numerous projects and tasks that you aspire to. You are in a position now to have been able to have over 2,500 volunteer hours of various projects and tasks to make Adare a better place. This, in 2022 and 2023. Well done.

You have mobilized over 33 different groups to undertake the work plan that you have set for yourselves. And yet, your population is still relatively small at 1129 residents. You are still able to communicate effectively with your residents so that everyone should know what is planned for your Tidy Towns year. And further into other years also! Involving the younger generation has been one of the great achievements of Tidy Towns and you in Adare have not missed this opportunity either.

Adare has had an involvement in Tidy Towns since 1964 and you were the overall winner in 1976. An involvement of nearly 60 years. And you won the Tidy Towns Gold Medal in 2022. Well done! You have not “rested on your laurels” since, that is for sure. For example, your Tidy Towns Volunteers took part in the Walk for Wellness Initiative, and this creates a community-wide vision for a healthier Adare.

You have even branded Adare and in a very professional manner. Personally, this Adjudicator would love to have seen the Irish version of Adare as part of the branding!

Doing the Tidy Towns work also means funding and you have managed to do this both from many other sources but also through the voluntary efforts of your community in Adare. You have brought your community together in many ways and it is testament to your efforts that you have striven to have an inclusive community.

In this era of the European Community, Adare has twinned with Buckow in Germany and Villecresnes in France.

Learning from other countries and creating friends in both is another aspect of Tidy Towns and it also promotes similar ventures that you have undertaken in Adare. You have been sharing the wider idea of Tidy Towns by working with and discussing the issues of other towns like Askeaton and Pallaskenry. This is the real spirit of Tidy Towns. You have constant engagement with Limerick City and County Council. This is good for Adare and good for Limerick County as a whole. Crucially, you have a very large cohort of businesses in the wider Adare area that support you. This is a two-way engagement – good for Adare and good for business. In addition, having so many sporting organizations in Adare and the wider Limerick area is good for mental and physical health in Limerick. Your engagement with schools creates a positive and can-do attitude - and more, it teaches in a real way what it is to be part of a community. You have a communications system that embraces new technology and even Church notices!

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

Streetscape includes many facets and Adare has continued to work on improvements and new projects. The recently wonderfully renovated Countess Dunraven fountain is part of your heritage, and it adds to the streetscape. There are wonderful old churches – for example, St. Nicholas Church of Ireland with the Cloister repaired by the Earl of Dunraven in 1831. The conservation of the thatched cottages is wonderful, it adds to the streetscape and is an example for other towns. However, perhaps this conservation is now too late for other centres?

In a different way the installation of Bike Racks will eventually encourage more cycling, make the Streetscape calmer, and add to the health and wellbeing of your community. Unfortunately, the room for bikes is compromised by the road width, the car, and the trucks. We are delighted to see the installation of road crossings.

Repairing the riverside fencing and adding seating is also part of Streetscape and Public Places as well as making the riverside walk safer for everyone. You have, with the Limerick City and County Council, improved the street lighting and added new pedestrian crossing areas. All these small but vitally important interventions make the Streetscape and Public Places calmer.

The Streetscape is being improved by old houses that are being refurbished in a sympathetic way and there is a continuing effort to upgrade the paintwork in the town. A railway house has been upgraded as a family home. In other parts of the country many of these buildings have become derelict and often demolished. These buildings are part of our heritage and should be treasured. The Heritage Trail will open the eyes of the wider Limerick community and, also give an insight to visitors. There are so many buildings enhanced with simple landscape features. For example, the small AIB building has a beautiful landscape feature. Well done, Adare.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You have continued with the improvements and enhancements of your park, and it is one that also adds to the Streetscape. The Park looks larger than it is and that is testament to the layout. It is good for relaxation, good for children as there are so many opportunities for free play and having “wild” areas in the park will enhance the creativity of children and teenagers too! There are water courses and hills and hollows. It is a great park and right on the street. Adding pollinator plants provides colour as well as attracting Bees and other insects. It is not a sterile park. You have wonderful Lime trees on the street and in the Church grounds. The Washpool is an interesting feature and connects us all back to a time when we had no Washing Machines!

There are other green spaces located throughout Adare and this enhances the overall landscape feature of Adare town in a very positive way. The Dunraven Field, although privately owned adds to the landscape richness of the town.

The St. Nicholas cemetery is beautiful! It is simple and has no kerbing and, no, it does not appear to have had herbicide sprayed! Overall, this cemetery is a reflective, quiet space and full of history too.

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

The pollinator seed adds to the pollinator bank but also and particularly in getting to know new residents in a friendly and welcoming way. It is also good that you have used Irish seed. And you have a partnership with Connecting to Nature and Greensource. A “win, win” for all!

You have increased your knowledge “bank” by attending lectures and this then inspires the local population in the understanding of what Nature and Biodiversity means in practice. Adding to this knowledge you have contracted Liz Gabbett to undertake a Biodiversity Survey, and this will then inform future ways to enhance Nature and Biodiversity in Adare. We noted the Stumpery that caused some discussion last year! However, it will be wonderful for wildlife.

You have a very interesting project in the Manor Fields. An area for sport and recreation and now you are investigating ways to increase the biodiversity of it. Your partnership with Adare Manor has a similar focus as the Manor Fields project. Not everything has to be sterile, and you are looking for ways to increase biodiversity and add to the beauty of the facility and whilst keeping this facility functioning. It is also wonderful to see an adjoining landowner planting trees.

You have worked on increasing your understanding of pollinator planting. This will help transform the village in terms of nature and colour. You have added Bird Boxes – good for nature and good for the community. In addition, you have factored in the quality of the stream that runs through the park and have attended a very informative evening with LAWPRO (Local Authority Water Programme). This is the way to deal with problems – learn, understand, and implement. In a similar way, you have learned about invasive plant species and how to deal with them in an environmentally acceptable way.

You have a partner with Analog Devices in the project to protect bees and have erected Honeybee Lodges and Solitary Bee Posts. In this endeavour you have worked with the Irish Bee Conversation Project so that you and the wider community will understand better how to protect and enhance this insect population.

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

Sustainability is now a mainstream issue and you have teamed with a company, Greensource, which diverts Brown Bin material to a facility, and which can then turn it into fertilizer. And yes, you have gone one further with Greensource in educating your community and the benefits of doing this.

To further this, you have attended a Sustainable Gardening Course and in partnership with Limerick City and County Council. In partnership with Adare Men's Shed an Allotment has been built and, although a recent venture you are now producing food produce. You have a Furniture Upcycling Project that is run with the Men's Shed. Pollution is an issue worldwide now and in Adare you have the problem of more than 17,000 vehicles passing through the town each day. This causes pollution and can damage the health of your population. It is good to see that you are working with Limerick City and County Council to build a By-Pass of Adare to deal with the problem. Not alone will a By-Pass deal with the pollution issue, it will also make Adare a better place to live, work and play in. Not alone have you embraced Sustainability, but your neighbouring JP McManus Golf Course achieved the international Standard ISO 20121 and is the first Golf Course in the world to achieve this! Additionally, the Manor Fields Pavilion also achieved Sustainability credentials with Near Zero Carbon Emissions standards. This is the "way to go" and you are setting an example.

You are working on Adare embracing the Sustainable Development Goals Audit and have already commenced this project by undertaking education on it. And, finally, you have been using sustainable methods for watering the plant containers, you recycle the coffee grinds as fertilizer, you have LED Lighting in the public lights, you have three hotels that are involved in Sustainable Tourism. And yes, we noted the Waterless toilets in the Visitor Centre!

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You have many events in Adare and that does generate litter. But! You have a plan for it and your Tidy Towns Volunteers are centre stage in this. In addition, you have weekly Litter Picks. And yes, in collaboration with Limerick City and County Council you work to recycle this material!

You have a regular Team to tidy up and undertake projects each week. You are working on signage decluttering. Limerick City and County Council have an event on each Good Friday to undertake a county wide clean up! And over 22,500 volunteers took part in this county wide initiative.

You are investigating a new segregated recycling bin; you have WEE collection boxes and you have a Recycling Centre in Adare. You are working on dealing with Cigarette Butts. Well done!

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

It is remarkable for Adare Tidy Towns to be able to say: "All the estates are kept in great condition as the long involvement of Adare in the Tidy Towns Competition has resulted in a great sense of pride and ownership of the estates." That says it all! But saying it is one thing and doing it is another! And that's what Adare does - it does it!

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

As you approach Adare from Limerick you are enveloped with wonderful old trees inside the walls of Adare Manor and adjoining other fields also. A similar feeling is generated when coming from the other side of the town. There is no signage clutter, no sign of overuse of herbicide. Despite the traffic, the entrance trees from all the roads leading to Adare compensate for the traffic congestion.

Concluding Remarks:

Adare is a wonderful town, a can-do town. Make plans for the by-pass and - do add cycle lanes when undertaking the work! Thank you, Adare.