

# Tidy Towns Competition 2022

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Doon - Dun Bleisce** Ref: **717**  
County: **Limerick** Mark: **317**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **07/07/2022**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	44	45
Streetscape & Public Places	80	43	44
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	38	39
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	37	38
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	16	17
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	58	60
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	36	37
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	36	37
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>317</b>

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

Fáilte Chuig Comórtas na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu 2022. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn. Go raibh maith agaibh as ucht bhur dtacaíocht le linn na paindéime. Lean leis an dea-obair. Welcome to the 2022 SuperValu TidyTowns competition. Thank you for your entry and for your commitment to your place in these difficult times. Keep up the great work.

Your committee of 12 members and another 50 volunteers are drawn from your population of 500 people in Doon – a very busy town. Six formal meetings are held throughout the year but from April to September you meet every week for work on the ground. Other groups in the community assist, for example the GAA taking care of their grounds, the Men's Shed who make benches, seats and plant containers and finally you avail of flowers from the Social Farm. It is great to see the old convent premises being used for new purposes. About 20 other agencies from business and public bodies support your work. You are well equipped in terms of communication by having your own website, twitter and Instagram and also use newsletters and newspapers and Facebook. In regard to schools, you support the Green Flag Programmes and we have read that Doon Convent N.S. received their 9th green flag for the theme 'Global Citizenship Travel' – well done to all involved. We have also read about Doon CBS Primary School activities, including the school garden. We have noted your special project of the privet hedging and lawn at St Patrick's church car park – it looked very well. Well done on being a participant in the competition since 2007 and we are delighted to learn that the experience has been a good one. Many thanks for your excellent map of Doon which is very well drawn and is very clear – our compliments to the artist. Next time we ask that you add street names and a legend to the page, so we can understand what the numbers mean without having to check back in the application form. Your application form was well presented. Your 5 year action plan is an impressive large document, but the important thing is for your community to take ownership of the various actions. Sometimes such reports don't receive sufficient attention because they contain so much information, in which case a few pages of proposed actions might work better.

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

Thank you for listing the various projects which you manage under this heading. We agree that you have some very interesting shopfronts. The curved street with parking on both sides makes it difficult to get through but perhaps that can be termed traffic calming where it makes drivers slow down. It will be great to see the old convent renovated for a more modern use, rather than have it decay. We noted the Social Farm – it was our first time to come across such terms. It is great to see it being a success.

We visited the grounds of St Patrick's church and noted the various improvements, including repair of statues and painting of railings. The car park is nicely tucked into the side. Being on a hill, the church dominates the view and is a focal point in that area. The GAA complex looks very well with an attractive boundary wall and entrance. We suggest that the large bare wall on its southern boundary could be softened with climbing plants such as ivy. Well

done to the GAA for providing a public walkway around the two pitches. We saw the car park provided by the Council at the graveyard and noted that you pick litter and do other work there. While this large featureless car park serves a purpose, especially when there are funerals, it is a significant large open area without any landscape treatment, and we suggest it should look much better than it is at present. A landscape plan is needed to regularise where car parking should take place and where soft landscape elements such as trees, shrubs, perennials and grass should be placed to enhance the space and to soften the impact of the concrete wall. We were surprised not to see any reference to that need in the 5-year plan.

Well done on working with the Council on the issue of derelict buildings and with Doon Historical Society for erecting 20 bilingual name stones in townlands in the parish and with another 15 to go, this is a major project. We noted the former church near the entrance from Cappamore Road (with the 'Belfrey' sign in the garden and wish the owner good luck in any venture that would provide a new use for this historic building. Good luck with the discussions and consultation on the issue of traffic in Doon. We hope you find a workable solution.

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

There is ongoing maintenance in the cemetery, and we note that the grass is well-maintained and in general families take care of their deceased relatives graves. What does need attention here is the boundary wall, which needs repainting. It would be nice if space was found in the cemetery for a few trees at suitable locations before the site is filled with graves. Cemeteries should be designed like parks where people can visit over many decades and centuries and trees can greatly enhance their appearance. Well done for maintaining other areas such as around the church and parochial house and congratulations on removing the suckers from lime trees growing in front of the old CBS school. The trees there looked very well. Plant containers and flower beds in and around Doon are generally maintained by you and you use a mixture of annuals and perennials to good effect.

We were most impressed with the secondary school – Scoil na Tríonoide Naofa. The buildings are very modern and colourful and there is a high standard of landscape treatment of the grounds with trees and shrubs well established. If only more schools were landscaped to this high standard. However, we were disappointed to see a lack of landscape treatment for the long straight approach road from the entrance on the Oola Road to the entrance of the school. Perhaps the school authorities/management have no responsibility for this approach road, but we suggest that it needs the same attention as the school grounds. A simple treatment would be a line of birch trees on both sides of the road where the margin is sufficiently wide. Please do not mix tree species here; they should all be the one type. Where the space becomes narrow it is suitable for climbing plants to help soften the concrete walls. The modern children's playground looked very well.

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

Pollinator Friendly plants are being used in your planting schemes, as per support from Albert Nolan who also undertakes wildlife walks and is planning a bat walk.

The wildlife signage on the walk is very good and there is a bug hotel in the Hillview estate. You maintain the whitethorn hedge planted on the Oola approach Road. You have plans to develop a wildlife pond and are helping the schools on their Green Fag programmes. maintain the whitethorn hedge planted on the Oola approach Road. The secondary school – Scoil na Tríonoide Naofa has a rewilding zone in the school grounds.

You have a rich natural area surrounding your community and it is important to promote an awareness of its many traits and to map these habitats. Appreciating your local wildlife resources is vital in order to achieve under this category. In this regard researching and raising awareness is more important than 'doing' at the early stages. Habitats of value include specimen trees, hedgerows, treelines, streams, woodlands and wetlands. Try to list the plants and animals to be found there and recognise their significance (native, protected, or alien invasive?). This information can be fun to gather and can involve the schools or other interested parties. Contact the Irish Wildlife Trust for more information. For more ideas on suitable projects under this criterion, we suggest you consult the revised handbook which is available at the following link. <https://www.tidytowns.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Nature-and-Biodiversity-in-your-locality.pdf>

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

Activities mentioned here include collecting scrap metal, reusing materials for new purposes, a second hand book scheme for school children and moving away from planting annuals to save on watering and volunteers time. You also maintain the brink banks and compost green waste materials for use as a mulch. School children have polytunnels where they learn how to grow plants and transition year students also work in the Social Farm. Doon Convent National School and the Doon CBS was awarded the Amber Flag, to promote positive mental health. You use mulch mowers instead of removing grass clippings.

This category is about tackling the growing waste mountain that is creating problems of pollution, unwanted land use, and the use of dwindling resources. It is a global and a local problem. To save the Earth we need to move quickly to a zero-waste society. Your town can play its part by first looking at the volume of waste that is generated. The emphasis here really needs to be on reducing the volume of waste produced rather than recycling (which is taken for granted). At this level of the contest the adjudicator wants to see innovation in tackling bigger issues of food waste, plastic disposal and energy use. What are homes and businesses doing to tackle these?

Regarding water usage, self-watering hanging baskets are a help in reducing the amount of water used and also the task of watering. Other waste minimisation projects include encouraging the re-use of water bottles and coffee mugs at school and at work. In response to an overuse of chemicals for weed control, many useful products of the past are no longer available and therefore communities are encouraged to use other means such as hoeing to maintain weeds. These activities will highlight the fact that you are focussing on this category and when you develop more

projects in the future your marks will increase.

For more helpful tips and case studies from other Tidy Towns entrants please take a look at <http://localprevention.ie/tidy-towns/>

For more information on project ideas for this criterion, we advise consulting the revised handbook which is available at the following link. <https://www.tidytowns.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Sustainability-Doing-More-with-less.pdf>

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

You are fortunate to have FAS workers who pick litter and maintain grassed areas as well as parking areas and controlling weeds. You liaise with the Council regarding emptying recycling bins as well as litter bins. You also remove cable ties and bunting when events have finished, and you keep road signs clean. In TLC this year, 50 of your volunteers collected 100 bags of rubbish.

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

Estates are not maintained by the Council, so residents undertake responsibility for that task or have it done by management companies or by FAS workers. The business community help by keeping their premises in good condition. Where there is dereliction, you are working with the Council to determine ownership and resolve the issues. We saw new footpaths being constructed in Hillview Estate. The open space at the entrance has a few nice trees. The clipped shrubs in the raised beds surrounded by low stone walls look very well. The front gardens would benefit from having a few hedges or shrubs to enhance the houses. The open space at the entrance to Assumpta Terrace looks very well. It is a mounded area (the Republican Plot) with the grass well-maintained and plenty of trees with perennial growing on the edge. The Fort estate is unusual in that rear gardens are not screened and there is no planting on the open space. The facades of houses are discoloured due to weather effect. The Glasha Talann estate looks well with single storey houses in a curved arrangement, but some weeds here need attention. We admired the well-established specimen of a weeping lime tree planted by former President Mary Robinson on the 29th September 1995 when she opened the estate.

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

The Main Street had footpaths repaired and new pathways were constructed on the Monastery Road and Cappawhite Road. You maintain the hedges on the approach roads to the village at Cooga Cross and the Oola Road and in particular have cleared away foliage from covering signs on the Cappawhite Road. We admired your work on the Cappamore Road where you maintain the flower bed and an old house and also maintenance of the green space with its flower beds and signs on the Oola Road.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

Doon is a great mixture of old and new, especially in regard to schools. Well done for being such an active community aiming to have the town looking its best. We look forward to receiving your application in 2023.