

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: Ballyphehane-Baile Féitheáin	Ref: 2286
County: Cork(South)	Mark: 230
Category: D	Date(s): 11/06/2023

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	40
Streetscape & Public Places	80	35
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	35
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	23
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	45
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	0
TOTAL MARK	550	230

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

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu don bhliain 2023. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amachanseo. Adh Mór.. thank you so much for your entry into this year's competition, you are very welcome. In addition to your 4 Board members and 12 Committee members you have an additional 20 general volunteers, and wonderful to see a veritable army of 175 Youth Hub volunteers. It is really heartening to read that there has been such strong community engagement and that there is such a diverse mix of people getting involved, a fantastic way to strengthen bonds and social connection. The 'Youth Hubs' are a good idea and good to see such active engagement from the Transition Year students with weekly litter picks on Monday and Wednesday mornings as part of their school curriculum, and we note that you are hoping to extend this to Coláiste Chríost Rí's second year students.

It is a really good idea to also connect with local businesses the way that you are doing, and getting their support and buy in to the work that you are doing, and hopefully some sponsorship as well if possible. The list of all the sponsors, funders and other organisations is far too many to name here (I counted over 50!) a testament to the level of engagement that you are undertaking.

Permeating throughout your entire entry form, there is a theme of inclusivity, connection and community. One example of this is the Gay Project Living Wall in conjunction with the Gay Project's Rainbow Garden Club, with the living green wall, and regarding your mission of ensuring that your work 'builds a sense of pride and ownership in all community members through active engagement' it looks as though you are already achieving this!

The other projects that you have mentioned such as the Defibrillators, Youth Art Space, Cherry Blossom Festival as well as the collaboration with the Gardaí illustrate the energy and community spirit to be found in Ballyphehane.

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

You have made a very good start with your first major project, the rejuvenation of the Pearse Square. It was a shame to read that this area, which used to be a major social hub for your community, has more recently become a black spot for anti-social activity. To turn this around and return it to a community and family friendly space is a great achievement, and great that this included the participation, support and sponsorship of local businesses, stakeholders as well as Cork City Council. The new wooden planters look fantastic and soften up the landscaping and seating creates a warmer more welcoming public space, and creates more of a focal feature of the lovely trees.

The Pipe Band Room Mural project is a lovely homage to the Ballyphehane Pipe Band and all their involvement in gatherings, memorials and occasions through the years, and also spotted was the Library Corner Planter as well as the plaque in memory of Patrick Pearse which looked clean and well maintained.

In keeping with your principles of sustainability and self-sufficiency, the introduction of a Pádraig Pearse electricity box mural will be achieved through a series of workshops with members of your community, involving young local artists. Fantastic work also to all those involved in the creation of 417 handmade tiles by various members of the community, as well as local schools. From the photographs that you sent in of everyone working side by side, young and old must have created a wonderful sense of community and fun, and will no doubt inspire even greater things.

Well done on your work on saving the local piece of history that is the bandstand in Tory Top Park, and we are looking forward to seeing this when fully renovated with complementary plants and seating as planned.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Your Tory Top Community Education & Meditation AXA Garden is a very exciting project. The illustration that you have kindly provided showing the maze, native Irish trees, benches and information boards as well as the food growing/education space will be a wonderful facility for those living in the area and we very much look forward to seeing this come to fruition in the near future. The area at Pearse Road is noted for its lovely Cherry Blossom trees to be seen in Spring, and your annual Cherry Blossom Festival sounds like a wonderful celebration of this with music, picnics, dancing etc. as well as workshops on art and biodiversity. The Cherry Blossom Mural project was admired and well done to your volunteer Ivan Borisov on this work with assistance from George and Sarah. The trees in the smart wooden planters at Pearse Square greatly enhance this area and provide a real sense of place and community

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

It is fantastic to see the collaboration that is taking place between Ballyphehane Tidy Towns and your neighbouring groups in Togher and Douglas, along with the Turner's Cross Biodiversity Group under the Tramore River Group umbrella. Together you are working on the cleanliness and maintenance of the river to ensure that it is free from pollution, thereby protecting its quality, ecosystem and the amenity value it has for the community. Well done also on the presentation on the biodiversity to be found in the river and its environs to members of the community. As you say in your form, this helps instil a sense of stewardship and responsibility to make sure these valuable resources are there for generations to come. Another joint project is the lovely Bug Motel situated within the Ballyphehane/Togher Community Development Project, great to give this previously unused space a new purpose as a habitat for insects other creatures. It also helps raise awareness and may encourage people to create their own haven for habitats in their gardens or communal spaces. Likewise, the 'tree tires' to be found at various places such as Dominic Road, and Killeenreendowney Avenue help take a grey space and elevate it with some nature and greenery to breathe some new life into these areas, and shows the huge difference a few small touches can make. I have mentioned the Community Garden already, and this will be a wonderful resource where vegetables, flowers, herbs and fruit trees can be grown, promoting an interest in self-sufficiency and perhaps encourage others to try their hand (or green fingers) at growing their own.

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

It is clear that sustainability is a core value of your group and something that you are taking seriously with all your work.

Leaf Moulding Project – this is a great project where fallen leaves are collected, added to the pile and turned regularly in order to produce home grown compost for your planting projects, and fantastic to read that this is already being used in one of your lavender beds.

I have already mentioned the Gay Project Living Wall, a great initiative where, in collaboration with the Gay Project's Rainbow Garden, members of the gay community care for the plants in the living wall and these are then replanted elsewhere in the environment.

The green wall was replanted with summer bulbs during the 'Clean & Green' event earlier this year. Learning and networking, a really good idea to liaise with other Tidy Towns groups nearby and other organisations in order to swap hints and tips, network and exchange ideas and plans.

Other initiatives that you might consider are clothes and book swaps in order to give 'pre loved' items a second life and prevent them going to landfill (and also save some money). At some stage in the future you might also look at energy efficiency, and the website of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) is a great source of information and also lists the various grants that are available for retrofitting, solar panels, electric vehicles etc.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Work that you are carrying out in this category to keep Ballyphehane look as well as possible includes a very dedicated army of volunteers who go out cleaning and litter picking come rain or shine. You meet every Saturday as well as Wednesday during the brighter months with an impressive 65 days in

total dedicated to tackling litter in your community. You are doing a great job, as apart from a few spots with some empty bottles and plastic glasses Ballyphehane was mostly litter free. Thank you for providing all the litter pick statistics from the last 12 months, very impressive!

It is a good strategic approach that you are taking as the cleaner a place is the less likely people will litter, and you are also raising awareness to try and ensure people dispose of their waste in an appropriate manner.

It was interesting to read that you have also managed to quantify this and have collected an impressive amount of approximately 1300 bags of waste, well done!

Good work also on ensuring that your sense of community spirit and ethos is passed on to the younger members of the community with the Tidy Towns Youth Hub, with an audience of approximately 175 students. Fantastic to read that the students participating have collected a total of 890 bags of litter, well done!

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

As with many towns and village across Ireland, there is unfortunately some vacant and derelict properties to be found in the area. Good work on monitoring these and keeping in constant communication with Cork City Council in order to keep them informed with what is happening.s Some of the housing areas visited included Plás an Phiarsaigh/Pearse Place, Bótar Mac Piarais, Ascal Árd na Croice amongst others, and the majority of these areas look well maintained and cared for, many with very fresh paintwork and flowers or hanging baskets to add a vibrant pop of colour. The green areas looked tidy and trim looking with very neat edges, and an idea for the future might be to encourage some areas left 'wild' in common areas and private gardens to help our pollinating bees and insects. A good source of information is Pollinator.ie the website for The All Ireland Pollinator Plan.

The Adopt a Street campaign is a fantastic way to get your local community to be more aware of their immediate environment and take ownership of where they live. As well as improving the visual appearance this also helps civic engagement and a sense of community with where they live and the people around them.

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

The 'Welcome to Ballyphehane' signs, to be found at key approaches to the town (at Connolly Road/Vicars Road Junction etc) add a sense of place and distinctness to the area and help create a really good first impression, as well as a sense of community. And fair play to you and your volunteers for deciding to create these signs yourself with members of the town skilling themselves on design, measuring, safety, and visual aspects as well with some assistance from Cork City Council. This is a great way to become more sustainable and instil a great sense of pride in the community. The approach roads as well as the streets and lanes in general looked well cared for, with some lovely Chestnut trees to be found at Scoil Maria Assumpta which greatly enhanced this area, as did the trees at Pearse Square that were mentioned earlier.

Concluding Remarks:

It was my first time to visit Ballyphehane, and was interesting to see how quickly you are taking on the Tidy Towns mantle and how much you have achieved already, as well as your very strong community ethos. We wish you the best of luck and hope to see you again next year!.