

Tidy Towns Competition 2022

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Bundoran - Bun Dobhráin** Ref: **697**
County: **Donegal** Mark: **301**
Category: **D** Date(s): **23/06/2022**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	44	44
Streetscape & Public Places	80	45	46
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	37	37
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	29	30
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	18	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53	53
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	34	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	38	38
TOTAL MARK	550	298	301

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

Community-Your Planning and Involvement/ An Pobal- Pleanáil and 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.

Delighted to visit this famous seaside resort and see your major natural amenities. It is good to learn that your committee has adapted to the end of lockdown, competition from competing activities and has even picked up a number of new volunteers.

It is significant that Donegal County Council and Failte Ireland support major initiatives in the town. We look forward to seeing the results of this investment. You are fortunate that the business community continues to support your work.

Your previous adjudicator queried the extent of participation by the wider community in planning, funding and action. It was recommended that this aspect required more attention and should be reported on in 2022. Could you develop a plan to improve on this aspect of your work and let us know the result. It could involve the formation of a committee type structure, containing representatives of different sectors and regular meetings. We are delighted to learn of plans for a “youth hub” and hope you will tap into the energy and creativity of young people.

Your Tidy Town map is excellent to orient us and every visitor to Bundoran. For the purpose of Tidy Towns it could be improved by only highlighting i.e. numbering, the location of your new projects. By highlighting them under their relevant category heading it would be even better.

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

Streetscape and public spaces/Sráid-Dreach agus Áiteanna Poiblí

We are delighted to learn of many works to improve the condition of public facilities and buildings in the town. It is impressive that the Tidy Towns group was responsible for improving the appearance of several derelict houses. Works you describe such as the installation of picnic table, removal of unsightly shelters, path maintenance and repair of the footbridge over the Bradog River will greatly improve the experience of Bundoran to visitors. However it is disappointing to note the continued presence of abandoned/ derelict buildings in your principal streets.

As it is obvious that the community is making great efforts to improve the appearance of buildings in the town. Thus

it is suggested that you engage with the Historic Towns Initiative and Heritage Council's Health Check to obtain funding for building improvements and a national monitoring system which measures vacancy levels in your town centre.

The inspection this year suggested to this adjudicator that some of the excellent features developed in the town c. 10 -20? years ago now need management. These include the small murals on the walls near the Tourist office which need touching up. It is significant that the town has several historic laneways, gaps between buildings leading to the sea or narrow routes between housing estates or churches which are principally used by pedestrians.

Bundoran would benefit from a so-called "Green Map". This would highlight pedestrianized routes inside and outside the town, sites where people can recycle waste materials, obtain water from a tap, see where food is produced locally (i.e. community garden) buy food produced locally, find supports for cycling (bike shop and cycling infrastructure), let visitors know where to access public transport and find out about local heritage and free amenities. The production of green maps was pioneered in the US. See <http://www.greenmap.org> for various examples.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Green spaces and landscaping/Spásanna agus Tírdhreachú

It is noteworthy that you managed some significant landscaping projects along the intensively used walks around the town. We were particularly impressed by the planters along Rougey Walk. Your planting is both attractive and biodiversity friendly and does not detract from the semi-natural quality of its environs. Regular management is the responsibility of the members of Tidy Towns team who also do a litter pick ahead of their weekly Wednesday planting session

The community garden, hens and allotments are amazing and confirm the value of networking with a regional facility which promotes organic gardening.

It is very welcome that the high quality landscaping near the Tourist Office is complemented by a nearby grassland area which is not mown and has a pollinator sign. However some of the shrubberies near the tourist officer need attention. It is unfortunate that herbicides are in use within Bundoran. Could you promote a campaign to ban them from town and boundaries in conjunction with the community garden and allotments.

It is significant that the Community Garden is a demonstration area of good practice and offers a venue for courses on gardening. It is notes that businesses in Bundoran stock a range of products to support sustainable gardening. It is impressive that one of those businesses offers courses as well as stocking useful products.

The community has been busy obtaining trees for planting in the locality at various locations, some by young people. It is hoped that standards associated with sustainable gardening would become second nature to people in the town and newly established trees would be cared for appropriately. Please indicate sites of tree planting in your map next year so that we can examine their condition.

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

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

Bundoran is indeed blessed in its location; as the sea and river offer a high quality experience of nature and biodiversity. It would be good to commission a habitat, bird and bat survey of the locality. You could follow this with some walks and talks in the town to inform the community about its significance. In communicating information about local biodiversity you could pass on the message about the correct use of wildflower seeds which should never be used in semi-natural areas but in gardens. See bit.ly/dnfc-seeds for an up to date guidance on the use of wildflower seed mixes. Similarly the planting of native trees and shrubs should be encouraged or species on the All Ireland Pollinator Plan.

The bird mural at the main beach is impressive and particularly as it is downloadable. Consideration should be given to provide this type of interpretation near the footbridge over the River Bradog covering river birds and grassland. In your application next year let us know if you have made any progress on the River Bradog walkway.

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

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

Your application described important initiatives by organisations, schools and businesses in the town to make their operations more sustainable and provide relevant resources to the community. The adjudicator in 2021 was concerned to find out what the Tidy Town committee had done. Your application this year informed us that you had organized a free workshop targeting all sectors on the same theme. On tuning into these workshop it was discovered that it featured presentations by local businesses which offered a range of suggestions to deal with particular aspects of sustainability. There was a particular focus on tree planting and composting. It would be useful to follow up this initiative by holding other meetings under this banner to continue to support this type of learning.

Following up on the workshop would be a relevant initiative by the Tidy Towns. Another aspect of sustainability relevant to Tidy Towns on which work could be done relates to water usage. Tidy Towns could ensure that all water used in planters would come from recycled sources not tap water and growing material was compost not peat moss.

The production of a Green Map would further support sustainable enterprises and life styles.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Tidiness and Litter control/Slachtmhaireacht and Rialú Bruscair:

As Bundoran is such an important tourism destination regular litter collections are necessary. The Tidy Towns team, Tus workers in coordination with Donegal County Council and a local councilor carry out litter collections every morning along the coast, beach and walks. This year more bins were placed along the seafront and a campaign was carried out to highlight beach litter called "three for the sea". It would be useful to quantify the amount of litter collected, its origins and density and also promote the message of "Leave no Trace." <http://www.leavenotraceireland.org>. Such monitoring might help to assess the effectiveness of educational messages and social attitudes. The supermarket involved in sustainability initiatives could house a large bin which could take segregated waste.

As the coast is an important amenity encouragement could be given to clubs and residents groups to participate in a regular monitoring exercise such as Coastwatch <https://coastwatch.org/europe/>. Similar to last year's adjudicator we are keen to learn the results of the signage audit.

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

Residential streets and housing areas/Sráidanna Cónaithe and Ceantair Tithíochta:

It was encouraging to learn about the establishment of residents associations in Ross Avenue and Ross View and the role of their residents in maintaining grass cutting and general upkeep. Encouragement could be given to residents to participate in the towns Tidy Town Committee where they would network with other residents and learn about general landscaping. All estates have areas with simple landscaping featuring mown grass. Encouragement could be given to make more imaginative use of this type of space to improve its landscape and biodiversity values.

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

Approach roads, streets and lanes/ Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna and Lánaí

As stated in the application the community is still waiting funding to carry out improvements to entrances to the town and the refurbishment and resurfacing of side streets – Rennison's Lane, Central Lane and Meehan's Lane. An opportunity should be taken to carry out a walkability study of the town particularly to consider designating some or all of those lanes as pedestrian only routes. We look forward to seeing the new Tidy Towns signs at the entrance to the town and learning of progress on the plans for a Greenway to Belleek and cycleway to Ballyshannon.

Concluding Remarks:

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Well done on an excellent performance in the 2022 competition. Bundoran is a challenging location to maintain a high standard of tidiness and deal with town centre vacancies. The application shows that this community is well connected through the local authority to tap into funding for useful actions. Turning plans into actions will be challenging but given your strong track record we have not doubt that there will be interesting actions over the next year and we look forward to keep track of your progress.