

# Tidy Towns Competition 2022

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dundalk - Dún Dealgan** Ref: **494**  
County: **Louth** Mark: **353**  
Category: **H** Date(s): **17/06/2022**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2021</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2022</b>
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	56	57
Streetscape & Public Places	80	49	50
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	46	47
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	37	38
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	25	26
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	55	56
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	36	38
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	40	41
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>353</b>

### Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus 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. Adh Mór... Thank you for your 2022 entry to the Tidy Towns Competition with maps and accompanying material.

A change in the requirements this year means that future planned projects no longer need to be mentioned in the entry form. They are noted for this year and can be included in your three year action plan going forward.

The map of Dundalk centre was clear and the numbers easy to read. However, as there was no legend it was necessary to refer back to the entry form on each occasion. Please do include a legend on the map. The second map was not of benefit as no projects were marked on it. Please also identify, if applicable, under each category where your projects or initiatives aim to address one or more of the sustainable development goals.

Your core committee of 10 are clearly dedicated and hard working and deserve the support of the 50 or so volunteers. It is good to see the number of volunteers increasing and particularly good to see members of residents' associations on the committee. You have a good cross section of agencies, bodies and businesses supporting your activities. It was noticed however, and has been commented on by a previous adjudicator, that there are not too many sporting clubs on the list. This could be an area to be investigated, particularly as most sporting clubs have green spaces with ideal patches made for increased biodiversity.

Your varied methods of communication aim to cater for all demographics. We look forward to seeing your new website when it is up and running.

It does help that Dundalk Tidy Towns to have such a large number of schools in your area all of whom are willing to help with projects as they also work towards their Green Flag awards. The young adults from Rehabcare and St John of God are also to be commended for helping with litter picks. Your primary project creating a newsletter for primary schools is very exciting. Welcome to Socks the Fox!

Your new logo was clearly well considered and is highly effective and fitting with the Matilija Poppy aka Romneya coulteri named after local man David Coulter. Perhaps you will be able to find suitable locations to include it in your planting schemes.

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

The rain teemed down in Dundalk on adjudication day but this did not take away from the impressive array of architectural buildings and the high quality presentation of the public spaces. As it is Year 3 of the facades project, it is clear to see the amazing effect the restoration and painting of the facades has on the town. The colour palette is pleasing and very much in keeping with the style of architecture. In general the facades of the buildings were exceptionally well presented.

The parklets were in good condition with excellent planting schemes throughout and the Ramparts project has clearly made a huge difference to the overall presentation of the area. It will be interesting to know how the ecology

study of the river goes. Please let us know as this progresses.

The new wi-fi hub in Market Square is an excellent initiative. Perhaps more will be installed as their popularity become evident. The street furniture was looking very good. Well done on your new colour scheme and the ongoing refurbishment of the street furniture. The poor condition of the corrugated iron gate beside Staffline was the one jarring element of an otherwise pleasing square.

The derelict/vacant property survey shows the extent of such properties and might prompt a discussion as to how best to deal with them in terms of visual appeal. In general the buildings were all in good order and presented well. There are too many to mention all but particularly noted were Swift Alterations, Brendan Marmion Decorating Centre, Catherine Allison Solicitors, The Townhouse, The Food House, McKeowns and Ruby's to name a few. The Back Alley of the Market Bar deserves credit for its innovative space saving and artistic treatment of what could otherwise be dead space.

In some areas there appeared to be a proliferation of new overhead cables being prepared for installation so do keep communicating with the ESB to try and get cables underground where possible.

The litter bins were, for the most part, clean and presented well. Those in Market Square need to be refurbished, particularly the recyclable bins whose markings have worn away leaving one wondering what one should put where. As the bins are being replaced, over time, to solar powered bins, it is hoped that a greater element of recyclable bins, clearly marked will also be provided.

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

The retention of the Green flags for two local parks is good news, especially as they have been signed up to the Pollinator Plan. One of the objectives of the new 2021 – 2025 AIPP is to encourage more land to be managed for biodiversity and to establish a 'Pollinator Trail' as well as monitor pollinators on public land. Your work and commitment to your area to raise awareness and increase biodiversity puts you in a perfect position to become a supporter for the AIPP. <https://pollinators.ie/aipp-2021-2025/> and is a tangible way of demonstrating your sustainable objectives so perhaps you could consider signing up to the Pollinator Plan also?.

Good luck with the status for Aisling park and Muirhevnamor Park. Hopefully next year you will be able to report four Green Flags for Dundalk parks. The addition of new trees on the Castletown River Walk is to be welcomed. Unfortunately the weather did not allow a visit so it would be good to know if native trees were planted.

The sponsorship of the roundabouts across Dundalk is great news and the planting of so many new bulbs to be commended.

The planting around Market Square was admired, especially the diversity of perennial plants. A top dressing of fine mulch would help to suppress the weeds and give the beds a nice finish visually. Admired too were the large grey containers with a mix of perennials and shrubs including bamboo, prostrate rosemary, herbaceous geraniums and box. The tower planters had been recently planted with begonias which will be colourful once established for the summer. However more permanent planting with perennials (such as the rosemary) would be more sustainable and create more year round impact. Bulbs could be included in the planting scheme to give a pop of spring colour. It was a little disappointing to see the area around The Demesne and Park Avenue in need of a some maintenance. Much of the planting was covered with cleavers and weed suppressing material was evident in many areas.

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

The ongoing roll out of the provision of biodiversity kits to registered residents' associations is a great idea. Please do let us know which associations have signed up and perhaps provide a short report on the results of this project. The Pumping House Fairy Garden is a cheerful, colourful and so nicely tended using many recycled and upcycled materials. Signs of herbicide use were evident which slightly marred an otherwise excellent project.

The sponsorship of the roundabouts across Dundalk is great news and the planting of so many new bulbs is to be commended.

As previously recommended, you are urged to carry out a habitat map to ascertain what you have and best practice management of habitats. The Heritage Council provide excellent information in their Conserving and Enhancing Wildlife in Towns and Villages

[https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/content/files/conserving\\_enhancing\\_wildlife\\_guide\\_2005\\_480kb.pdf](https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/content/files/conserving_enhancing_wildlife_guide_2005_480kb.pdf). Dundalk is lucky to have so many green spaces throughout the town and to be able to create a network of wildlife sites linking corridors by planting will provide an ecologically valuable and biodiverse environment.

The project to restore the Clarke Memorial is exciting and we look forward to hearing of its progress in future submissions.

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

Dividing this category into the four headings of waste, water, energy and food as previously suggested enables a committee to identify the areas and work on each one.

You have listed a sizeable number of ongoing project in this category, including Park and Share facilities, a Council Climate Change Team and a Dundalk decarbonising zone, each contributing towards a more sustainable living environment and for which you are to be congratulated. You have not noted which of the many projects are new or maintained/ongoing. The recycling figures for the civic amenity sites are considerable and plans to join with VOICE to host workshops will hopefully encourage people to reduce first, reuse second and then recycle.

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

The Recycling Bring centre was colourful and fun. The area around the bins was in need of a good clean up with broken glass, weeds and general detritus in the area. Litter could also be seen in the green space beside the Bring Centre.

Apart from some isolated areas, Dundalk was very clean and litter free on adjudication day. It is clear that your

efforts as a team and with the help of your volunteers, local community and businesses, is paying dividends so well done.

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

Manor Hamilton was beautifully kept with excellent perennial planting as were Willow Grove, Pearse Park and Carlinn Hall. There was a clear sense of pride in place in the residential areas. The name signs are Ard Easmuin was however hard to read and the area around it rather untidy.

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

In general the approach roads to Dundalk were clean with good signage, well planted with mature trees and grass verges with one strip of grass cut and the rest left long.

One old brown welcome sign was almost illegible and it would be better to remove it altogether.

The Inner Relief Road Project has provided a number of strands including the brightly painted utility boxes, the new planters made from recycled plastic bottles and the planting of the containers with native trees and perennial planting. Well done.

The area around the entrance to the Dundalk Port is also considerably more attractive and was obviously a more popular place for walking for local residents.

There is still room for more planting of trees along some of the approach roads and this is a project that could be included in your new three year plan.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

Despite the very wet weather, the visit to Dundalk was most enjoyable and it was a pleasure to see the huge improvements that have been and continue to be made to the town. Well done, keep up the good work and the best of luck in the tidy Towns Competition.