

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Bree - Bri** Ref: **29**
County: **Wexford** Mark: **358**
Category: **B** Date(s): **07/06/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	54	55
Streetscape & Public Places	80	44	47
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	49	52
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	38	41
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	19	20
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	64	67
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	35	36
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	38	40
TOTAL MARK	550	341	358

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 a chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo. Adh Mór....

The community of Bree is very welcome to the 2023 SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition. We note you are a very active committee which has developed a high standard over the years, and we can see that the committee of 11 members is strong and supported by another 20 volunteers and 2 CEP workers. We counted 17 agencies that support your work, including Wexford Co. Co., other local bodies and the business community. Communication is no bother for Bree and you avail of social media platforms as well as local newspapers. It is great that you engage with the local school Green School Council and the Green School Co-ordinator, Mr Coffey and help with their projects. Your special project for the past year has been improvement works done in Hill View Housing estate. With 24 years of experience in the competition, we are pleased to note that it was beneficial. Many thanks for your map of Bree and a legend for the items that were marked on the map. While the project numbers went up to number 19, we were able to locate them – with some difficulty. We suggest that the numbers on the map should follow a logical sequence to save us scanning the page for a particular number. Get that right first and then transfer the numbers to the entry form. While the map was ok, we suggest it could be improved by a better quality image – and of course, don't forget to put the name Bree on the page.

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

We had a good walk around the ICA garden which is on the theme of four seasons. The raised beds are convenient for wheelchair users who can get close to the planting. Some of the beds could do with refreshing. The sundial in the northern section may at one time received sufficient sun to form shadows. Now it is totally shaded and would best be moved to a more central and sunny location.

Items mentioned under this criterion include cleaning street signs, painting the timber sign for Wexford and Enniscorthy, updating the Trailhead for Bree Hill Walking Trails and extending the path which leads to Ballybrittas Portal Dolmen. A new signpost at the church graveyard to show Bree Hill Walking Trails and the Community Centre. Upgrading and painting a house beside the shop. Removing barriers in the School Car Park and painting the Community Centre and the Ballyhogue GAA complex. The community centre is a fine complex – the hedge along the roadside boundary is a good idea to reduce the impact of car parking and the line of tree in the car park looks very well. Behind it is the GAA complex which also looked well. It seems to be good planning to have so many facilities in the one area – the community centre, the playground and the sports facilities. It is suggested that the large, gravelled car park of the GAA complex could be softened with some tree planting – which could be used to define the parking arrangements and help make more effective use of the space.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

More and more we are looking at cemeteries as being valuable green spaces which means that attention should be paid to the landscape, especially the boundaries. We liked your cemetery very much, especially because of the regularity of the headstones and grave surrounds – we noted the regulations of 2016. Because the cemetery is only about one quarter full, there is an opportunity to do more planting, and have it function as a pleasant park as well which will last into the future. We liked the meadow developed on the areas not occupied with graves. We also liked the established birch trees along the northern boundary, even though they are close to the hedge. It would be a nice idea to have avenues of birch trees defining the four plots as shown on your map. Fortunately, you have reserved a space inside the front wall, and we suggest that it would be an ideal location to plant a line of trees like what we saw in Fern's cemetery on the Enniscorthy Road. In that case, lime trees were used, but whatever tree species is chosen, all the trees should be the same to provide a uniform effect.

The car park for the church is clean and tidy and we liked the effort at planting wall plants (Cotoneaster and Hydrangea) in the bays and hope you will continue this work to the other bays. The line of lime trees at the back of footpath line are developing well. The boxes of flowers planted at the base of these trees would best be removed and placed between the trees where they will look much better in full sunlight where they will get more rain and be away from the competition of tree roots for nutrients. Also, over time, the tree roots will grow up into the box and that is not desirable.

The Dick Joynt Garden is a nice tribute to a great artist, and you were privileged to have him lie in your community for 13 years. The planting of clematis is noted. At the northern end of the village, there are four green spaces with trees and other plants. These are important areas for enhancement of the village, especially because on the opposite side of the road the grain yard dominates the view. We suggest that it is easy to become fussy with these four green spaces and that is something you should avoid. The emphasis should be on trees, shrubs, perhaps a seat and of course the pump. You should refrain from adding boxes or plant containers or wheelbarrows with plants, especially on grass where it is possible to plant directly into the ground. In one case, a wheelbarrow is placed beneath a dying specimen of purple leaved plum – both should be removed. What might enhance these areas would be some pieces of sculpture.

In several locations, we observed some stakes attached to established trees. In most cases, the stakes are no longer needed and should be removed before they cause damage to the tree stem. We wish to commend you for the standard of perennial planting at several locations in the village but suggest that the plants should not hide the signs such as is happening at the Knocknagross stone.

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

We are pleased to note that you followed the advice of last year's adjudicator and developed a meadow in the graveyard. You have taken a similar approach in some other areas – we noted the wildflower meadow in the school yard. Well done on your work with Coillte in the development of car parking facilities in the woodland, picnic facilities and the fairy trail and for developing a trail on Bree Hill. Other activities include clipping hedges before the 1st of March and managing roadside margins to encourage dandelions, buttercups, and mayflowers

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

Activities mentioned under this heading include lobbying Wexford Co. Co. for the Local Link TFI route no 384 which is five times a day. Well done on that achievement. Provision of bicycle parking facilities in the school car park. Installation of solar panels on the community childcare facility and more are planned for the community centre. Recycling facilities include battery collection in the school and Centra shop and there is a bottle bank behind the Community Centre and a book swap library there as well. Well done on the vegetable growing venture in the school grounds.

For more ideas on this criterion, we suggest you consult the handbook on the following link.
<https://www.tidytowns.ie/competition/handbook/>

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You are fortunate to have the support of Community Employment Project to help with litter collection and emptying the bins. You have weekly litter patrols and have removed kerbside weeds and swept the pathways. This work is noted, but do not forget to paint the poles that carry signs – the Yield sign near the church being one example.

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

Most residents take great pride in the homes and gardens and have them looking very well. In Cluain Aiteann estate, we admired the fine birch trees on both sides of the entrance but were surprised that there are so few trees on the large open space. We suggest that continuing the line of birch trees along the open space would greatly enhance this estate. Some trees still have supporting stakes attached and which appear to be unnecessary. You described various works done in Hillview Housing estate and that the trees were professionally pruned.

Unfortunately, we cannot agree – the cutting back of these trees is not a good idea. The pruning has destroyed their shape and will lead to their decline. In our view, the trees should have been thinned out by removing some branches and retaining their shape.

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

Bree is very welcoming, and the standard of maintenance is so good that it encourages people to stop – and smell the flowers! You are actively pursuing further improvements such as pathways to make Bree much safer. We have noted your efforts and wish you good luck in having everywhere looking so well. The Parish Information signs were

to a high standard.

Concluding Remarks:

It was my first time to visit Bree and I was delighted with the experience. The first impressions of Bree are of a very ordered and tidy village. There is no doubt that you can progress further in this competition, and we hope that our comments and suggestion will help you in that regard. If you do take up some of our suggestions, please mention them in next year's entry form for the adjudicator's attention.