

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Bruff** Ref: **1077**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **270**
Category: **C** Date(s): **12/06/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	41	42
The Built Environment	50	29	31
Landscaping	50	38	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	29	30
Litter Control	50	34	35
Tidiness	30	18	18
Waste Minimisation	20	11	12
Residential Areas	40	27	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	29	29
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	400	263	270

Overall Development Approach:

Bruff is most welcome to the 2012 Tidy Towns competition. Bruff Tidy Towns is going from strength to strength and it is clear from reading your application form that you have all been very busy since last year. You are correctly placing a lot of emphasis on finding new committee members and volunteers. It is noted that you are now liaising with the national school's parent committee, Bruff rugby club, girl guides and youth club among others. Your new three-year plan was perused with great interest and it contains many ambitious projects that will keep you busy in the coming years. Do make sure to honestly appraise this document every year and produce an update in 2013 on what managed to get ticked off the list.

Well done on setting up and managing a Facebook page. Used correctly this can be a great tool for raising awareness of the work you are doing, particularly through posting images of people at work, or before and after photographs. It can be used to attract new volunteers, especially from younger generations. Of course you need to keep all the usual communication channels open, newsletters, local papers etc. Do you distribute copies of the adjudicator's report?

Despite the downturn you have also managed to maintain funding sources and this is much your credit. Many thanks also for your town map, which is a part of an elaborate guide to Bruff. From the adjudicator's point of view it would be welcome to have a map that pinpointed locations where recent projects have been underway.

The Built Environment:

Best of luck to the heritage group and their plans for the heritage centre. Your project to paint the gable end of the house at Inglenook and repair the footpath at the Roman Catholic Church are noted. The reopening and renovation of the church of Ireland building is a major addition to the town, well done to all those who were

involved. You mentioned that you are removing ivy from the graveyard walls, don't be too zealous in this regard as ivy can be home to bats and nesting birds. It should be removed only carefully, during the appropriate season, and under heritage advice.

Scoil Dean Cussen is looking very well and was proudly flying its green flag. The church of Ireland stands in an imposing location overlooking the river and is looking extremely well. The interpretive panel at its entrance is clear, clean and interesting.

The Old Bakehouse restaurant is very well presented with its clean facades and colourful flower displays.

A number of properties in Bruff have fallen into disuse and disrepair. These should be addressed through the creation of an inventory in the first instance and then targeting individual areas. This can be done through cooperation with landowners or, failing that, working with Limerick county council which has particular powers in this area. It is noted that you have approached the Bank of Ireland regarding their facades and it is hoped that this approach will bear fruit. The Garda station looks lush and it would be nice to see flying flags on its poles. The colourful mural on the Community Cafe is an attractive feature, adding a sense of youth and movement. Bruff courthouse (again without flags) adds a further point of interest to the town

Landscaping:

Your numerous landscaping projects are acknowledged. Do note that while annual flowers provide welcome summer attraction this should be balanced with the need for year-round landscaping features. This can be hard to achieve in crowded street settings but potted trees and smaller shrubs have been used to great effect elsewhere.

Morning Star Park is exceptionally well maintained with well mown lawns and appropriate planting schemes. A display of roses near the church of Ireland was admired.

Hornbeam trees on Main Street were noted and make a striking impression in these locations, softening otherwise hard facades.

The monument to Sean Wall clearly holds a special place in the town's folklore as it is so well tended. The roses here are particularly attractive.

The bedding plants across the Community Cafe are well maintained but perhaps too small to have any real impact in this location. A small tree or shrub arrangement would be more appropriate here.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It is welcome to note you have appreciated the fact that first and foremost this category concerns raising awareness of what is there before any direct intervention is made. In this regard your talks on bees, bats and from the NPWS are most fruitful.

Your new biodiversity action plan is a most welcome development. It could have gone further however in identifying the actual habitats in Bruff through a habitat map. It would also have been beneficial to include specific actions for the town.

That said it is a nice project for you to have put up bird boxes and the proposed publication of a book on Bruff's birds would be a wonderful asset for all the town's people.

Litter Control:

It is noted that you participate in the national spring clean and encouraging that despite greater efforts on your part you collected less rubbish. It is also acknowledged that you carried out daily litter inspections and this is most impressive.

On adjudication day there was no significant litter issue to be seen on the ground this is a wonderful achievement for you, well done!

Tidiness:

Well done for taking on board comments from last year's report and tidying up the area at Croom junction. The town is generally tidy and it is noted that you have an inventory of signs. Watch out for pointless protrusions from buildings e.g. flagpoles that never have a flag. Christmas decorations e.g. on Clancy's pub, should be

taken down after the festive season. Old bunting on a pole at the RIC barracks should be removed.

Waste Minimisation:

You have made a good start here through your surveys of local businesses, Nagel's Eurospar and the community cafe. Was it of benefit to them? It is also noted that you held a waste minimisation workshop, was there good attendance at this? You have correctly identified that recycling is only one element of this important category although it is acknowledged that it is difficult to get past this mindset. What ideas did you come up with at the workshop that could be applied?

Well done to Bruff national school and Scoil Dean Cussen for their green flags. These achievements are so important in this category as much of what has been done in schools could be applied to the rest of the community.

That said you are engaged in a wide range of initiatives, from composting and battery recycling to selling on used books.

Residential Areas:

It is great to read that you operate an open invitation to all residents areas to participate in Tidy Towns. How good is participation from these areas? Your story of Brackvoan estate is a sadly all-too-familiar tale however this one seems to have a happy ending.

Your award scheme for best estate/street sounds promising. Do show some photos in your 2013 entry. Another site from OMC homes requires attention as the entrance is quite tatty.

Sycamore Drive was admired for its sycamore as well as its well-kept homes. The gorgeous semicircle of cottages across from Bruff courthouse deserves a special mention. They are further enhanced by the leafy maple and chestnut trees.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach from Hospital seems to have improved since last year and this adjudicator found it to be neat and tidy with a clean town name place. A sign on the Hospital road beside the mural needs attention, even just to get rid of unsightly metal fencing.

General Impression:

Bruff impressed with its array of historical points of interest and the clear level of energy and enthusiasm displayed by the Tidy Towns team. It is recommended that you prioritise derelict buildings by 2013. Best of luck!