

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kilteevan** Ref: **2189**
County: **Roscommon** Mark: **274**
Category: **B** Date(s): **14/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	34	34
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	38	39
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	37	37
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	22	24
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	18	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53	56
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	31	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	33	34
TOTAL MARK	450	266	274

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2017 for your 3rd year and we are pleased that you find the adjudicator's reports helpful for your projects. We note your committee has an average of thirty members and another 70 volunteers and you have further support from various organisations such as the GAA. You have strong links with residents, voluntary groups and schools and receive support from local businesses and public bodies such as Roscommon County Council, Inland Fisheries, National Parks and Wildlife and several others listed in the application form. The use of Facebook, church announcements, word of mouth and newspaper are your means of communication. The involvement of the local school in the spring clean-up augers well for the future of your committee. Many thanks for attaching maps of the area with project locations marked for our attention and some photographs. Apart from the location map may we suggest that you try and incorporate the five other maps into one map which can be A4 or A3. The adjudicator will be less familiar with the locality than you are and it is better if they can see the entire area on one map and not be trying to see where different pieces fit together. Thank you for including the legend on the map. Your 3-year plan is noted. Finally, may we advise that 'less is more' in terms of the size of your application. Please reduce the submission for next year and if you use bullet points with the text, we will find it easier to read.

Built Environment and Streetscape / An Timpeallacht Thógtha agus Sráid-dreacha:

This section deals with the various public buildings and structures within your community. We were most impressed with the Community Hall and enjoyed reading about its history as the former church. It surprised us that this stone built structure which became unsuitable for a church was good enough for the Community Hall. It is fortunate that it was not demolished and it now forms an important part of your heritage. Perhaps the new church is more spacious. The national school beside the Community Centre is a lovely modern building which is well painted and proudly fling the Green Flag. We enjoyed the wildlife garden in the yard at the rear of the school with its many symbols of flora and fauna. The single arch stone bridge over the stream leading to the new church is delightful and makes the village very scenic. The well-painted new church looks very well and we admired the beech hedges in church grounds. The front boundary wall for the width of the church property consists of dashed concrete painted to match the church. Both sides of that boundary is defined by a un-rendered concrete block walls that don't complement either the stone walls near the bridge or the rural location. Ideally if they were faced with stone, they would look much better, but that would be a major task. A simpler alternative would be to plant climbing plants such as ivy in front of the walls and in a few years' time it would cover the wall and soften its hard appearance. Another alternative would be to plant a beech hedge against the wall as was done along the fence inside the church. This idea if adopted should be part of a design including regulated car parking spaces with the inclusion of trees between every 3 or 4 cars. The planting across the road looks well and if this boundary was improved it would add significantly to the area in front of the church. The Graveyard and Cemetery has a very interesting heritage sign

where we enjoyed reading about the Mapother family and the connection with Tom Cruise. We were most impressed with the stone boundary wall here; it is an excellent construction and we noted the removal of ivy from the older wall. The grounds looked well and no litter to be seen and individual graves are well maintained. We admired the old dry-stone wall, the former entrance to Kiltveevan graveyard, which octogenarian Mattie Murphy and a neighbour cleaned. Paddy's Finn's Pub is a lovely stone built structure with a stone wall boundary. However, in our view, what makes it exceptional is the tree planting on the boundary and in the car park. We know of no other bar in the country which is so well landscaped and it even has a wonderful background of trees which were probably there when the bar was constructed.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

In the environment of Kiltveevan, there are many mature trees planted by past generations. These are the main structural elements in the landscape and it is important that this generation plays their part in planting for future generations. We mention this because we feel that your focus is very much on flower beds when the long-term impact can be made by planting trees. You have opportunities to plant trees (mentioned in the section above) where we suggested planting in front of the new church. You have other opportunities in the grass margin near the Community Centre and in the semi-circular space at 'Mattie's Wall' and in sections of the approach from Ballinaboy. We saw the Mountain Ash or Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) tree planted by Owen Brennan for the gathering in the garden at the rear of the Community Centre. It seems to have established well and we suggest that the supporting stake be removed; it is no longer needed. Flower beds look well in the village centre where they signal to visitors that this is an important location. They are much less important when positioned along a rural road where the aim is to highlight the natural environment. In that regard, we suggest that the rectangular boxes of flowers on a grass margin from Ballinaboy, near the village sign be removed in favour of a line of trees such as birch, maple or lime (choose only one species). It is appropriate however to have some planting beneath the village sign as you have done. The use of permanent planting is encouraged rather than relying on annuals which are more demanding in terms of watering and feeding and we note that this is the approach you have taken. We noted the planted bed with a stone surround at Ballinaboy Cross and this is a good idea to inform visitors that an active community is close by. However, the bed is a little lost behind the signs. It would look much better if you incorporated the signs into the bed; it would show off the junction better and reduce grass maintenance in cutting between the poles. On the other side of the junction, a stone with Ballinaboy written there is at the back of a planted bed. The bedding plants in front are somewhat concealing the stone. We suggest that the stone be repositioned near the front of the bed and even placed higher and plants be positioned to the rear and sides of the stone where they will provide enhancement without hiding it. You have paid great attention to planting at the slipway beside the stream. It is nicely done but in our view bedding plants are not appropriate for this location. Instead, it would be better to encourage plants that grow beside a river or, if you intend to keep the raised bed with its stone surround then use it for wildflowers or low growing perennials such as Campanula, Aubretia, Iberis or other rock plants that will look well with the stone walls.

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fíadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádurtha:

We note you have planned to upgrade the loop walk and applied for funding for signs, benches, road improvements etc. and we wish you luck in that project. The Cloonlarge loop is a wonderful asset for heritage and biodiversity. We admired the signs on flora and fauna placed there. Please summarise the findings of the river survey planned for June in next year's application. Being aware of invasive plants such as Japanese Knotweed is important to help prevent their spread which suppresses the growth of native plants. We like the idea of delaying mowing of grassed areas to allow dandelions to display their yellow colours and allow bees an early harvest. After all, they provide as good a display as daffodils. The activities mentioned for supporting the National Pollinator Plan are interesting but sometimes we overlook what is actually there without us having to do anything. For example, the fields surrounding the graveyard was delightful with the tall ash trees and loads of buttercups and we saw similar scenes elsewhere in your community. There is a rich natural area surrounding your community and it is important to promote an awareness of its many traits and to map these habitats. Appreciating your local wildlife resources is vital in order to achieve under this category. In this regard researching and raising awareness is more important than 'doing' at the early stages. Biodiversity is under threat globally and sadly Ireland is a part of this trend. Habitats of value include specimen trees, hedgerows, treelines, streams, woodlands and wetlands. List the plants and animals to be found in your natural environment and recognise their significance (native, protected, or alien invasive?). These are very useful project for schools as you are no doubt aware.

Sustainable Waste and Resource Management / Bainistiú Acmhainní agus Dramhaíola Inbhuanaithe:

You have listed 14 activities under this heading so well done. We thought the school name sign made out with bottle tops a novel idea. The rainwater harvesting and composting area was noted. Being aware of the need to value our water supplies and to conserve its use is important as is understanding how wells were used for many homes in the past. This category is becoming more and more important and the available marks are now increased to 50 to highlight the need for communities to address the issues involved in tackling the growing waste mountain that is creating problems of pollution, unwanted land use, and the use of dwindling resources. Other measures for you to consider in regard to sustainability include the following. Contact your waste contractors and try to find out what is being thrown away and armed with this information you can start to think about how waste can be reduced. One third of our waste is organic in nature, such as grass clippings. You can avoid collecting mown grass by more frequent cutting and using mulching mowers which shred the clippings and facilitate faster decomposition. In regard to water usage, self-watering hanging baskets are a help in reducing the amount of water used and also the task of watering. Other waste minimisation projects might include working with retailers to cut down on packaging, reminding people to re-use shopping bags, discouraging junk mail, encouraging the re-use of water bottles and coffee mugs at school and at work. In response to an over use of chemicals for weed control, many useful products

of the past are no longer available and therefore communities are encouraged to use other means such as hoeing to maintain weeds. In some cases, allowing wildflowers to develop is an acceptable alternative. These activities will highlight the fact that you are focussing on this category and when you develop more projects in the future your marks will increase.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Nine actions comprise the information supplied in the application form and they vary from litter collection, weed control to anti-litter awareness projects. You are also researching wrought iron gates for painting. The chewing gum project supports the national campaign and it is significant that you have reduced the number of hanging baskets to reduce the use of water; it will also save you time. Of note is your mention of ceasing the use of pesticides which we assume means mainly weed killers and we are pleased to state that the impact of that action is very pleasing – we didn't see any yellow scorched areas around the sides of planted areas or poles or bases of walls. Kiltewan is very clean and tidy so well done. The field gate beside the slipway is one of the few untidy areas in your community.

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

You don't have housing estates so the entire community is your residential complex. From the application, it is clear that the entire community supports the work of tidy towns and they have made a special effort to support the participation.

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

Approach from the N63 looks very well. Some ideas have already been mentioned about further improvements at that junction. The road leading to the village has a lovely rural character and the village sign looks well. The grass is maintained in this section and that is appropriate. The grass in flower contrasts with the mown grass at the welcome sign. All signs were clean but we wonder why some of the information signs are not bilingual. The stone walls add great character, especially in the village centre.

Concluding Remarks:

You have made great progress in such a short time of participating in the competition. We wish you good luck and hope that this report provides useful guidance for future projects.