

# Tidy Towns Competition 2018

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Allenwood** Ref: **2205**  
County: **Kildare** Mark: **228**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **02/07/2018**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2017	Mark Awarded 2018
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	29	30
Streetscape & Public Places	50	27	28
Green Spaces and Landscaping	50	28	29
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	17	19
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	12	13
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	46	47
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	28	29
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	32	33
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>228</b>

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Allenwood Fíodh Alúine chuig Comórtas na mBailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2018 agus chuig Ceiliúradh 60 Bliain an Chomórtais. Allenwood Tidy Towns is very welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2018, celebrating 60 years of the Competition. Thank you for your comprehensive Entry Form and submission including location map, Strategic Plan 2018, photographs and illustrations recording all the works undertaken by your Committee over the last year. The Tidy Towns map included with your entry was clear and the legend provided helped in the adjudication of your village. You currently have 10 members on your Committee with a further 20 people who volunteer to assist with your activities. Meetings are held bi-monthly and you work with three Resident's Associations who are active in the village. You are supported by a range of local organisations to further your goals and you communicate with residents and members through Facebook, Parish Newsletter, Regional Newspapers and your new website. Your engagement with young people in the area is very strong and you co-operate well with the local National School, on various projects. The involvement with the Tidy Towns Competition over the last two years has been very beneficial for Allenwood and has improved the local environment and community spirit. Your focus initially was on high profile enhancement projects but this is now moving towards the other elements of the competition, such as biodiversity and 'doing more with less'.

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

The Texaco Garage and Spar Shop are prominent buildings at the main junction as one approaches the centre of Allenwood. The Fáilte sign and floral displays at this junction are welcoming to the visitor as is the circular timber picnic bench at this location. The Church in Allenwood is a very impressive majestic building and is a major landmark in the village. The car park is well presented and the container planting on both sides of the Church doorway was admired. However, this area would benefit from additional tree planting particularly around the perimeter walls and some internal planting would also soften the impact of extensive hard surfaces. It is noted that agreement has now been reached regarding the provision of tree planting outside the Church and this work will be carried out in the near future. The all-weather pitch at the school was busy on the day of adjudication with a local summer camp and it was great to see this facility in active use. The current condition of the site at the rear of the XL shop detracts considerably from the general appearance of this part of the village. The school was visited and the buildings and surrounds are well maintained and the frontage along the road is presented to a high standard. The side access vehicle gate to the school property would be enhanced with painting and in a similar way the perimeter railings on the boundary of the Rock World Water Features premises, would also benefit from painting and upgrading. The improvements to the premises at the Credit Union were noted and the Tom Baker family butchers and Michael Anderson photography premises at Oak Grove were particularly admired. It is good to note you are taking steps to deal with the derelict building opposite Cushalla in consultation with Kildare County Council. A site has been chosen for a new playground facility for the village and the project is progressing well.

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

The 'Down to Earth Mural' at the local takeaway enhances the appearance of this area and well done to all who were involved with this worthwhile project. You have cleared an area at the Station Road to create a Wildlife Garden. It should be noted that thickets containing briars and scrubby vegetation provide important nesting sites for birds and care should be taken when considering their removal. Happily native Irish wildflowers will be re-established here. Floral displays in the central part of the village significantly enhance this area and the timber log planter at the main junction and the new planters near the Texaco garage, were greatly admired.

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

Your flagship project this year is the creation of a School Garden in the Local National School. A wonderful garden has been created here and the colourful gate, fencing and benches, raised timber planters and the reuse of tyres as planting containers were all greatly admired. This will provide a great teaching resource for the school. Well done for all the efforts made here. You attended a 'Biodiversity Walk and Talk' along the Grand Canal in May of this year and have been building bug hotels with the local beaver group for re-use at your Wildlife Garden. You are supporting the creation of a looped walk and nature trail along the Grand Canal in conjunction with the Water and Communities Office and the Waterways Ireland and there is no doubt that improved pedestrian access is needed to the Grand Canal Way at Bond Bridge. In addition, the surfacing of Canal towpath would be very beneficial from a public access viewpoint- you are wished well in your endeavours in this regard. Bogs are a unique habitat and Allenwood is fortunate to be situated close to extensive areas of bogland and the Canal Link Project exploits this unique heritage and it would be great to see a new linkage by way of walkways and cycleways established between Allenwood and Lullymore in the future.

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

The very well-constructed cable reel bench situated at the main junction in Allenwood, fits in well with the objective of this category of 'doing more with less' and re-using available waste materials. The 'something old into something new' initiative also follows this approach. In relation to future projects under this category, you might consider the possibility of developing a Community herb, vegetable and fruit garden on a suitable site in the village, building on the experience gained at the National School. The promotion of low carbon vehicles and the installation of an electric car charge point at an appropriate location in the village could also be considered. The extension of cycle parking facilities in the village or cycle routes along the Canal might be pursued. The greater use of solar panels on roofs and heat exchange units to reduce energy consumption in homes and businesses are also worthwhile initiatives- Grants are available for these improvements. The use of water butts or tanks to provide storage for the watering of plantings at the School Garden, village floral displays or in private gardens during the Summer period is also encouraged. The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland website has good information in relation to the development of Better Energy Communities.

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

It is noted that you undertake regular litter picks and this is evidenced by a general lack of litter in the village on the day of adjudication - well done. You have involved the scouts in the Annual Spring Clean and have created a good partnership here. Unfortunately, significant clutter was noted in the main part of Allenwood village on the day of adjudication. The XL Shop advertising hoarding on the path and the bollard sleeve adverts detract from the streetscape here. Signage in this area is also needs to be examined. It was wondered why so many bollards have been erected in the centre of the village and along the newly surfaced stretch of road leading to Oak Grove - one of these new bollards had already been knocked over. Too many bollards in a village setting can create visual clutter and very often these are struck by vehicles and become a visual dis-amenity. Where vehicle encroachment on footpaths is a problem, high kerbs can be an effective solution to this.

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

You have planted new hedging along a missing section of hedge in front of Whitethorn Park. It will be interesting to see how this grows following the recent very dry summer. Cushall estate was visited and was maintained to a good standard. At Woodlawn Estate the overhead power lines are prominent at the entrance to the estate and some additional street tree planting is needed here. At Cushalla Estate the hornbeam trees at the entrance were particularly admired and enhanced this area. It is good to see that you are encouraging Residents Associations to take steps next year to make estate entrance signs bilingual - this is a very positive initiative.

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

Significant road re-surfacing works were underway in Allenwood on the day of adjudication and it was great to see these improvements taking place. It is noted that you have identified two 'Green Kilometres' in the locality which will be improved as part of a county-wide competition. Approaches to Allenwood were generally well maintained and presented and road surfaces and markings were generally good, particularly at the main junction in the centre of the village. The brown Tourist sign on the approach to Allenwood needs cleaning. The maintenance of roadside verges and hedges is best carried out with a view to encouraging wildlife. Leaving a strip of long grass near the hedgerow on rural verges is a good option and is visually acceptable and allows a suitable strip to be reserved as a wildlife corridor.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

It was a pleasure to visit Allenwood village. You are making good strides in the competition and your committee is working hard to improve Community spirit and the appearance of the village – keep up the good work.