

# Tidy Towns Competition 2018

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Suncroft** Ref: **386**  
County: **Kildare** Mark: **257**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **07/07/2018**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2017	Mark Awarded 2018
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	37	37
Streetscape & Public Places	50	32	33
Green Spaces and Landscaping	50	37	37
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	32	32
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	10	11
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	46	46
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	32	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	28	28
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>257</b>

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Suncroft Crochta na Gréine chuig Comórtas na mBailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2018 agus chuig Ceiliúradh 60 Bliain an Chomórtais. Suncroft Tidy Towns Committee is very welcome to the Tidy Towns Competition 2018 your 30-40th year entering the Competition. Thank you for your application form and hand-drawn map. The map provided with your application was unfortunately not very clear and did not show any new or maintenance projects carried out over the previous year, referenced on the map. This is important as it provides some guidance to the adjudicator when visiting your village and assists greatly in the adjudication process and can be addressed next year. You have a loyal Committee of 5 people with varying number of volunteers assisting your work. You receive good Community Support and are also assisted by the ICA, The Community Development Group and local clubs and the school. Young people assist your work by undertaking environmental initiatives and litter picking. Communication with the general public is through your Newsletter, Meetings and Leaflet drops. Have you thought about setting up a Facebook Page – this can be useful in getting your message out to a wider audience? Text alerts are also useful for contacting volunteers regarding ongoing works.

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

The name Suncroft 'Crochta na Gréine' as you know refers to the 'blessed sunny field' and this was certainly an apt description of the weather which greeted us when we visited your lovely village. The centrepiece and landmark of the village is the Church which is wonderfully presented with attractively painted piers and gates. The Belltower and Church Bell located in the grounds are particularly attractive features here. The nearby Scoil Bhríde National School has a very impressive frontage along the road with well painted road markings and boundary wall. We admired the small barrels planted with flowers outside the wall along the road in the vicinity of the Church. The water pump was most attractive and was colourfully painted and landscaped. The Grotto is also worthy of positive mention. The Croft Inn and Beau Bailees Coffee shop looked well and the unique vintage wagon wheel seating to the front was a hive of activity. The bunting across the road here has seen better days. The attractive animal figurines on the wall beside the off-licence premises were greatly admired. Suncroft Nursing home was very well presented with a beautiful garden located to the rear. The Community Complex in Suncroft has a wide range of facilities. However, some additional tree planting provided in the car park would enhance this area. The playground area was also very colourful, with well planted beds and the trees near the flagpoles added a splash of colour. The old cemetery was visited and this is a very interesting local heritage site and it would be good to initiate a research project here to identify the old graves and undertake some gravestone restoration work, where this is feasible.

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

The maintenance of green spaces and landscaping operations has been delayed this year due to adverse weather

conditions in Spring. The small little Park and amenity area called Páirc úí Chatháin was visited. This is an interesting triangular shaped space located on the outskirts of the village. One wonders whether the small stream which skirts the site could be opened up to public view as it is currently hidden away behind hedging and shrub planting. Some consideration and attention is needed to the general maintenance of this area on an ongoing basis, including the maintenance of the seats. The maintenance of floral displays and plantings in the village area was generally to a good standard.

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

It is good to note that Kildare County Council are supporting your group in relation to issues concerning the environment and conservation etc. The 'Save the Swift' initiative sits well under this category and the erection of swift boxes at various locations in the village and monitoring their usage is a worthwhile project and the completion of this work is awaited with interest. The existing stream along Askinraw Lane has good wildlife potential and it is recommended that this should be managed to encourage wildlife i.e. the use of ornamental planting along the banks of the stream should be minimised and natural waterside vegetation should be allowed to develop as much as possible. A survey of water quality and aquatic life in this area could also be undertaken. Are there any sites in Suncroft suitable for developing an area as a wildflower meadow, woodland or naturalised bulb planting ?

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

It is noted that you have plans to develop a Suncroft Way as a project under this category. Is this a looped walk or is there a section of the School Lane proposed to be part of the route? It would be good to include the proposed route on the map of your village. Other initiatives under this category to consider for the future include the development of a Community Garden for growing herbs, fruit and vegetables and as an educational resource or alternatively a community composting facility. You could also work with the school to develop a garden in the school grounds or a polytunnel to assist with producing flowers for your annual floral displays. Other possible projects to consider for next year include the promotion of the use of low carbon electric vehicles, pursuing the installation of an electric car charge point in the village or a car-pooling initiative. The further promotion of grant aid for the installation of wall and attic insulation on older building stock, the greater use of solar panels on roofs and heat exchange units to reduce energy consumption by households/businesses are worthwhile initiatives to consider. The use of water butts for the watering and flower boxes and tubs and private gardens during the Summer period is a good water conservation measure. The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland website has good information in relation to the development of Better Energy Communities. We noted the new recycling bins located in the village which were well presented. The new recycling litter bin located in the village will help to increase the amount of segregation of waste in the future.

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

It is good to note that you have arrangements in place to deal with litter on an ongoing basis with litter picks in the village and along approach roads carried out 3-4 times per week. It would appear the source of much of the litter and dumping in the area, as with many other villages in Ireland, is from passing traffic and this is an ongoing problem. The main part of the village was generally neat and tidy on the day of adjudication with very little litter was noted here. There was however, a significant amount of litter found within the curtilage of the old graveyard and it was disappointing to see that this wonderful heritage asset in the village had been despoiled in this way. The existing 'Slow' sign on the approach to the village on the Athy Road could do with a clean or possible replacement.

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

Askinraw Drive was well presented, however there were two dead trees at the entrance which detracted from the appearance here. Eascanrath Brook also looked well with attractive planting along the stream - perhaps more natural streamside-type vegetation should be encouraged to grow here. Katie's cottage with its beautifully thatched roof was a very special feature in this area. There are two estates as you enter the village from the Newbridge Road. Ashfield estate has an attractive open space interspersed with trees located opposite the housing and this could be developed further. There is a splendid wildflower meadow located beside the wall. We very much admired the newly restored house located opposite Ashfield estate, which has been expertly and very tastefully finished, and which is now a really important addition to the streetscape & village of Suncroft. Newtown Grove housing estate opposite Ashfield is very well maintained with a new planting scheme located to the front. This estate is not yet finished and would benefit from additional tree planting, particularly on the roadside margins. Churchview estate was very well presented with attractive trees interspersed on the open space to the front of the houses and had a nicely painted white wall along the road. It is noted that you are liaising with Kildare County Council regarding the resurfacing of roads and provision of footpaths in this estate. The individual house and garden facing onto the main road with the sunroom extension was superbly presented.

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

The approach roads to Suncroft village are characterized by well-developed boundary hedgerows which are an attractive feature and also provide important habitats for local wildlife. The hedgerows contain a range of species including Ash, blackthorn or sloe, brambles, blackberries, elder and hawthorn. The approach roads and roadside margins are generally well maintained with signage, road markings and surfaces etc. presented to a good standard. It is noted that you have purchased a leaf blower and strimmer to assist with the maintenance of edges and roadside margins. As you know where a margin is wide enough, it is a good idea to leave a strip uncut adjoining the hedgerow to encourage the development of a wildlife corridor along the road.

**Concluding Remarks:**

Suncroft has good potential to progress further in the competition. It would be important to try and recruit more volunteers and members to assist with your work. Planning and implementing a high-profile project can be a good way to achieve this. We wish you well with your further endeavours in this regard.