

Tidy Towns Competition 2018

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Spink** Ref: **419**
County: **Laois** Mark: **262**
Category: **A** Date(s): **29/06/2018**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2017	Mark Awarded 2018
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	36	37
Streetscape & Public Places	50	32	32
Green Spaces and Landscaping	50	35	36
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	27	27
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	12	13
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	56	58
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	28	28
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	30	31
TOTAL MARK	450	256	262

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Spink(Spinc) chuig Comórtas na mBailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2018 agus chuig Ceiliúradh 60 Bliain an Chomórtais.

Welcome back to the Supervalu Tidy Towns Competition. It is lovely to see you feel that your residents by taking an interest in how the area looks, have embraced the rural idyllic countryside you live in. Your ability to get 40 volunteers for you Buds & Blossoms festival demonstrates the level of community spirit in your village considering you have population of approximately 150. There are not many areas that could count on this level of support for an event. We wish you well on hosting an event for Laois Walking festival.

Following the remarks from last year's adjudicator, thank you for including the distance from the picnic area to the community field. Sometimes for a linear village it is good to have an approximate area to ensure that all the distance is covered.

Please consider doing a 3 year plan. It does not have to be professionally done up. Just a page with the three years 2019, 2020, 2021 and a few bullet points under each. Alternatively consider a table showing if the project is new, ongoing or a future project. It is usually satisfying for Tidy Towns groups to see at a glance all of the work that has been carried out in one year.

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

The national school looks well including the boundary wall. The purple seat was bright and attractive. It was a nice idea to have the picnic tables here for the children during their lunch hour. It is something that is missing from a lot of larger schools. The snakes and ladders painted on the school yard are an imaginative way of ensuring the children keep active during their lunchtime. Although judging by the well-kept nets we would assume that much GAA happens during recreation time.

However the community centre alongside the school would benefit from painting. We observed that this is in your plans.

The Church and its grounds are in general well-maintained especially the grotto area.

The sheds of Glanbia plant were not yet painted on day of adjudication. We can see why this would be a priority for you given the prominence of these buildings.

Headens bar is kept very well and provides a colourful focal point to your village.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You are surrounded by amazing scenery in Spink. The details of your Coopers Walk has been described as "A challenging walk traversing the hills of the 16th century Cooper Estate with spectacular views of Laois, Carlow, Waterford, Kildare and Tipperary". We didn't manage to complete the walk due to time constraints but it is one we

will certainly come back to. There was no notice board for this walk noted as yet. You mention this is on your list of future projects.

Your community field is maintained to the high standard that one would expect from a facility used for many events including the Laois Garden Festival.

The shrubbery beds out of the Glanbia plant have a good base of shrubbery planted but are in need of weeding.

Some supplementary colourful planting here would enhance this area.

The picnic area signage remains an issue.

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

Your hedgerows and stone walls are providing a wonderful natural habitat for so much of the nature around you.

For assistance in this category you check out <http://www.biodiversityireland.ie>.

Although we received the brochure for the Laois Garden festival with your submission, the only category that this was mentioned under was Tidiness & Litter Control. From Laois Garden Festival Facebook page we found "Buds and Blossoms Laois Garden Festival is fast developing into one of the best garden events in the country. For the last two years it has attracted many of the specialist nurseries in Ireland, and this year it is continuing the trend, but with the addition of two of the leading nurseries in Britain." By all accounts this festival was a huge success well done.

Adding some information (just a line or two) from some of the many experts that participated on how they were informing and encouraging the public through this event is a potential way to gain marks in this category.

Feel free to include any projects that are run in your area that fall under any of the categories for Tidy Towns, even if no member of the Tidy Towns committee is directly involved. You are reflecting the work that is done in your side community. Through our research we found An Cnoc Ban Farm. They run camps and workshops for children during the school holidays and mid-term breaks which are linked to traditional themes and natural farming rhythms of the seasons such as St. Brigid's Day, Shrove Tuesday, Bealtaine, Mid Summer, Harvest, Samhan/Halloween and Christmas. Feel free to include a few bullet points on how the organic farm adds to and protects some of the biodiversity in your area.

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

The inclusion of the food producers and the promotion of buying local produce from your Buds & Bloomsoms festival is certainly worth a mention in this category.

No flags flying on the flag poles although you do mention in your submission that the schools has retained its Green Flag status. Obviously these flags are only achieved after a great amount of work. To ensure extra marks in the sustainability section ensure you give more details from your school of these projects and results. Short bullet points would be sufficient. We are not trying to create extra work for your committee. Maybe a small group of the children from older classes could get involved here as part of your Junior Tidy Town committee?

The Bring Bank themselves were in good condition and there were items in each which demonstrate they are utilised. Are there any figures on the amount of recycling here, or the number of times they are emptied?

Remember that the emphasis is now on the reduction of waste in the first place. Avoidance is the foremost concern, followed by recycling and re-use. You can get more up to date information from the Environmental Officer of your County Council.

You might get some handy tips on <http://www.epa.ie/begreen/> and on the Tidy Towns website.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Unfortunately you remark that litter continues to be a problem in the area due to passing motorists. Being a linear village this does usually mean you are cleaning up extra rubbish not generated by people within your own village. Despite the assistance of a rural social scheme worker you still collected 12 bags of rubbish during Laois Clean-Up week. 15 people involved means 10% of your community assisted in these efforts. A sizeable amount of the community.

On day of adjudication your hard work was noted and there were minimal amounts.

The area around the Bring Bank needs weeding. We would encourage you to take this on as a project as from previous experience in other areas these areas are more prone to illegal littering if they are not well maintained.

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

Your work in encouraging individual householders to maintain their own individual properties is paying dividends.

The row of similar bungalows was unusual in that they didn't face the road. But with the views in Spink this does make sense!

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

The black welcome sign with the planting underneath delivers a very good first impression. While the sign are very well kept and the planting underneath is well maintained, as you are country village why not consider reflecting the nature that is there by planting more native pollinator plants in the future.

The traditional stone bridges maintained by local residents are a wonderful addition to your village and continue this good impression. The well-kept bright green post-box was a little gem.

The verges were well cut back on the road side and were not encroaching on the yellow lines.

Concluding Remarks:

Spink is an obviously well-kept and cared for village. We admire your work and wish you well in your future

endeavours.