

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Castlelyons - Bridesbridge** Ref: **572**
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **325**
Category: **B** Date(s): **13/06/2019**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2018	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	48	48
Streetscape & Public Places	60	39	40
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	45	46
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	37	38
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	20	21
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	58	59
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	33	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	40	40
TOTAL MARK	470	320	325

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Castlelyons Bridebridge – Chaisleán Ó Liatháin páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019. Many thanks for your application form, photos, map and three-year plan. The map is well-labelled with projects in their various categories but I was surprised when I arrived in the village that Glanbia wasn't marked on the map. As a first time-visitor I was a bit confused as to where I was! Make sure to mark places mentioned in the form on the map, where possible and keep an eye on the scale. A three-year plan to guide your work is a great idea. You don't have a time frame for most projects in your plan and it might be worth thinking about this for next year. You have a small committee of three but have volunteers to help out. It is always a challenge to recruit new members onto committees but maybe worth putting the call out again. You liaise with and received support from a wide range of organisations, individuals and the school community which is great. I was delighted to read that particular effort was put into a project on invasive species and collaborating with the Bride project. It is clear that the work of the Tidy Towns group has made a huge contribution to the village and it's nice to realise that when you look back at old photos. Maith sibh!

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

The historic map of Castlelyons Bridgebridge is an excellent future project. You have most of the work done for your heritage trail and it makes sense to be included in the historic map series. I look forward to seeing the final result. Castlelyons Bridgebridge obviously has a rich heritage with many interesting features in and around the village including the castle, lime kiln, the abbey, the victorial post boxes, old stone bridges, the church and the lovely old graveyard. The school looked very well on adjudication day with its well-maintained grounds and trees although their green flag wasn't flying. Fr. Ferris Park is a wonderful amenity and very well maintained and presented. I really liked the oxeye daisies on the bank at the back of the upper car park. The playground looked very inviting on a sunny day and exercise machines in the park area are a good future project idea including the wheelchair friendly swing. Good luck with this project. Benches around the village in various locations were in good condition. The Village Park is another lovely amenity and opportunity to enjoy Shanowennadrimma river. I recommend leaving c. 1m adjacent to the river un-mown in order to allow the riverside vegetation to develop naturally. This will protect water quality and provide a habitat for wildlife. I also think it can look very attractive. I loved the old stone bridge and the large weeping willow in the park. The Bridge Bridge park is also well-maintained and provides an opportunity to enjoy the Bridge River.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You have a lot of maintenance work to do with all the green spaces and landscaped areas etc. Thank you for the

photos of winter colour and planting too. All of the parks are very well-maintained. The Church grounds and adjacent green area are beautiful. As I said before, I would recommend not mowing close to water courses in general and allowing the natural riverside vegetation to develop. To be honest, the hydrangeas on the bank at Murphy's garage didn't look like they were thriving but it is early days yet. There was a lot of bare soil which will be hard to maintain weed free. Planting a ground cover plant will keep the weeds out and might help the hydrangeas blend in. Hydrangeas are lovely shrubs but they aren't hardy and will need to be minded.

The hornbeam trees along the Grand Avenue (remember to note this on the map next year!) and the rowan in the park are doing well. The hanging baskets and florals displays around the village are attractive. I'm not a huge fan of hanging baskets on historic structures such as old stone bridge. In general, I would recommend moving away from summer bedding (e.g. begonias) and using more permanent planting including perennials that have benefits for pollinators. E.g. along the stone walls on the Grand Avenue where you have begonias under the tree roses (please remove the tags on some of the roses), the begonias look little out of place to me. The stone planters with begonias are very colourful and attractive but again you could include some pollinator-friendly perennials here. There was some planting in the stone wall near Father Ferris Park which looked lovely and fit in well.

There appeared to be herbicide use in some areas (e.g. stone walls, Bridebridge Park and near the stone village name plates). Please try to reduce any herbicide use and only use where weeds are causing a hazard or on invasive species. Chemicals such as pesticides and herbicides are not good for the environment, nature and/or human health. There are also nice features around the village such as the bicycles and the Victorian post box that add a splash of colour and interest. The overall impression is very good.

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

Castlelyons and Bridebridge have an abundance of natural habitats in and around the village with the trees, hedgerows, grassland, old stone walls and the Bride and Shanowennadrimina Rivers. I'm delighted to read that you are continuing to treat Japanese knotweed in Bridebridge. Hopefully you can collaborate with Cork County Council and the Bride project to continue to eradicate invasive species. As you say, mapping is essential and this has started on the Shanowennadrimina. It's good to read that you leave some grassland unmown for wildlife. Maybe include some pollinator-plan signage next year to highlight these areas and the value of this approach. I think there are several other areas on the approach roads (e.g. Grand Avenue) and in the parks that grassland along boundaries or in quite corners could be left unmown. The new graveyard is neatly maintained by there is nice meadow area here and pollinator plan signage, which was good to see.

It's good to know that your work is guided by your biodiversity plan. Please include a summary of the plan next year. You are trying to avoid the use of herbicides and controlling weeds manually but there is still some evidence of herbicide use in places, as I mentioned above. I noticed a nice bee project in the school grounds.

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

Your village does cover a large area and a mobile motorized water unit with a clever system to ensure minimal waste is a great idea. Do you use rainwater for all your watering? Could your rainwater harvesting be extended? This category covers everything from waste reduction to water conservation and re-using of materials etc. How about running some workshops on composting, upcycling, zero plastic etc. to help raise awareness and understanding among your community?

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Overall the village was tidy and clutter-free on adjudication day. Some litter was noted at the abbey and weed growth. There was also a bit of litter in the new graveyard. The big clean-up in March sounds like it was very successful. It's great to get the whole community involved. The Cork County anti-litter competition is a great initiative and another incentive for the community to keep the village clean.

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

There is a mix of housing types in the village and many are presented to a very high standard, well-maintained with attractive gardens or planters. There is a lovely green area in front of Kent Terrace. Árd na Rí has a nice green area and well-presented houses. A dead tree in the green should be replaced and additional landscaping could add some colour and interest. Several houses on the main street are well-painted and have nice floral displays.

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

The approach roads to Castlelyons are good with a mix stone walls, trees, hedgerows and grassy margins. I liked the stone name plates with Caisleáin úí Liathain. Signage in general was clean and clear. The floral displays provide a welcome to the visitor.

Concluding Remarks:

I really enjoyed my visit to Castlelyons Bridebridge on a beautiful summers day. I look forward to returning and learning more about the area with the historic map.