

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: Castleknock - Caisleán Cnucha	Ref: 772
County: Dublin	Mark: 230
Category: G	Date(s): 21/06/2019

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	30
Streetscape & Public Places	60	28
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	28
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	25
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	45
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	29
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	27
TOTAL MARK	470	230

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Castleknock (Caisleán Cnucha) chuig comórtas Náisiúnta na mBailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2019. Thank you for your entry form, map, photographs and Three-Year Plan 2019-2022. Next year put the photographs showing events etc. organised by you throughout the year, including your spring bedding etc. into the various categories within the entry form it helps the adjudicator. We see that the relaunch of Castleknock Tidy Towns took place on 25th March this year when a new committee was formed consisting of ten members. Your open public meeting on 19th March had attracted over forty people which was excellent and following on from this you now have a committed 20 /30 each week who assist you. Choosing high profile areas for your clean up will, we have no doubt, lead to additional volunteers. You received advice from a large number of other TidyTowns groups and also have the support of state and semi-state agencies in addition to local businesses – Myo's, Silver Spoon Café, Brenna Crushell, etc. Your communication methods are perfect – the variety ensures that all ages are aware of your activities. Bringing the youth on board is vital and we encourage you to keep up those links and become actively engaged with the teachers, scout leaders etc. by arranging projects/ nature walks etc. for/with them.

Already you tell us the relaunched Tidy Towns group has made a difference to the look and feel of the village and as a group of like-minded individuals, working for the social good, you have already bonded – this is the true spirit of this competition.

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

Nestled between the M50, the R147, the River Liffey and the Phoenix Park, Castleknock is a tightly knit community with a busy village core surrounding by housing estates interspersed with educational facilities. The core of the village consists of two storey premises - houses and business intermingled with each other. The Ashleigh Retail Centre, with its great variety of well-presented business premises, has now been joined by another retail centre – Lidl. This is located adjacent to the Ashleigh Retail Centre and hopefully when complete, and fully occupied, will add greatly to the commercial life of the village core. You have some fine community structures – St Brigid's Cofl church, the RC church - Our Lady Mother of the Church, Our Lady's Parish Centre, St. Brigid's National School, Castleknock National School, Castleknock College and of course Farmleigh House and parkland. Some of the business have made a particularly good effort to present themselves and Myo's must be singled out in this regard – beautifully painted, clear façade uncluttered by advertisements and flags flying high in the private carpark. We also admired the Village Shoe Maker and adjoining Dental Surgery (could the name be put in the frieze?), Castello Bruno with its traditional awnings and De Brúns bar and restaurant. You mentioned a few areas which need attention and we concur with you. We might also add that some road bollards and poles need painting as does the Castleknock Village Centre sign and the railing at the Circle K Service Station.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

There are quite a number of communal green spaces dividing residential areas one from another. These help to provide pedestrian linkages between the estates and also into the village core. We particularly admired the area around the RC church, Community Centre and large green space behind with its mature trees. There were quite a few other green spaces similar to this one – Park Avenue Green and the one between Phoenix Avenue and Hadleigh Park. We recommend trimming the suckers at the base of the trees (there are quite a few trees effected by this) and also trimmed back the under growth. We also recommend trimming the grass around the trees in the open green spaces. Wildflower/ biodiversity areas /natural habitats can be accommodated in specific locations in these green spaces. In fact, all that's really required in these large open connecting green spaces is pathways to be cut through them and areas set aside for ball play; other than that, the grass can be allowed to grow long. You have a great facility in Tom Russell Park home to St. Brigid's GAA, which is another green lung in your community. There are tree lined avenues in most housing estates and we noticed where some of the trees have failed FCC have embarked on a replacement drive which we were pleased to see. The row of mature trees along the edge of the open green space at Castleknock grove were very healthy and give a great roosting site and shelter to our birds. There were colourful flower beds place in strategic locations which emphasised the area and added to the visitor experience – but take care to plant to the sides and back if an estate name is located close to the ground. Some name signs couldn't be seen due to the planting.

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

Having the Phoenix Park beside you is a wonderful asset for you in this category. But you are correct when you say your group 'can do more to generate awareness'. We see that you are embracing this category and have two Biodiversity Officers on your steering committee. When they attend a workshop, they should then engage with the local community and pass on this knowledge – have mini workshops in the village. Leaf compost is excellent to enrich soil and we are delighted to read that one future project is the installation of leaf deposit bins/compost areas where residents can bring their fallen leaves. On the Castleknock National School website we noticed the new school wormery which must be very interesting for the students and saw that they also had three new duck chicks this year. There are sloping banks along some of the roads (some in residential areas) which would be very suited to planting with wildflowers – this is something you might also consider for the future. We see that you also intend to grow wildflowers (please ensure they are Irish) in College Grove and we look forward to seeing this next year – take photos of it as different wildflowers come into bloom.

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

Many communities struggle with this category which is unfortunate as it is just about 'doing more with less'. How can we reusing items which we would otherwise throw away? Recycling is always good but this category is more than that. We see you have plans for some projects here. What about also engaging with the local business and see will they sign up to 'Bring your Own Cup' or will they consider using compostable straws rather than plastic ones. Will you grow your own plants /take cuttings? Segregating waste during your litter pick-ups is admirable and we are sure FCC are delighted with this help. Besides the shoe repair shop on the Main Street are there any residents who have skills /repair items – appliance repairers, dressmakers, bicycle repairers, furniture restorers? If there are, then publish the contact details on your Facebook Page and also print out a copy to put on the community notice board in the local shop(s), and also put in doctors and dentists' waiting rooms and in hair salons. With sustainability to the fore in our minds we must all begin to think before we reject an item and throw it away. Another idea might be to have a 'Castleknock Buy, Swap or Give Away' Facebook page where members of the community can advertise unwanted items.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Castleknock was virtually free from litter when we visited and we also delighted that weed growth, often a source of untidiness in many communities, was negligible in the centre of the village. So, well done to all involved in the litter pick-ups and weed control on your Saturday morning clean-ups. On other main road (R806) we did however notice quite a lot of weed growth. We see you have 'Love your Kerb' which should in time alleviate the issue of weeds along kerbs and road edges. Do you have a list of areas adopted with the names of the community member who has volunteered to look after it on the community notice board (church) and/or on the community notice board in the local grocery shop? This has helped other large communities to be virtually litter and weed free in that people see unadopted areas and then volunteer. We noticed sandwich boards on the footpaths in front of a few commercial premises which must make it difficult for the physically and visually impaired members of your community. We were delighted to see the absence of 'Dog Fouling' signs which clutter up the streetscape in many other communities. If you find dog fouling is a problem, we suggest that you paint 'Clean up after your dog' on the footpaths in problem areas. We have been told by other communities that this works better than the signs on poles/ fences etc. We were delighted to read that you had surveyed Castleknock in relation to areas of graffiti, rusty utility boxes and redundant poles these all make for an untidy streetscape. By now you have engaged with FCC with regard to these and we hope a resolution to this untidiness was made and that soon these problems will be resolved. In St Brigid's graveyard plastic and compostable materials were in one pile – provide a bin for the plastics.

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

The residents of Castleknock are very proud of their area and of their homes. Within the old village there are some fine detached houses on large sites with well-maintained gardens. We loved the group of brick semi-detached houses opposite St Brigid's church. The various housing estates we visited were extremely tidy and the communal

open space had neatly cut grass with edges trimmed. We also noted that grass margins along footpath in these housing estates were neatly trimmed and chemical weed killer had not been used. Your 'Love your kerb' is working – it's all new so in time you'll get more volunteers. You mentioned utility boxes in another context but truthfully we were amazed by the number of utility boxes there were in some areas.....can this be resolved too? One small green space at the entrance to a housing estate had six utility boxes! We particularly admired the name signs of Castleknock Cross. A very simple idea but very clever – a cut out of the name from a sheet of metal which is fixed to two simple uprights. Your 'Tidy Gardens' and 'Tidy Estates' competition should prove successful. Chesterfield estate had a stunning display of flowers in planting beds at the entrance.

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

We entered Castleknock from the R147 and then drove down past Castleknock Lawn Tennis Club into the village. You mention the 'upright cattle grids' and we tend to agree. But we were delighted to see the approach taken at the junction of Beechpark Lawn and the roundabout at the RC church where planting existed inside the barrier making the area very presentable. Perhaps this approach can be adopted where there is sufficient space inside barriers. Your main road through Castleknock (the R806) has a considerable amount of traffic on it and so road markings are bound to wear quickly. As you have such a number of commuters into the city, we know that road markings leading to safety will be a priority for FCC and we have no doubt that those worn are in line for repainting. We noted a distinct lack of seating at many bus stops - this is something that should be provided. Throughout the village the estates entrance roads are lined with mature trees and we were pleased to see that replacement trees had been provided where trees had failed. Pedestrian linkages are important and we noted quite a few.

Concluding Remarks:

We were delighted to visit Castleknock which we have visited many times before and it is always good to see the improvements taking place.

A suggestion on filling up the form and producing the map(s). In the application form, please number the projects as, New N1, N2, N3.... Maintained M1, M2, M3 and Future Projects FP1, FP2, FP3 and please number them consecutively. These numbers can then be transferred onto the map(s) so that the adjudicators can locate the projects and see your hard work. Needless to say, attendance at workshops, seminars etc. will not be transferred onto your map(s). Please also provide a legend on you map(s).

Thank you for entering the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2019 competition and we are delighted to welcome you back. We see you are developing a Logo ... very suitable ideas so far.