

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Barraduff - Barradubh** Ref: **1515**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **252**
Category: **A** Date(s): **24/06/2019**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2018	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	36	36
Streetscape & Public Places	60	33	35
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	33	34
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	20	20
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	15	15
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	52	54
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	27	28
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	28	30
TOTAL MARK	470	244	252

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Barraduff An Barr Dubh páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019.

With ten committee members and another 25 volunteers, plus the school and the Men's Shed, you are well served for local support in such a small community for this your 4th year in the competition. You hold monthly meetings throughout the year and involve the local housing estate. Kerry County Council are supportive of your efforts as are Inver Ireland, O'Donoghue Cost-Cutter and John Dan's Bar.

The use of Facebook, Mass leaflets, text messages and public meetings are your means of communication. The involvement with the National school is commendable as their projects (such as the Green Flag) are exactly in line with the aims of the competition. We are pleased to note that participation has encouraged greater civic pride and respect in your community. Many thanks for attaching a map of the area with project locations marked for our attention and some photographs. The map is a good size and was easy to follow but rather than numbers, we suggest you write directly on the map. That way, it saves us going over and back from the map to the legend. However, the map is not accurate because for example, the Garda Station is not opposite the church. We suggest that either you seek assistance from Kerry County Council in getting a more accurate map or check what is available on the internet, which is what we had to do. We also suggest that you include more of the village on the map, such as the GAA grounds and other landmarks, including the road numbers. you have sufficient space. We do encourage communities to aim for a 3-year plan because it is not possible to achieve everything in one year and it is good to aim for targets over a period of years.

May we suggest that loose pages should be stapled together to ensure that some do not get lost.

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

In general, Main Street looks very well, with the Garda Station opposite Nagle's Service Station, the latter, which is improved, compared with last year's report. Further down the street, Kates – Home of Good Food looks very inviting. The modern Sacred Heart Church is well maintained as are many of the other buildings on this street. Well done on the very colourful painting and improvement work done on the vacant house on the corner of the N72 and the R570. The green reveals on the windows and doors as well as the painted picture in the windows is a great way of turning a negative into a positive. We liked the Corner Bar with its lower level painted mustard colour and the upper floor in stone. The damaged gable indicates that an ivy plant was removed in recent times and it brought some of the paintwork with it. We wonder if the ivy had been killed first and allowed to die back; that is the way to remove it without causing too much damage to walls. The Old School is now home to Barraduff Men's Shed group. We wonder if they plan to upgrade the building by replacing the windows and doors. It will be great when improvement works such as repairing and painting the gable are done. It looks like part of the front boundary stone wall is missing. Is it planned to restore that section? Murphy Motors and nearby, Inver Service Station are

well-maintained as is St. Bridget's Funeral Home. The GAA grounds are substantial in size and well-developed; it would look better with some landscape treatment, such as trees to enhance its appearance. The new school is a nice modern low-rise building. The boundary wall is well painted, and we liked the blue-painted gates and railings. We were pleased to see trees in the school grounds and well done on achieving a green flag and having it flying during our visit.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The main structural elements in the landscape are trees and fortunately, there are several groups of existing trees in Barraduff vicinity. We note your mention of planting 30 trees on approach roads and we saw some of them on the Rathmore approach. In planting new trees, it is best to use a single species on a road or street for uniformity and we note you planted oak – a good choice, but some other species as well. Also, it is important to ensure that the base of new trees is maintained free of weeds, grass and flower beds to ensure early establishment, so please keep this in mind as the new trees grow over the coming years. When trees are established it is important to remove the stakes as the stems can get damaged from the ties or stake.

There is plenty of scope in Barraduff for a line of trees from one end of the village to the other and we suggest you include this as a project to undertake in your action plan. You will need to work with Kerry County Council to determine suitable positions for the trees, to take account of underground services etc. The existing trees in containers are good specimens but they have no long-term future as long as they are in containers. Guideline for plant containers is to use them only where planting directly into the ground is not possible; they should not in themselves attract any notice. It is better to have fewer well planted containers than a large number in which the quality of plants is inferior. Empty or poorly planted containers are less effective than no plant container at all.

We note the planting of white thorn and black thorn hedging, which is very appropriate and will give you white flowers over a period in Spring, and both of them are supportive of wildlife. Well done on growing flowers from seeds using the poly-tunnels in the school grounds. If considering more seasonal flowers the use of permanent planting including herbaceous perennials for floral displays is encouraged rather than relying on annuals which are more time consuming. A major effort in planting flowers was made on the approach from Rathmore, near the bridge. However, having several small beds can add clutter and for that reason we suggest that the design be revised. We liked the fact that you used stone surrounds instead of timber but painting them white attracts attention to the stones and not the plants/flowers. That approach with its curved road is quite attractive because of the existing trees and you have planted more trees which will add further impact in years to come. If a plant/flower bed display is your desire at this point, we suggest one large bed with a range of shrubs and herbaceous plants that provide colour for the maximum period throughout the year. It would best be positioned on the side near the STOP sign, where one already exists. Other grassed areas on this approach provide an opportunity for the development of wildflowers.

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

Under this heading you mentioned a picnic area near the river, and you are abiding by the Wildlife Act in refraining from cutting hedges during the bird nesting season. You are conscious of the importance of wildflowers and plan to provide more bird boxes and insect hotels. You are working with the local fishing club to teach school children water safety and an appreciation of nature.

You have a rich natural area surrounding your community and it is important to promote an awareness of its many traits and to map these habitats. Appreciating your local wildlife resources is vital in order to achieve under this category. In this regard researching and raising awareness is more important than 'doing' at the early stages. Biodiversity is under threat globally and sadly Ireland is a part of this trend. Habitats of value include specimen trees, hedgerows, treelines, streams, woodlands and wetlands. Try to list the plants and animals to be found there and recognise their significance (native, protected, or alien invasive?). This information can be fun to gather and can involve the schools or other interested parties. Raise awareness through holding events such as hedgerow walks or bat walks. Contact the Irish Wildlife Trust for more information.

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

This category is about tackling the growing waste mountain that is creating problems of pollution, unwanted land use, and the use of dwindling resources. It is a global and a local problem. To save the Earth we need to move quickly to a zero-waste society. Your village can play its part by first looking at the volume of waste that is generated.

The emphasis here really needs to be on reducing the volume of waste produced rather than recycling (which is taken for granted). At this level of the contest the adjudicator wants to see innovation in tackling bigger issues of food waste, plastic disposal and energy use. What are homes and businesses doing to tackle these?

Activities mentioned in your application form include using rainwater for watering plants and a polytunnel for growing the plants you need. Composting activities take place at the school and in some private gardens. In the area of transport, a bus is used for the school children instead of parents using their cars and a clothing bank is being well used.

There are several other measures that your town can take regarding sustainability.

- One third of our waste is organic in nature, such as grass clippings. You can avoid collecting mown grass by more frequent cutting and using mulching mowers which shred the clippings and facilitate faster decomposition.
- Regarding water usage, self-watering hanging baskets are a help in reducing the amount of water used and also the task of watering.

- Working with retailers to cut down on packaging, reminding people to re-use shopping bags.
- Encouraging the re-use of water bottles and coffee mugs at school and at work.
- In response to an overuse of chemicals for weed control, many useful products of the past are no longer available and therefore communities are encouraged to use other means such as hoeing to maintain weeds. In some cases, allowing wildflowers to develop is an acceptable alternative.

These activities will highlight the fact that you are focussing on this category and when you develop more projects in the future your marks will increase.

For more helpful tips and case studies from other Tidy Towns entrants please take a look at <http://localprevention.ie/tidy-towns/>

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Well done on the regular clean-up projects and collecting of 100 bags of rubbish and we note that the national school assists with litter patrols. You did a great job in managing weeds at kerbsides because we didn't see any, and good for you in not using weedkiller sprays. We also noted the absence of posters and your aim to have overhead cables placed underground. Although, we didn't see that these were much of a problem compared with other towns and villages.

A site beside the GAA grounds appears not being used. No doubt you are anxious to have this site/enterprise up and running.

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

Many individual private houses on the Main Street and on side roads are in good condition and well maintained. We particularly liked the house (Dromada) opposite the old school and admired the specimen of *Acer platanoides* 'Globosum' in the front garden. The unnamed residential scheme opposite the school has a stone-faced wall onto the road and on the inside the plaster render is painted white. We liked the stone facing very much but suggest that climbing plants such as ivy planted on the inside would in time require less maintenance than painting and add significant softening. Well done on having some birch and oak trees planted on the open space. One of the oak trees is leaning and needs attention.

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

The approaches to Barraduff on both sides of the N72 look very well and we have commented above on the special effort being made on the Rathmore approach. We noted the small perennials with a gravel mulch at the directional sign for Mallow but since the space is so narrow, we wonder if it is worth the effort. The general natural appearance of the vegetation around the sign is quite acceptable. The situation is different on the Rathmore side where the directional sign for Glenflesk is in a wider space. However, our problem with the planting at the base of the sign, is that the white stones are more prominent than the plants. Opposite the church there is a commercial complex, some units of which appear vacant and the courtyard planting is in need of maintenance. The road to the school needs repair.

Concluding Remarks:

Well done on your efforts to improve Barraduff. You are to be complimented on your success to date and we hope this report provides some guidance for further improvements.