

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Brosna - Brosnach** Ref: **276**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **290**
Category: **B** Date(s): **22/06/2019**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2018	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	36	36
Streetscape & Public Places	60	36	37
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	37	37
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	31	32
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	17	17
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	60	62
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	34	35
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	34	34
TOTAL MARK	470	285	290

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Brosna Brosnach páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019.

We are surprised and pleased that you have such a strong committee for the size of your community in this your 22nd year of participation. Ten committee members supported by another 30 volunteers is a fantastic achievement. You hold four meetings throughout the year and avail of social media to contact each other when needed. Kerry County Council is very supportive of your work as is SuperValu and the North and East Kerry Development Group. Communications are done via social media, newspaper, newsletters and public meetings. The involvement with local schools is commendable and we have seen the evidence of how they assist your litter cleaning programme. Many thanks for attaching a map of the area with project locations marked for our attention. While we commend you for this effort, we advise that over the next year you make a determined effort to improve on this map. You could use an A4 page and fold it in half. Please check with Kerry County Council; they may be able to provide you with a template that would make your job easier. When placing project numbers on the map, please follow a sequence that would be easier for an adjudicator (who is less familiar with your village) to follow. We 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.

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

Most houses in the village are in good condition and well-painted. Main Street is unusual in that some houses have private gardens with walls and others have paved areas linking directly with the footpaths. Brosna Parish Hall is well painted, but we suggest some permanent planting along the side wall would help to soften its appearance. Kate Pat's, The Sportsfield's Bar and the Three Counties all were well maintained. We also admired Murphy's Convenience Store and Post Office. The limestone and sandstone church forms a lovely focal point in the square and is nicely framed with mature trees. The two beds of Begonias are adding summer colour. The adjacent cemetery is well-maintained, and we noted the historical stones/plaques in the shrub border fronting the stone wall boundary. While there is some evidence of weedkiller being used it is not as widespread as in some other cemeteries. We liked the daisies in the grassed area of the cemetery. Lupins were on show at the lovely Grotto, nicely situated in a corner beside the church but the sand pile in the opposite corner does nothing for the overall appearance of the square. Scoil Mhuire was looking very well with all walls painted yellow. We liked to see the range of trees planted in the grounds.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The large square at the top of Main Street leading to the church and cemetery is a very functional space, but a tree

planting scheme is advised to enhance and soften its appearance. We suggest that either oak, maple, lime or birch be used rather than flowering cherries which are not native to Ireland. The main structural elements in the landscape are trees and these should be your first objective as they will provide long term benefit for the community. The Main Street has enough space for a street tree scheme that in time would significantly improve the streetscape. That would be a much better idea than having trees in containers in some locations as is the present situation. In planting new trees, it is best to use a single species on a road or street for uniformity. Therefore, we recommend that you consult with Kerry County Council with a view to engaging a professional such as a Horticulturist or a Landscape Architect to design a street tree planting scheme for Main Street and the square. At the entrance to the square, an old water pump is placed beside a seat with a Brosna name stone and some planting that includes *Cordyline australis* (New Zealand Cabbage Tree). We suggest less paving and more planting, using a combination of shrubs and herbaceous perennials that are pollinator friendly. However, a revision of the layout here could form part of a brief for whoever would be engaged to design a scheme for Main Street and the square. 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. Well done to all involved in the provision and maintenance of window box display.

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

We can see from the information you attached that Brosna and Knockaclarig National Schools are very active in their studies and appreciation of biodiversity and a climate change seminar was held in Brosna School in June. The pupils from Knockaclarig school visited the Tralee Bay Wetland Centre. And we note the pupils also help with your clean-up projects. That is all great stuff and it will stand to the children as they continue their development and education. The surroundings of Brosna are a delightful rural area with several habitats. These 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?). 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). Your application focuses mainly on the use of rainwater for watering plants and that is very good.

Several other measures for you to consider are.

- Avoid collecting mown grass by more frequent cutting and using mulching mowers which shred the clippings and facilitate faster decomposition.
- Self-watering containers such as hanging baskets with a reservoir for water are a help in reducing the amount of water used and the task of watering.
- Working with retailers to cut down on packaging and 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:

Your actions this year included participation in the County Clean-up when an impressive 30 volunteers and the collection of 100 bags of rubbish, including tyres and plastic. What a great achievement for your community and also to have the schools involved and also have the benefit of the Rural Social Scheme. A rusty galvanised shed roof takes from the Abbeyfeale approach. Old tyres mounted on a garden wall probably intended to be features still look like old tyres and are best recycled with other tyres. Closer to the village, kerbside weeds have yet to be dealt with. However, we didn't see any litter so well done to all concerned.

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

Residents in Brosna are very house proud as evidenced by the many homes in good condition and well-painted. The addition of window box displays was also noted. The Cois Clydagh estate contains only five houses, all are well-maintained, and some residents have established hedges in their gardens. Cois na hAbhainn estate has trees planted in the roadside margins that are not very suitable (flowering cherries, copper beech). We suggest they be removed and replaced with birch trees, which are native and would do a better job enhancing this scheme. The road here was in poor condition.

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

Patsy's Cross is well marked with a large welcome sign highlighting the success of the All-Ireland Junior Club

football winners 2014/2015. That would be fine on its own but the additional sign for the music festival and the cycle tour add clutter to this approach. The town name sign to the side is very much a side show. While all of these signs succeed in getting the message across, we suggest the design of this area be reconsidered to reduce the clutter. Why not use the green spaces on the R576 where there is more space and make one feature with floral displays (if necessary) instead of three groups of flowers which make little impact? The 'Failte' name stone at the 50kph signs looks a little lost because it is so close to the ground. The stone itself is fine but we suggest it would look better if raised onto a plinth. The distance of approximately 1.5 kilometres to the village centre has natural hedgerow/embankment vegetation which is fine, and several individual houses and sites look well.

Concluding Remarks:

We were pleased to visit Brosna for the first time. Well done on the many improvements being made in and around the village. We hope you find some ideas in this report for future projects.