

# Tidy Towns Competition 2019

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Causeway - An Tóchar** Ref: **329**  
County: **Kerry** Mark: **227**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **12/06/2019**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2018</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2019</b>
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	35	35
Streetscape & Public Places	60	30	32
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	25	27
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	20	21
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	8	8
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	45	50
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	25	27
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	25	27
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>227</b>

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Causeway An Tóchar páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019.

We have noted that your committee of five members assisted by up to 9 volunteers hold monthly meetings throughout the winter and weekly during the summer period. Kerry County Council is supportive of your work and you use newsletters and social media for communication. The primary and post primary schools assist with your clean-up projects. We hope you found the experience of participation last year was helpful in deciding what works to undertake. In that regard, 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. The map drawn on the application form was of little use because we don't know the village or its landmarks. Even though we took some pictures, we had to revert to Google maps and use the street view version to become familiar with the layout once again. The reason for that is because our reports are usually written several days or even weeks later and it can be difficult to recall several features within your community. Therefore, we advise that for next year, you download a Google map satellite view and use it as your base map upon which you can write the project numbers that you want us to visit.

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

The Forge Pub and Cantillon's were well-painted and we admired the window box displays and hanging baskets. Clanmaurice Credit Union building looked well and made good use of the gable wall with the CU logo. McHale's Stratford Bar was well-painted and had hanging baskets on the upper floors of the building. Some weeds in the gutters need attention. A large off street car park to the rear of houses is well surfaced and enclosed with a rendered concrete block wall. This is a good location for the recycling banks which are located to one side of the car park. Suggested improvements for this site would be to provide some screening around the recycling banks, plant climbing plants such as ivy against the concrete walls and plant a line of trees around the boundary. In a few years' time, this site would be transformed into a very attractive place. An Tóchar Inn Bar and Lounge is well-painted. The Community School is a fine modern building; it is sensible to have it located near the GAA site. The temporary traffic control measures made with bollards and signs are not visually pleasing; are there plans to do a permanent roundabout? The boundary fence of the GAA site is visually obtrusive on the approach to the school. We suggest a hedge be planted on either side of the fence to soften its appearance. Na Leaneí Childcare Centre looks very well, and we were pleased to see some trees in the grounds. The Adult Education Centre is a large two-storey building in good condition and the grounds were landscaped. Leahy's Foodstore is easily recognised with the name on the gable wall. It looked well. The Old Creamery building, and site looks sad and no doubt its improvement is on your mind. We admired the Green Flag flying at Cill Lúraigh National School. The church has an adjoining cemetery and a car park which is essentially a lay by of the main road. We liked the groups of trees planted here to break up the impact of the hard surface and cars. Well done. Lights at the church are unusual and

surprisingly at a low level. The railings and plinth wall are painted and the grounds clean and tidy. The cemetery is enclosed with a rendered concrete block wall painted white. The trough planted with flowers outside the wall is an attempt to improve this area with flowers, but they are insignificant and would best be placed elsewhere. It is clean and tidy, but like many other cemeteries little thought was given to providing trees or shrubs to break up the large expanse of graves. Can you consider planting climbing plants such as ivy at the concrete wall on the sides; they would make a big difference

### **Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:**

We were pleased to see trees in several places around Causeway and indeed there is great scope for further tree planting. Trees we liked were those planted at the church car park and near the colourful single storey cottages on the Tralee Road. Further out that road, we also liked the more established specimens on the grass margin in front of Marian Terrace. There are lines and groups of mature trees elsewhere in Causeway which look very well. We always advise that trees should be the first consideration because they are the main structural element in the landscape. In planting new trees, it is best to use a single species on a road or street for uniformity and we are pleased that this has been the approach taken in Causeway. 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 and again, we are pleased that this is what you have done.

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. The use of old cable reels as plant containers was a first for this adjudicator; usually they are used as picnic tables. However, we advise that the most important matter is to have plants well-established and if possible, concealing the container. In that regard, planting in the cable reels should be stronger. Shrub planting of mixed species near the centre of the village (in front of the red painted house) looks well but please be aware that periodic pruning will be needed to prevent the border becoming overgrown. 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.

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

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:**

Your application includes information on the problem of speeding vehicles going through your village and you have applied for funding to implement safety measures such as digital signage. We wish you luck with that venture and when the measures are implemented, please include them under the criterion of Approach Roads, Streets and Lanes.

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 town 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?

There are several measures that you can take in regard to 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 the task of watering.
- 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:**

Actions taken by you under this heading include a weekly litter run and we note the National School assisted with the Spring Clean and you are fortunate to have two CE scheme workers. Some litter was seen beside the recycling

banks, but in general, we were pleased to see very little litter in the village. A rusty shed on the Ballyduff Road takes from this approach. Overhead wires in the streetscape are adding clutter. We suggest you work with Kerry County Council with a view to having them placed underground at the first opportunity. A sign at the church wall was dirty.

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

We were very impressed with the condition of most private residential properties in and around Causeway. In addition to keeping the houses smart with fresh paint, many residents have gone a stage further and add floral displays as window boxes or hanging baskets on the buildings. Well done. Tóchar View estate has nice houses, but we suggest some softening with hedges in the gardens. We liked the splayed entrance constructed with stone nicely capped and with a tree growing behind the wall. At Marian Terrace, the sign needs painting, the houses are in good condition, but the gardens are without any planting. Some trees and/or hedges would add enhancement. We liked the trees on the open space and the stone wall boundary with the pavement adds character. It is advisable to check the tie and supporting stake to see if the trees are sufficiently established. Aim to remove the stakes at the earliest opportunity before they cause damage to the stem.

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

Stone walls on the approach to the village are delightful and it is great to see them in such good condition. We enjoyed the natural vegetation growing around the 50kph signs on the Ballyduff approach. It was interesting to see roadside kerbs painted white. We were very impressed with the castellated stone wall on the boundary of the GAA sports complex. It is very good quality.

On the Tralee Road, outside the stone wall at Marian Terrace, a wide grassed margin is planted with a combination of trees, groups of shrubs and there are round plant containers. We suggest that the plant containers be removed as they serve no useful purpose and only distract from the other planting.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

Congratulations on applying again this year. We appreciate that it is a new experience for you, and we hope that this report provides some guidance for your future projects.