

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Cromane - An Cromán** Ref: **1460**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **211**
Category: **B** Date(s): **23/06/2019**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	30
Streetscape & Public Places	60	30
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	28
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	22
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	8
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	35
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	28
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	30
TOTAL MARK	470	211

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

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

Welcome back to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition after a break of 32 years. We are delighted with your decision to join in this wonderful national movement of environmental improvement. Having four committee members supported by another ten volunteers is fantastic for your small community. You mentioned Cromane Community Council, a local councillor and local business as supporting agencies, but we note from the long-term plan that it was supported by the South Kerry Development Partnership Ltd. Under the Rural Development (Leader) Programme 2014-2020. For communications you avail of social media, public meetings and the Community Council website. You have a School Liaison Officer on your committee and are hopeful of having a Junior Tidy Towns group at some future date. In time, they will become the future Tidy Towns Committee, so it is very important to plan for succession.

Many thanks for attaching a map of the area with project locations marked for our attention. However, we advise that you work on improving this map for next year's entry. Some tips to do this are to put a North point to help us orientate ourselves and please distinguish between land and sea. Because there is no scale on the map, and because an adjudicator is not familiar with your locality, it can be difficult to know when they have reached a particular point or have missed it. In that regard, we found that your map covers a very large area and in fact the area is too large. We drove to Cromane Point. For next year, we suggest that you confine the area to the village centre and immediate surroundings and in a few years when you have implemented improvements in that area, consider including other areas. You also need a clear legend, so we know at a glance what the numbers or letter represent. This should be on the map to avoid the need to go over and back through the documents. Have a look at Google maps, we had to use it to help explain some confusion with your map. Apologies for the several comments on these points but we must emphasise the importance of having a good map. It is great that you have a long-term plan, but it is not complete until you indicate when the various projects will be implemented. We realise that the plan was done by a consultant, but you need to take ownership of it and add this information 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:

The Star of the Sea church looks very well and is bounded by a low stone wall with brick piers. The large car park adjacent looks untidy. The old school, now a Community Centre is serving a new purpose which is great. The GAA Club House is a fine building serving a fine sports complex. Nearby, the modern playground looks very well, and no doubt is well used by local children. The car park here serves many purposes which is making good use of the

land. An adjacent cemetery is also new and we liked the fact that there are existing mature trees to the side. The other side is landscaped with a mixed border of shrub species. In order to soften the hard impact of the car park, we suggest the planting of climbing plants such as ivy at the base of the concrete wall. Jack's Restaurant looks well. The national school, Realt na Mara is a fine big building opened in 1986. This is a large site with trees in the background. The grounds are well maintained.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

In the coastal area you have challenges in planting trees and other plants. It is best to take the approach of using native plants to the maximum. The best colour we saw was with sea thrift, so make better use of it rather than the usual range of annual flowers. However, 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.

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 are pleased that you have not too many plant containers. But we saw a line of ornamental containers in a gravel strip in front of a stone wall boundary to a private garden. The containers are of little value as the dominant view is of weeds in the gravel. If any planting is desired here than it should be a line of trees (if allowed) or a low hedge, or a line of alpine perennials, such as sea thrift.

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

You are very much aware of the rich natural area surrounding your community that is home for the Natterjack Toad and the Kerry Slug. Well done on this and it is great to read that you are interested in the conservation of these species and their habitats. Appreciating your local wildlife resources is vital in order to achieve under this category. You have plans to develop a community orchard and insect refuge on a site near the school which means it will be available for their environmental programmes.

Meanwhile, we suggest that the pupils could try to list the plants and animals to be found in your community 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:

Under this heading you mentioned a focus on natural materials in your work and liaising with Kerry County Council regarding the disposal of plastic washed up from the sea. You plan to get water butts to collect rainwater for plants and you intend to manually control weeds instead of spraying. All of these activities are appropriate.

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.

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?

Other measures to consider are.....

- 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.
- Self-watering containers such as hanging baskets 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 and encouraging the re-use of water bottles and coffee mugs at school and at work.

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:

You organise a clean-up of the beach every month and encourage locals and fishermen to help you collect the litter and various debris, including plastic. That is a very visible project that helps to strengthen community support. You also encourage walkers to help pick litter on their routes. Well done on this huge effort and we were surprised to read that you collect 26-30 bags of rubbish each month. Is the collected material segregated for recycling? We were pleased to see Cromane looking so clean, especially at the recycling banks. The clothes bank beside the GAA building painted blue is in good repair.

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

Most individual homes that are occupied are well maintained and you have taken action and worked with the owners to improve others that are vacant or derelict.

The small Slieve View is an estate of cottages with large gardens and the White Sands Holiday Homes are well maintained.

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

The approach roads were in reasonable condition and we were pleased to see so many stone wall boundaries which add great character to your community. At Castlemaine Harbour, it is great to have public toilets and information signs and we noted the recycling banks were there also. We were delighted with the great growth of sea thrift (*Armeria maritima*) with its pink flowers popping up everywhere. The long border of *Zantedeschia* (Calla Lilies) with its white trumpet shaped flowers on another roadside was truly most unusual. The picnic area (red benches) at the statutory town name was clean and tidy.

Concluding Remarks:

Well done for submitting an entry, the last one being in 1987. We hope this report provides some guidance for future improvement schemes.