

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Duagh - Dubháth** Ref: **335**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **270**
Category: **B** Date(s): **15/06/2019**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2018 | Mark Awarded 2019 |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Community – Your Planning and Involvement | 60 | 37 | 38 |
| Streetscape & Public Places | 60 | 36 | 37 |
| Green Spaces and Landscaping | 60 | 33 | 33 |
| Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality | 50 | 24 | 24 |
| Sustainability – Doing more with less | 50 | 16 | 16 |
| Tidiness and Litter Control | 90 | 57 | 58 |
| Residential Streets & Housing Areas | 50 | 29 | 30 |
| Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes | 50 | 34 | 34 |
| TOTAL MARK | 470 | 266 | 270 |

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

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

You must be pleased to have such a strong committee of ten members and another four volunteers. That is a very good number for a small community and is an indication of strong links with residents, voluntary groups and schools. Kerry County Council, local business interests, Duagh Development Association, Duagh School, the GAA and even the Graveyard committee support your work. Well done on having your own website and we see you also use the Church Newsletter and local newspapers for communications. It is great to read that the local school has a daily litter pick, which we presume is within the school grounds. Last year's adjudicator was very impressed with your map and we can see why. It is very easy to read and has a North point. However, more landmarks are needed, we couldn't find The Glen to see the whitethorn hedging.

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. So perhaps you would provide one for next year. Please note it is important that you look at each criterion and identify what suitable projects could be achieved within a timeframe. That way it would have your ownership. Congratulations on being a participant in the competition for eight years.

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

The Presbytery is a large building located beside the church. St. Bridget's Church is a fine sandstone building with limestone reveals around doors and windows. We admired the trees and shrubs in the grounds of the National School and the artwork on the side of a building. A rusty iron roof on a small building opposite needs attention. O'Brien's Bar is painted a dark maroon colour. Watson's Service Station is very clean and tidy, and we liked the hedge planting on the front boundary. The cemetery is down Springmount Road where there is memorial to the victims of The Famine period in Ireland. Graves are well-maintained here (although we would like to see less use of chemical weed killer) and the cemetery is bounded by a traditional stone wall. It was nice to see a map and legend of the grave plots, some of which are quite large tombs. A little bridge across the stream leads to Tober Mhuire (the Grotto) where a statue of Our Lady stands on an altar on high ground. This complex of a grotto and graveyard in a wooded valley is very pleasant. Well done to the GAA for providing a new walkway around the sports field.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Projects mentioned under this heading include hedges and grass verges maintained and 500 beech hedge plants from Coillte were to be planted in May on approach from Abbeyfeale. That seems very late, the likelihood of failure

is quite high when planted outside of the dormant season. Whitethorn hedging at the Glen area we didn't see. The GAA entrance planted with perennials and summer flowering plants is an improvement and the garden at the back of the church is a great community project.

The main structural elements in the landscape are trees and that should be the top priority. A project of great merit would be to establish an avenue of trees through the village; there is enough space. However, such a scheme would require the services of a Horticulturist/Landscape Architect to ensure that soil and site characteristics, including underground services would be considered as well as choosing the correct tree species. We suggest you work with Kerry County Council with such a scheme which would probably fit in well with their objectives for improvement of the village.

In planting new trees it is best to use a single species on a road or street for uniformity. 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.

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. In the case of the half barrel at the welcome sign, it does not fit that criterion and therefore, any planting should be done at the base of the sign. Empty hanging baskets on piers at the graveyard should either be planted or be removed. 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:

It is great that St. Brigid's School have taken the lead on biodiversity and that the school has a green school committee and they have nesting boxes, feeding tables, a log pile, bug hotel, wild areas, feeding boxes, nesting etc. That is all great activity. Next year, can you add some information on how the school activities is spreading to the rest of the community. 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:

Thank you for the information on how the school was awarded five Green Flags (Litter and Waste, Energy Conservation, Water Conservation, Travel and Biodiversity). We also note that rainwater is used to water the flowers in Duagh.

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?

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.
- The use of self-watering 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, 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:

It is surprising to read that 96 bags of rubbish was collected in the April County clean up. That seems a lot for a small village. Was this material segregated for recycling?

Your activities in the past year included cleaning footpaths and kerbs and weeding.

Well done on removing advertising posters and for placing bins where dumping was an issue. Your efforts on all these matters has been worthwhile because we found Duagh very clean and tidy.

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

Most occupied houses in Duagh are in good condition and well-maintained and many have trees and/or shrubs in their gardens. Well done for taking an interest in vacant premises. Cois Ard is a small estate of two-storey houses. The open space would benefit from tree planting and hedges in private gardens would add enhancement. We admired the cottages opposite the entrance. The entrance to An Tobar, (an unfinished estate) has a palisade fence on the left on which ivy is doing a wonderful job in softening. What would usually be front gardens of the houses are instead hard surfaces for car parking. Hedge planting between these areas would benefit visually as would some trees on the open space.

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

On the approach from Abbeyfeale, a private concrete block wall has yet to be rendered or faced with stone. An alternative is to plant climbing plants in front and in a few years' time, they will hide the wall. Closer to the village, several private houses have concrete walls which are painted in pastel colours. On the right-hand side, a line of trees adds great character to the approach. The heritage design welcome sign is attractive, but we suggest that the half barrel be removed. If plants/flowers are desired, there is enough space at the base of the sign.

Concluding Remarks:

Well done on the improvement works being done by your community. It is a great effort that is proving very worthwhile.