

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Farranfore - Fearan Fobhar** Ref: **1087**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **275**
Category: **A** Date(s): **25/06/2019**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2018	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	38	38
Streetscape & Public Places	60	34	35
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	35	35
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	30	31
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	16	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	54	54
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	31	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	32	32
TOTAL MARK	470	270	275

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Farranfore Fearan Fobhar páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019.

With a committee of ten members and another 30 volunteers, you represent a strong force in Farranfore. Well done. Judging by the information on training, you are a very active community and are keeping abreast of good practice in many spheres. Many agencies support your activities, including Kerry County Council and you have successfully secured funding from Leader, the Community Support Fund and several other bodies as well as business interests. For communication, you use all options, including emails, texts, social media, Parish Newsletter etc. You have good links with the local school and that is important to foster a community spirit in children who will become the Tidy Towns Committee in future years. Many thanks for attaching a map of the area with locations marked for our attention and photographs. Rather than listing appendix numbers on the map, we suggest you write the project name or provide a legend on the map because it is not convenient on site to be going over and back through the application to find out what we are supposed to be viewing. In your case, the application is far too big and that makes the problem greater. We suggest that you aim to reduce the size of your application and this can be achieved by reducing the number and size of photographs. It is best to place photographs beside the text in the application form. Printing on both sides of the page will help even more and we advise against putting everything in plastic folders, especially plans as they can be difficult to replace. A simple stapled document is sufficient for us to read and then get out and around your community.

We note your Action Plan of 2012 and the Development Plan 2013. However, these are out of date, unless you have still to complete some actions, but we do not have that information. We suggest that a summary of an up to date plan be included with next year's entry.

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

The Centra shop looked well and there were plant containers on the footpath. Herlihy's Bar (The Half Way House) was well painted and some plant containers were placed on the footpath. There were also window boxes on the lower level. Instead of plant containers we suggest that trees would provide longer term visual and environmental benefit and require less maintenance. They would also help to reduce noise and dust from passing traffic. The very large Garda Barracks is a significant building in the village on a large site for which we note you have ambitions to develop an amenity park

The 4 Park Retail Centre has eight commercial units with plenty of space for more. While this space may be regarded as desolate because it is not developed, the good news is that nature is taking its course and native vegetation is trying its best to reclaim the space – that is biodiversity! Just inside the entrance, two maple trees

have established and no longer need to be staked, so please have the ties and stakes removed before they cause damage to the tree stems. The same comment applies to some fine specimens of birch trees planted in the open spaces at the car park. This complex was litter free but kerbside weeds need removal. The entrance to this retail park has open spaces that if landscaped would enhance the approach. Some trees would make a big difference.

Kerry Airport is a fine complex for a village and has hedges on the boundary with the road.. The car park is very good, but it can be improved with tree planting. Some kerbside weeds were present. The railway station has a large site, portion of which is a hard-surfaced car park. Some planting was done between the station and the car park and some weeds need attention. Sherwoods Bar is a large complex on the corner of the N22 and N23. We suggest enhancement by landscape treatment of the car park to soften the impact of the buildings and enhance the village at that important junction. Cronin's Used Furniture Sales operates from a large building that is well-maintained and Aherns Pharmacy looks fine. The Republican plot looked fine. The GAA grounds are beyond the school. It is a large site with a fine club house, and all was looking well except for some rubble inside the entrance. Knockaderry National School is a large complex; some trees in the grounds would add enhancement.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The information you provided relates to biodiversity which is more appropriate to the criterion – Nature and Biodiversity in your locality, but it is also relevant here. Well done to Kerry Foods for choosing a hedge and fence for their boundary. It is much more pleasant than a wall and blends in well with the rural surroundings. We also noted the splash of colour of the flowers planted in special sections at the base of the hedge. The main structural elements in the landscape are trees and fortunately there are many matures growing in and around Farranfore. However, each generation must plant trees for their children and grandchildren, and we note you have planted whitethorn, holly and rowan. However, there are places at both ends of the village where you have plant containers that make little impact and require maintenance when trees would provide much better enhancement in the long term and be easier to maintain. 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:

At the railway station grounds there is a great opportunity for biodiversity, and you have used it for that purpose and provided information signs. We saw the signs advising that treatment for invasive plants was done and asking that the area be left undisturbed. Well done on increasing the number of bee keepers in the community, achieving 50 pots of honey a year. We looked over the wall of the bridge over the little stream An Feith Fionn and were surprised to see Gunnera growing on the banks. This plant can be invasive in some places and so it is best to limit its growth. Mown grass dumped under the Gunnera is not good practice.

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. 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:

Items mentioned under this heading include a recycling unit for bottles, cans and clothes, the shredding of Christmas trees, a composting tub, a school vegetable garden, rainwater usage for plants, encouraging more use of public transport. Local businesses recycle pallets, installed water saving devices, biodegradable wrapping for sandwiches, composting sites and use of reconstituted stone for the Railway Amenity Park. All of these actions are most appropriate for this category which 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.

Other measures for you 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.
- 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 and 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:

You are fortunate to have some help through the rural social scheme to undertake general maintenance, including weeding and litter control. Some observations from our visit include the following. The area where recycling bins were positioned close to Centra is untidy. We suggest that a less conspicuous site would be better for the recycling bins and the car wash facility. Some garages would benefit from being tidied and others such as the Skoda distributor looked well.

An 80 KPH sign needed cleaning and the bus stop sign opposite the Republican Plot needs replacing. An old poster is still on a pole near the bus stop and the road channel here needs sweeping.

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

Most private houses in the village are in good condition and well-maintained and their grounds have either trees, shrubs or hedges. Parkview residential estate near the school looks well. There are trees and shrubs in the open space and some hedges in private gardens. The resident of a house near the name stone deserves special mention for the great display of flowers in the garden and in window boxes and hanging baskets.

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

The approach from Killarney has plenty of mature trees and hedgerow vegetation. We were pleased to see that the grass was not mown around the town signs – it is too narrow and looks fine. Closer to the village, there were flowers planted beneath the large directional signs, but they are hardly needed at this point. The name stone on the Tralee approach is nicely done with Lavender in bloom in the planting arrangement behind the stone. However, kerbside weeds beside this feature took from the impact. Road surfaces were generally very good.

Concluding Remarks:

This was our first time to stop and look around Farranfore instead of driving through. Well done on your efforts which are making quite a difference.