

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Knocknagoshel - Cnoc na gCaiseal** Ref: **343**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **227**
Category: **B** Date(s): **22/06/2019**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2018	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	30	30
Streetscape & Public Places	60	30	31
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	30	31
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	20	22
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	10	11
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	50	50
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	25	26
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	25	26
TOTAL MARK	470	220	227

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Knocknagoshel Cnoc na gCaiseal páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019.

Your committee of eight members supported by a further ten volunteers and another group of eight youths have made a good effort in improving your community.

It is noticeable that you have not formed alliances or obtained much support from the local authority or other public bodies. This is very important, and we advise that you to contact the Environmental Awareness Officer of Kerry County Council who will assist you in preparation for this competition. Your means of communication include public meetings, a newsletter and notices in the shop. It is great that school children help with cleaning and planting flowers. Many thanks for attaching a map of the area but we found it of little use because it is not accurate and does not include all of the village. We suggest that you work on improving this map for next year, Please note that downloading a map from the internet would help you greatly as it would have the correct alignments for streets and will also include a footprint of the various buildings.

As mentioned by last year's adjudicator, please make use of the space on the application form to tell us what works/projects you have done under the various criteria. This is important in order to gain more marks each year. 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:

St. Mary's Church, Grotto and grounds look well. At the National School we admired the green flag and window box displays. The building and grounds are well maintained

An old water pump at the corner in the village is flanked with plant containers. On the wall behind is a plaque to Charles Stewart Parnell about his famous speech at a public meeting in Knocknagoshel on May 4th, 1891. The Village Inn is well painted in cream with red outlines for the windows and doors with a light green plinth. Eddie Walsh's is also tastefully painted and has window box displays. Leahy's Funeral home looks well, and the adjacent car park is enclosed with a nice sandstone wall, with a new footpath and bollards outside the wall. D. C. O'Connor's Bar has a stone façade at the lower level, with the upper floor painted black, windows and doors are red. Kierans XL Shop is painted white and blue which looks well but the display items on the footpath, (sticks, peat briquettes, a plant tray, litter bin and ice cream cone advertisements) add clutter and may inhibit pedestrian usage of the footpath outside the shop. The Community centre is very good and nearby, the Garda Station has window boxes and is well painted. The ornamental gate was well painted.

In the cemetery the graves were clean and tidy, but the wall needs cleaning.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

There is a good variety of well-maintained shrubs in the churchyard. The Bible Garden behind the church is quite a novelty to visit with its many symbolic features taken from the bible. It has a seating circle and a small bridge and a Tomb of Resurrection. We liked the Ogham stone feature. The Cedar of Lebanon tree in this garden is likely to outgrow its space. The colourful Village Park is a small garden looked after by a wise old owl sitting in the middle. Empty brackets on a pole indicate a past enthusiasm for hanging baskets. They are not needed here so we suggest removing the pole. Weeds are taking a hold in the border and pathway.

Opposite the community centre, there are 11 trees which are not doing well. Perhaps they did not get suitable maintenance/water after planting, but we advise that they be examined by a Horticulturist/Arboriculturist. The supporting stakes should be removed and maintain a clean area around the base of the tree. 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:

In several places we saw sections of fields alongside the road where only the edge is mown and the rest unmown. We were also impressed with the extensive wildflowers growing in the cemetery. We assume that this is planned for pollination.

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:

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). 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 your village 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 containers are a help in reducing the amount of water used and also 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.

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:

We note you brush all pathways and compost grass and vegetables in the Community Garden. As mentioned above, it is not necessary to remove grass clippings if the frequency of mowing is increased; the grass can decompose on the ground.

Some vacant premises exist in the village and weeds in the front area adds to the poor appearance. A pole had plastic wrapping around it near Eddie Walsh's. An old tractor parked in a small sunken area looks untidy. The cemetery had rubbish behind the recycling bins and behind the front wall. Some finger post signs needed cleaning, including the one for the Village Park. We suggest you work with Kerry County Council towards having overhead cables placed underground when the opportunity arises at some future date.

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

In general, residents take good care of their houses and keep them well-painted. Church View estate is a neat and tidy small estate and we suggest planting trees instead of the plant containers on the edge of the open space. The houses are well painted. An Cnoicin estate has six houses but other than grass on the open space, there is no landscape treatment. We suggest trees be planted on the open space and hedges in the gardens. There is a lovely dormer house and entrance piers opposite the cemetery.

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

At the Four Crosses junction, we liked the stone with the bilingual name, but it is facing the road, not the oncoming

traffic. Why doesn't it face the crossroads?

A linear raised bed on a stone wall has a good selection of plants and the white fence behind is fine. Hanging baskets are not needed here in this rural setting so we suggest you move them elsewhere, closer to the village. Further on the statutory sign needs cleaning. The Bible Garden finger post is pointing the wrong way, and this was mentioned by last year's adjudicator. The GAA grounds look well the building is well painted. Weeds are all along the base of the wall. We suggest growing climbing plants such as ivy along this wall to soften its appearance and save having to paint it annually. The clothes recycling bank needs cleaning. The grounds are a great opportunity for planting trees. Some signs need painting. At the Limekiln, roadside planting is well done and the picnic area looked clean and tidy.

Concluding Remarks:

We repeat the suggestion from last year's adjudicator that you approach Kerry County Council and the local LEADER company for discussions on support for a village design statement or a landscaping plan? Keep up the good work.