

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Lixnaw - Leac Snámha** Ref: **346**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **229**
Category: **B** Date(s): **12/06/2019**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	40
Streetscape & Public Places	60	29
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	29
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	19
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	10
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	48
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	28
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	26
TOTAL MARK	470	229

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Lixnaw Leac Snámha páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019.

Lixnaw Development Association with its 12 members and another 40 volunteers who support them as needed is very welcome to this competition. Our records show that you last entered the competition in 2010. There are an impressive ten active voluntary groups in Lixnaw that you help to coordinate in regard to community projects such as the annual County Clean-Up Day. Unfortunately, the map with numbers referred to in the application was not attached, so we used as a guide the one in the Development Plan. However, the symbols for the projects were too difficult to read. Well done on completing the online version of the application form and for using a different colour font for your information. That made it easier for us to identify your projects. Another suggestion, please use bullet points in the text to separate one project from another thus making it easier to read.

You receive support from Kerry County Council as well as North, East and West Kerry Development (NEWKD). The use of the Parish Newsletter, Parish Notes in the Kerryman Newspaper, posters and flyers are your means of communication. Liaising with the Girls and Boys National Schools is commendable, and we note the involvement of Scoil Mhuire gan Smál in the Community Garden and Recycling Scheme.

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

Items listed in your application include completion of a derelict building on the Tralee Road, Daughton's Triangle maintained as a picnic area and playground, a new bench seat at the Community Centre, a Visitor's Information map outside St. Michael's Church, relocation of the bottle bank from the Main Street to the yard behind the Railway Bar. All of these projects are worthwhile. The Railway Bar has a nice stone façade on the front of the building. The Dew Drop Inn was painted green and beside it, the less subtle Bite Time is in contrasting colours of white with red and black stripes. The Garda Station looked fine, but the boundary wall needed painting. The stone building of St. Michael's Church looked splendid as did the ornamental silver painted railings mounted on a plinth wall of stone. Attractive entrance gates are set back from the footpath line in a curved recess. The adjacent convent building, and the church complex are important heritage buildings in your village; it is great to see they are well maintained. The Visitor Information sign is of high quality and well positioned. A Marian Shrine (Grotto) is located some distance away from the church. The Pharmacy building looked well and is enclosed by a railing.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Projects mentioned under this heading include Daughton's Triangle, the new Integrated Constructed Wetland which

will replace the outdated sewage system, a new pitch for the local hurling club and a walking/jogging path around the pitch.

The main structural elements in the landscape are trees and while you have many good examples in Lixnaw, you also need to plant more trees for future generations. 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. When trees are established it is important to remove the stakes as the stems can get damaged from the ties or stake.

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. 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:

Appreciating your local wildlife resources is vital in order to achieve under this category. Your emphasis has been on native hedging, grass and wildflowers. The Lixnaw Pollinator project in the Community Garden focuses your attention on this aspect of nature and that is good.

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:

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 village 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, 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 to consider 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 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 and 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:

Actions listed here include the County Clean-Up Day at which the local Youth Club assisted. You are fortunate to have two work groups of Social Employees to assist in litter control, weeding and path cleaning. We are pleased to learn that relocation of the bottle bank has been a success. A rusty pole at the Campus Oil station needs painting.

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

There are several residential estates of different periods and styles in Lixnaw. Slí n Faiche has fine houses with plenty of open space. Quite a number of trees were planted with mixed success; ash and whitebeam did well. Those that survived are now established and we suggest that supporting stakes are no longer required so they should be removed before they cause damage to tree stems. Weak and dead trees as well as stumps and leaning specimens should also be removed, and replacements planted in winter. The roadside margin is without trees so there is great scope for planting more trees in this estate and make significant improvements. Remember, when planting a line of trees, use only one species. There is an opportunity to reduce the mowing frequency on some grassed areas and encourage wildflowers to develop. Most gardens are without any planting, so we suggest at least the planting of hedges to soften the hard appearance. There are extensive concrete block walls the impact of which is quite hard. It is suggested that climbing plants such as ivy are the most economical means of softening their appearance and adding enhancement. This has been successfully done elsewhere and a visit to other communities is recommended to see how this can be achieved. Kilcaragh estate has a low stone wall entrance with

fine specimens of established trees behind the wall. At Kilcaragh Lawn estate there is a remarkable contrast between the hedge of Photinia on the right-hand side and the bare concrete wall on the left-hand side. Ivy would make a big difference here and all that is needed is to excavate a pit approximately 15cm wide and 150 cm long for each plant and fill it with soil. Further into the estate we greatly admired the line of birch trees.

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

Stone walls always delight, especially if they are well constructed. This traditional style of boundary is in many towns and villages and in Lixnaw you have a selection of low walls in some places and taller walls elsewhere such as near the Railway Bar. Entrances to residential estates such as Clanmaurice have lovely curved stone walls which convey an impression of grandeur and is to be encouraged. The use of a low 'trip rail' using timber provides some sense of security and safety on one approach fronting a linear strip with established ash trees. In time the timber will rot and have to be replaced or a low stone wall provided. A concrete container with flowers sitting on a raised concrete area is not necessary in this environment and its removal would not be missed. Picnic benches provide areas for relaxation and we were pleased to see them being used.

Concluding Remarks:

Welcome back to the competition and well done on your efforts. We hope this report provides some guidance for future projects.