

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Keshcarrigan - Ceis Carraigín** Ref: **432**
County: **Leitrim** Mark: **292**
Category: **A** Date(s): **28/06/2019**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2018 | Mark Awarded 2019 |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Community – Your Planning and Involvement | 60 | 42 | 43 |
| Streetscape & Public Places | 60 | 37 | 38 |
| Green Spaces and Landscaping | 60 | 43 | 44 |
| Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality | 50 | 28 | 29 |
| Sustainability – Doing more with less | 50 | 17 | 18 |
| Tidiness and Litter Control | 90 | 53 | 54 |
| Residential Streets & Housing Areas | 50 | 31 | 31 |
| Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes | 50 | 34 | 35 |
| TOTAL MARK | 470 | 285 | 292 |

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

Cuireann an moltoir seo faille roimh Keshcarrigan (Ceis Charraigín) chuig Comortas na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu 2019.

Thank you for your excellent hand written entry form, review of what is proposed for the immediate future, pictorial records and excellent sketch map indicating points of interest in the village and its environs.

The adjudicator certainly enjoyed his visit to Keshcarrigan and will endeavour to reflect your work over the last year in a fair and objective in manner, in line with the guidelines of the competition and in a shorter narrative than before. You have a good committee structure and a volunteer core that you can call on to do practical tasks which are of course most important.

Your communication methods are a mix of the tried and trusted methods such as news letter and of course word of mouth.

It's to note a large swathe of centres have never mentioned "word of mouth" in their entry forms.

The above are complemented by the forms of social media that you feel relevant to your needs.

One notes that your activities are included under the Keshcarrigan Development Facebook page which indicates that you are very much part of the development structure of the village.

Good to note that you have strong links with both Leitrim County Council and Leitrim Development Company.

Most important that these two, what are in effect, public services entities are supportive of your work and plans for the future.

Waterways Ireland does not feature on your list which is a little surprising as they have a part to play in your plans for the village by ensuring that the Trailhead project at outskirts on the Ballinamore Road is completed post haste!

25 years is a long time of involvement in the competition and well done on this, also thank you for your positive endorsement of Tidy Towns and what it means to your very attractive village?

An additional mark s awarded for your efforts in this category in the last year and for the practical manner in which you have engaged with the local community.

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

Some of the content that you have mentioned under streetscape and public spaces crosses over into the next category which is quite understandable as the two are intrinsically linked.

It's good to note that you are involved in maintaining many of the community facilities that would be under the public spaces heading.

The following is a number of observations that the adjudicator made on his walkabout.

The previously mentioned Trailhead Project needs to be completed as soon as possible to maximise the potential visitor impact that it will have for the village.

The adjudicator noted that there were some boats parked up and it looked like the occupants were nearly corralled in as the marina area was blocked off.

There is a lovely entrance, stone wall and nice attractive signs that attract the attention of passers by.

Hopefully you will get commitment from Waterways Ireland that the work will be completed very soon.

The Fr Michael Judge Memorial Park a little outside the village in the wonderful setting on Keshcarrigan Lake is a credit to the Village residents who have honoured this brave man of Keshcarrigan stock in such a fitting manner.

The businesses in the village were presented in a very acceptable manner.

McKeon's Pub had a very attractive frontage with a nice colour scheme and a bilingual name sign which was good to see.

An establishment that was well run one would think.

The Village Shop next door was also presented very well and was well stocked and indeed busy that particular time of day.

Gerties is one of these quirky pubs that attract people's immediate attention when one arrives into a village like Keshcarrigan.

It has a great collection of sporting artefacts inside and if one is a Celtic fan you won't be disappointed.

The proprietor rustled up a quick late breakfast for this adjudicator and a conversation ensued with the proprietor and some locals that was most interesting and entertaining.

The local Kiltubrid sporting teams featured prominently on one of the walls of the establishment.

Some very fine stand alone private residences were observed in the core of the village and a few had some attractive gardens.

It was good also to see that village was not overtly overrun with what one would term "celtic tiger" developments.

What was put in place fitted into the village vernacular.

Mind you some of these properties were vacant as were a few other rather large houses in the village.

The Fairgreen was in good condition and the area that houses the 1916 memorial was nicely presented and kept in a tidy fashion.

The Kesh Bowl memorial stone was in a prominent place in the village.

One of the main elements of this category is the condition of roads and footpaths, all were in good condition and the village was free from unsightly overhead wires criss crossing the street.

Your effort earned you an increase in marks.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The overall standard of landscaping was very good with colourful summer annuals in permanent and replaceable planters dotted around the village.

The entrance name stones were also complemented sustainable planting that has an all year round effect.

The Fairgreen was in top class condition and the mix of perennials and annuals added to its attractiveness and the green was cut and well maintained.

The excellent Fr Michael Judge Peace Garden had some extremely attractive planting arrangements as well as a central shrub bed that had been recently tended to.

Well done to the personnel who are responsible for the upkeep of these excellent village amenities.

The flower boxes on McKeon's Bar window sill blended in with the colour scheme of the pub; the adjudicator has noted this as an example of simple creativity that could be copied elsewhere where many business owners just opt for the easy option of using plastic type planters.

As stated previously there were a few outstanding private gardens observed during the walkabout.

The Trail Head/Marina area has been already referred to in a previous section.

Well done to the committee for ensuring that sympathetic grass cutting was done on all approach roads into the village and this will be referred to in later section of this report.

The adjudicator feels that there is even more potential for the village in this category and that as a committee you should consider consultation with Leitrim County Council Horticultural section.

For instance the area down near the wildflower garden could further developed for landscaping purposes as well as having section hived off for the wildflower garden.

At the moment the area seems to be in a bit of a limbo.

That said what's in place and what has been done in the last year has been excellent and an additional mark has been awarded.

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

A number of recommendations were made in last year's in depth report some were feasible and some not so feasible for different reasons.

The key components of this adjudication category are a) knowledge of local species and habitats and knowledge of local designated areas and b) being able to promote the knowledge gained to the local community and the passing visitor in format that would be easily accessed such as wildlife information boards in a central location.

Good advice and communication of the importance of the local wildlife heritage to the local community is so important

Being aware of invasive and possible destructive plants such as Japanese knot weed is also essential.

The adjudicator feels that you have got a good instinctive knowledge of what nature and biodiversity is about and its importance to the local community.

Yes you are correct in saying that the village has abundance of wildlife habitats, lake shores, and wooded areas and even within the core of the village the Fairgreen.

The bridge over the river linking both lakes another habitat.

You have endeavoured to preserve these areas in accordance with recommended practice i.e. the area that is left undisturbed near the recycling bank to ensure that hedgehogs' survival is a case and point.

Well done on this approach.

Pollination planting is high on your priority list as well.

At some stage when all is sorted with the Trailhead it might be worth considering a wildlife information panel at that particular area and maybe also at the Fr Michael Judge Peace Park.

This would be to depict the fauna and flora and lake life of your area.

Leitrim Development Company could be your potential partner on this one.

Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:

The objective in this category has moved on from one of reduce reuse and recycle to one of promoting the concept of reducing the production of potential waste at source such as excessive packaging.

“Doing more with less” is a very apt slogan that should be promoted even more to the general public to

The practical benefits of good waste management and control of unnecessary production will be seen as a major contribution to a better environment.

Also the category encourages communities to get involved in energy saving projects that will benefit local inhabitants

The inputs that you have in this section very much fall within the objectives of the category guidelines.

The key is to have the resources to manage these in an efficient and sustainable manner and this can be a problem for any voluntary committee of the demand on limited resources in terms of available personnel.

To get more out of this sector in terms of creating even a greater awareness of all things that contribute to a more sustainable environment consider looking at the following websites for idea generation.

www.localprevention.ie ,www.greenhomes.ie and www.sustainableprocessing.ie

Also something that this adjudicator became aware of over the last few years is the circular economy.

It is a bit too long to explain the concept in detail in this report, but if you access the following www.dccae.gov.ie you will get a pretty good idea of what it's all about.

The idea of what is called a linear economy of “take, make and waste” is now being seen as not sustainable and alternatives need to be found.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The standard of tidiness and litter control was good on the day of adjudication.

In a small village of the standing of Keshcarrigan little things stand out and there were a few back areas that were somewhat untidy.

Few unoccupied units in Ceis Lawns that were in need of a coat of paint and it was noticeable that Keshcarrigan is no different to similar villages that had “benefited” from the boom years and then felt the pain of decline.

We have already mentioned the area around the astro turf amenity.

Organising litter pick groups is an effective way of ensuring that all areas of the village are addressed and cleared of any litter on a regular basis.

It certainly has paid off as the village and its surrounds were free of litter except for a few pieces.

The Bring Bank which was quite sizeable for a small village as presented to an acceptable standard and ample parking for users.

Encouragement is very strong in your work ethic so well done to keep the message of tidiness and litter control to the forefront.

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

A very good series of inputs from you in this category and once again the key to the good standard that prevails is the committee's ability to communicate with local residents encouraging them to work to present their respective estates to the highest standards possible.

The adjudicator visited the few of what one would consider housing clusters and was impressed with the approach taken by residents to keeping homesteads, boundary walls and front gardens in the best possible fashion possible. There were a few houses in these estates that were now unoccupied and could fall into some form of disrepair if not monitored properly.

Ownership of these could be hard to establish but the committee is proactive enough to address the issues in advance of further deterioration of these properties.

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

First off may I convey my thanks to the person who drew up the sketch map for indicating on it the destinations that the roads out of the village lead to.

One would be surprised how many maps supplied with entry forms do not do this.

The Road in from Carrick on Shannon very well presented with some nice houses on the left on into area that the sculpture is.

The Ballinamore Road out by Lough Scur is also very impressive with a number of very fine elevated private homesteads to be seen.

The Mohill Road off which the adjudicator first came to the village was a pleasant entrance as one had Keshcarrigan Lake and Fr Michael Judge Park as attractions on the way in.

The road verges in the main were cut in accordance with good practice.

Directional, speed and name signs were clean and visible which is what they should be and traffic calming measure such as basic stop signs on the road surface could be noted well in advance of approach.

Concluding Remarks:

This was the very first visit to Keshcarrigan village which is actually in the parish of Kiltubrid.

It was an enjoyable visit and the local hospitality was sampled and enjoyed.

The village has some very nice attractions and features one call it a lake village as it encompasses two lakes ideal for visitors that are into water based activities.

Keshcarrigan has potential to do even better in the competition and has a proactive committee that will drive things on in the future.

You are wished well.