

# Tidy Towns Competition 2019

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Knockananna - Cnoc an Eanaigh** Ref: **247**  
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **307**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **15/07/2019**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2018	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	42	44
Streetscape & Public Places	60	43	44
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	41	43
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	25	27
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	18	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	63	64
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	31	32
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>307</b>

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Knockananna - Cnoc an Eanaigh páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019. Welcome Knockananna and many thanks for your entry form, maps, three year plan, lovely photographs and your wonderful flora and fauna lists. Your printer appears to have been acting up a bit with some text overlap. You do have the option of having your form printed by the TidyTowns Unit in Ballina so use this if it helps you with future entries. Your map needs to show a bit more information such as showing the location of a few more landmark buildings to help orientate the reader as well as fitting all projects on the one map. They can be colour coded according to type of category and the map can be A3 size to ensure you fit everything in. You need to make sure every project mentioned in your report is shown on the map. You can also presume that your adjudicator may never have been to Knockananna before like this myself and therefore didn't know where the Mass Path was unfortunately. Your newsletters made for great reading – well done on these providing helpful information and especially good local nature notes fulfilling a TidyTowns committee's role in spreading knowledge and information about the local environment. You have good support from local businesses and public bodies. Great to see you're actively working with your local national school – the pupils are the Tidy Towns members of the future! Your annual coffee morning sounds fantastic – Tidy Towns at its best where young and old gather together to enjoy each other's company and work together for the locality that they all love.

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

The Knockananna streetscape will always have the wonderful advantage of the stunning backdrop of the Wicklow mountains. The Knockananna central crossroads is very unusual featuring six roads instead of the usual four. We note that Wicklow County Council's road engineers have plans to make the junction safer for drivers. While safety is obviously of paramount importance, hopefully the plans will take cognisance of the heritage value of this unusual streetscape. I wondered about the beautiful old church building left all closed up with the modern church beside it? Why was the building abandoned? Could it have a new life in the future serving Knockananna community through a heritage building grant? You do mention this possibility in your 3 year plan so hopefully it will come to fruition before the lovely building goes beyond repair. The Old Forge restoration is going well and the new roof looked great. The various different looped walks all looked inviting and are a great feature of the village. The walks alone would be a visitor attraction to your village. Have you thought about producing a leaflet to guide visitors about the walks? You mention plans for a noticeboard about the walks – this would be a great start as they are not so clear for visitors to Knockananna to figure out. From your village noticeboard it looks like you have plenty of information gathered already, it would just be a case of putting it all together. The community garden is a terrific asset and was being very well tended during the adjudication visit! Your plan for a Sensory garden behind the community hall sounds lovely and one that future adjudicators can look forward to. When planning for it make sure to use plants listed in the really

helpful 'Pollinator Planting Code' available to download at [www.pollinators.ie/resources](http://www.pollinators.ie/resources) We have lost 17% of our bumblebees alone since 2012. It is a responsibility of Tidy Towns groups who are planting in public areas to do what we can by providing lots of pollinator food by way of long flowering herbaceous perennials, leaving grass verges for their nesting habitats, letting wildflowers flower instead of mowing and strimming them away and not using poisonous herbicides.

### **Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:**

The bed at the centre of the village under the birch trees on the Hacketstown Road has been very well maintained but it needs some more colour and more flowering perennials for the pollinators. The Pollinator Planting Code mentioned above will have lots of suggestions and ideas for herbaceous perennial plants that once planted will last for years and give colour over many months of the year – nearly the whole year if the right mix of plants is made. The developing Hawthorn hedge on the Tinahely road was looking great. It was wonderful to hear of the local schoolchildren's biodiversity research work there finding all those invertebrates – we hope this research went towards earning their Biodiversity Green flag! Lovely to hear of how your Grannies' roses are now doing well in the centre of the village – they were providing a great splash of colour near the community garden on adjudication day. Great to hear of the Knapweed in your wildflower meadow, this is always a great hit with the pollinators. The flower bed outside the pub right in the village centre was looking great after all your hard work. The area at the Hill road entrance to the village was viewed. There is potential for a great village gateway project here based around your proposed 'Little Jimmy' monument. What about a good rockery featuring local granite stones and interplanted with various heathers and alpines such as house leeks and Sedums? These would echo the native plants of the hills and mountains nearby and would not take too much maintenance while providing lots of pollen rich flowers for the local pollinators too.

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

Well done to Knockananna National School on attaining the 5th Green Flag for Biodiversity. It was flying proudly on adjudication day. You have a great awareness of biodiversity in your local area as demonstrated by the wonderful lists featuring many local names (this adjudicator heard Queen Anne's Lace in Canada and in Knockananna you call it Boleyn's – there's obviously a link despite the distance, very interesting!) Well done on your wildflower seed collections. Indeed, it would be great to see an extension of the wildflower patches around the Old Chapel. As mentioned above our beleaguered pollinators need all the help we can give them. I have no doubt that you have several bats living in and around Knockananna as they will have lots of food in the lovely habitats around your village. It is great to hear the Knockmullan residents are showing an interest in these fascinating and misunderstood creatures. Contact Bat Conservation Ireland ([www.batconservationireland.org](http://www.batconservationireland.org)) for lots of interesting information and think about organising a batwalk (with BCI) followed by a barbeque for a wonderful community gathering! Well done on sowing Yellow rattle to parasitize and weaken the grasses at Dan Whelan's plot. Unfortunately, this wasn't marked on your map so I didn't know where to look but you have done the right thing and hopefully will be rewarded with lots of wildflowers at this plot into the future. Delighted to hear of your mowing regime to encourage the all-important dandelions (or Jinny joes!). We now know that these flowers are of vital importance to bumblebee queens awakening from their winter hibernation so well done on this project.

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

Your management of your Community Garden using cardboard as a winter mulch is great as well as your projects involving seed collections and splitting of perennial plants. These are all great local sustainability projects getting right to the nub of this 'sustainability-doing more with less' category.

### **Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:**

Knockananna was looking very clean and tidy on adjudication day. Well done on all your litter picks, especially encouraging local school children to help. Don't get too worried about kerbside weeds. Hoe where you can but no herbicides is use is more important than a few kerbside weeds in this time of critical importance in the conservation of our precious pollinator species.

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

All the residential areas looked well and the playground was being well used on adjudication day! We looked forward to hearing if you follow up on the Community Batwalk idea with BCI especially as the Knockmullan residents showed such interest. We are sure you will find you have more than one species of bat enjoying the rich biodiversity in the Knockananna area and providing a wonderful ecological service by eating 3000 midges each every evening in summer!

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

You have many approach roads into Knockananna and all were looking well on the summer's evening of adjudication. Well done as this takes a lot of work from your local residents. Have you entered the Co. Wicklow Pure Mile competition? You would have a good headstart as your approach roads are already looking good and litter free!

### **Concluding Remarks:**

You appear to be a group with a tremendous amount of energy! Well done on all the projects that you have carried out so far and maintain so beautifully. You clearly care very much for your lovely homeplace and its heritage and

realise how special it is. In Knockananna Tidy Towns Committee you really embody all that is great about the Tidy Towns competition and how everyone is a winner because it's really all about improving the quality of life for all in your area – for resident humans, plants and animals as well as visitors!