

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Newtownmountkennedy - Baile an Chinnéidigh** Ref: **515**
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **292**
Category: **D** Date(s): **10/07/2019**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2018	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	43	45
Streetscape & Public Places	60	33	34
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	37	38
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	35	36
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	15	17
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	54	55
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	32	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	33	34
TOTAL MARK	470	282	292

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Newtownmountkennedy - Baile an Chinnéidigh páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019. Thank you for your entry form and map. The sequential numbering system was great and helped for easy movement between the text to the map. Well done on all your links with various agencies and bodies and a great sponsorship program, you've done well with hi-vis vests and trees. Your calendar idea is great and looks very well produced. Your pictures show that your community events in Mount Kennedy Woodlands were a great success and what a lovely way to foster even more community spirit! Delighted to see your links with the local primary school helping with litter picks - these are the Tidy towns members of the future! Your village renewal scheme is very impressive. You have been very successful in your funding - well done on this and the best of luck with the future development of the plan. Thank you for submitting your 3 year plan into which you've put a lot of work. Tidy towns groups in general find these plans very helpful in planning ahead and delegating work. They are also a healthy reminder of how much work you have actually achieved!

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

Your painting project has been a great success village looked well presented an adjudication day. You've carried out a lot of work on your main street. Lots of practical things in association with the authorities making the street safer etc. This is great work on behalf of your local community. Your inventory of the village's built environment sounds interesting and we look forward in future competitions to the development of your riverine park plan. You have not one but two beautiful ancient churchyard sites in your area. You will find guidance in their maintenance in the excellent Community conservation of graveyards publication by the Heritage Council available to download at www.heritagecouncil.ie/publications although your Wicklow Heritage Officer should always be your first port of call when working with such sensitive sites. You have a long list of future projects in this section. Make sure they are included in future competitions for adjudicators to see.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Newtownmountkennedy is a long village with a lot of concrete and tarmac surfaces. These leave little habitat or food for our beleaguered pollinator species. There is great opportunity for TidyTowns groups to help all over Ireland through the types of plants they pick to beautify their surroundings and the methods they choose to maintain their green areas. It is clear that you are already going to great trouble and expense with colourful pots and planters around the village so the argument can be made to use pollinator-friendly plants while you are at it! The National Biodiversity Data Centre has produced a comprehensive document with long lists of plants that are pollinator-friendly and suitable for all sorts of situations. This document is freely available to download at

www.pollinators.ie/resources and is called the Pollinator Planting Code. Your 1798 garden is a good example - it is quite a big area which you have planted and despite using many perennials the only plants good for pollinators on adjudication day were the lavenders. On adjudication day three different species of bee were seen feeding on the lavenders while across the path the large rose bed had no pollinator species. This is because hybrid Roses have been bred for their colour and their double flowers prevent pollinators from accessing the pollen. Therefore, although beautiful to our eyes they are of no food value to our hungry beleaguered pollinators. This type of situation could make for an interesting biodiversity experiment by your local school pupils! Well done on your commendable tree planting programme, this will be a wonderful legacy on into the future. Delighted to hear of your more relaxed grass mowing regime. This will reap benefits for all and the objectors will come around as they realise that you are thinking of the bigger picture!

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

Your awareness of the diversity of species and habitats in the Newtownmountkennedy area is great – in particular your knowledge of the sites of international significance. Good to see that you are aware of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan and that you refer to it. As mentioned above there are lots of other helpful resources on the pollinators.ie website so be sure to use them as many are designed specifically for community groups such as yourselves. Your work with schools is to be much commended – wonderful to hear of all those nature walks – you will definitely have a few budding environmental scientists in your locality! There has been a lot of work on swifts in Wicklow, if you are interested as a group it would be worth contacting your Heritage Officer and Birdwatch Ireland to see about getting swift boxes put up in order to attract them to your area. As you acknowledge they need all the help we can give them.

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

You have a long list of projects in this section. Great to hear you were inspired by the conference in Trim – these meetings are so important for good guidance, advice and support. The new LED lighting on the main street will make a difference. Your fruit tree planting in local housing estates is a terrific idea - good on a number of fronts including sustainability, biodiversity, sharing, community spirit and making housing estates look better! You are lucky to have a very active Men's Shed group - a lot their workmanship was noted around the village. The very best of luck with your SEC Project, this is a big undertaking that takes a lot of organisation but I don't doubt that you will manage it and it is great that Newtownmountkennedy Tidy Towns are involved.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Having your village straddle a very busy main road is acknowledged as a great difficulty when it comes to litter. Unfortunately, litter was noted on adjudication day. Much of this probably came from passing cars as local pedestrians were seen using the litter bins provided! You have carried out a huge amount of work in this section and your liaising with various groups about the different issues is great. Keep up this hard work.

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

The best of luck with the Best Estate competition in September. It will be interesting to see how the new different category competitions work. They work well in other towns and always foster improvements. Newtownmountkennedy has many long-established housing estates. Several have made a great effort with lots of colourful planters. As with much of the area around the village improvements could be made here in the choice of species - please consult the above-mentioned Pollinator Planting Code. Also noted was the use of herbicide a long grass verge edges around several housing estates. This is unnecessary, harmful to pollinator species and leaves an ugly brown streak of dead grass.

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

Well done on your beautiful mowing regime on the road outside Coillte headquarters. There was a beautiful show of wildflowers and wild grasses on adjudication day. However, it was diluted by the unnecessary use of herbicide on the grass verges here. Herbicides contribute to the population decline of our pollinator species. Its use is only necessary in TidyTown situations where there are invasive species to be cleared and even in this case invasive species clearances should only be carried out by professionals with the aid of your local County Council. You mention Murray's Hill where you want to sow wildflower seed. This will not be necessary, all you need do is change the mowing regime to manage it as a hay meadow with a first mowing in early July, remove the cuttings and then a final mowing in September. After a couple of years the native wildflowers will come up of their own accord and you will have less maintenance in this busy part of the road. Winners all round!

Concluding Remarks:

You have a seriously impressive list of ongoing and future project sin Newtownmountkennedy. Keep up all your great work as the dividends of a better quality of life for resident and visitor to Newtownmountkennedy are clear to see.