

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Roundwood - An Tóchar** Ref: **246**
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **309**
Category: **B** Date(s): **12/07/2019**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2018	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	43	46
Streetscape & Public Places	60	39	40
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	34	35
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	30	33
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	16	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	62	64
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	38	39
TOTAL MARK	470	295	309

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Roundwood – An Tóchar páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019. Welcome Roundwood and thank you for your comprehensive entry form, helpful photographs, maps and information sheets. You have a great number on your committee and the huge number of 50 + who volunteer for you occasionally is tremendous for a village your size demonstrating the good will you have earned over the years. You also have a long list of supporting community groups, businesses and public bodies. These are all a good sign of a healthy system in place! Congratulations on all your awards most especially being the outright winner of the Pure Mile 2018 competition. You rightly must be very proud of this achievement. You've had a busy calendar of events over the last year including a visit by An Taoiseach himself - a great show of support for vibrant communities. You have a dizzying list of activities and achievements that is both inspiring and uplifting demonstrating the power of wonderful community spirit. Thank you for your two maps they were very helpful. May I make a suggestion for next year that you print your Tidy Towns entry map on A3 giving you enough room to put the legend on the same page. This will be most helpful to future adjudicators. Another useful amendment would be to colour code your numbering system according to each adjudication category for the map. This will greatly help future adjudicators relate the numbers on the map back to your text.

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

We look forward to the development of your plan for the Synnott's corner area in the years to come. Having functional public toilets on the main street of any town or village is a bonus in Ireland. This adjudicator found your example very charming with lovely planting outside and lots of characterful features inside such as the old doors and chain pull cisterns! I also loved the moss on the roof tiles and it was great to hear of your acknowledgment of their habitat value in their own right! The only thing missing at the toilet block was a lick of fresh paint. Work for another year. Keep up your ongoing communications with businesses in the village. It was very busy with lots of locals and visitors on adjudication day, parking spots are a bit scarce and there was pathway obstruction due to open storage containers outside Centra. In a busy village they are not helpful, hopefully Centra can come up with a more workable solution. Good luck with your car park and playground projects. Both will add greatly to village life in Roundwood.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Berties triangle is a good landmark on the entrance to Roundwood. Old cable reels are unusual planters and they catch the eye. The area is well looked after and I was pleased to see the grass had been left long enough to let daisies, buttercups and clover flower. The only suggestion I would make for here is to follow the 'Pollinator Planting Code' list for the plants in the planters here as the planting seen on adjudication day was very sparse and not

pollinator-friendly. Our pollinator species populations are in such trouble in Ireland that it is incumbent on all to provide as much food and habitats for them as possible. Tidy Towns groups all over Ireland have a huge role to play in this by ensuring lots of suitable flowering plants are planted in their public places. The planting needs to be generally of the perennial variety as the annuals of old planting habits don't provide much food by way of pollen. Herbaceous perennials also provide a much longer flowering season as well as only needing planting once therefore cutting down on both cost and labour for our hard working Tidy Towns committees! Wonderful to hear of the four generations of the same family involved in the development and maintenance of the Roundwood Bank picnic area. It certainly looked very inviting on adjudication day. It was indeed a most fitting use of 60th anniversary grant. Ogham walk is a marvellous collaboration with Roundwood Men's Shed and a lovely way to incorporate the Irish tree names. Let me congratulate Roundwood Men's Shed for their beautiful craftwork on the Ogham tree posts. Educational, poetic and lovely to look at all the same time!

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

Many congratulations on your Neighbourhood Community Woodland. Your Winning of the RDS Spring Award highlights the huge value of these projects with benefits both for human physical and mental health, social cohesion and inclusivity and tourism not to mention the benefits for local biodiversity and all that brings with it. Unfortunately, Tidy Towns adjudicators are always stuck for time as we have so much work get done in a short period but this adjudicator treated herself to walking a good part of your new trails and they are an absolute joy! The interpretative panels are most interesting and I was delighted to see the concept of Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF) explained for the layperson. Community bonding and biodiversity awareness go hand-in-hand together so make sure to make the most of them and use these lovely trails for community events on into the future. The best of luck with your Pollinator Award entry this year. You have a very good grasp of the importance of biodiversity and pollinator-friendly planting in your locality and this will hopefully be rewarded with a healthy local biodiversity to enjoy in the years to come. Indeed, it sounds like you are reaping the rewards already with lots of lovely birdsong this spring. You mentioned the future project at Doyles Bank where you plan to sow yellow rattle seed. This is a good idea where you want to suppress grass growth. However, if this area has not been fertilised recently you may not need to sow anymore wildflower seed but simply manage the area as you would a hay meadow and see what wildflowers grow of their own accord. There would be plenty of good wildflower seed source coming in naturally in this beautiful part of Co. Wicklow. Keep up your good work on monitoring for invasive species. This is so important to make sure things don't get out of control. Your Community Herb patch at the Health Centre (what an appropriate spot!) is a great idea. The Pollinator Planting Code has lots of pollinator-friendly herbs listed for when and if supplementary planting is needed. They can become very attractive flower beds with plants of differing sizes and colours e.g. chives, fennel, rosemary, sage, borage etc.

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

You have lots going on in this category and a great awareness of what's involved as you break it down into six sub-categories in your entry form. It also sounds like the local school children are very tuned in too. We look forward to lots more imaginative projects in this category in Roundwood into the future!

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You carry out a lot of work on the litter and tidiness front. It is acknowledged that this is particularly difficult for communities who live in tourist areas such as yourselves as you have to deal with lots of other people's litter too! Well done on the Adopt-a-spot projects. These will hopefully make things more manageable for your group as the workload is spread out.

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

All the residential areas looked well maintained on adjudication day. Roundwood is blessed with being home to many mature trees. Particularly striking is the beautiful row of mature Beech as you enter from the Calary/Dublin side and the mature conifers in the background. However, it struck this adjudicator that some of the residential areas could benefit from some tree planting, especially where the gardens are not yet mature enough to feature trees. As a group you seem to have a strong relationship with the various residential groups around Roundwood. This is a good strong base from which to work on future projects together.

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

It is heartening to hear that the hedgerows on your approach roads are cut with hedge cutters rather than flails. This will make such a difference both to their appearance and to their flowering and fruiting bringing benefits to wildlife as well as for us humans' aesthetic sensibilities!

Concluding Remarks:

You are a very busy group with lots of energy and lots of plans. Roundwood has so much to offer both its residents and its visitors. Keep up your great work and I look forward to my next visit.