

Tidy Towns Competition 2021

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Waterfall - Tobar an Iarla** Ref: **1746**
County: **Cork(South)** Mark: **281**
Category: **B** Date(s): **24/08/2021**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	39
Streetscape & Public Places	60	36
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	37
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	29
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	35
TOTAL MARK	470	281

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

Fáilte Chuig Comórtas na mBailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2021. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn. Go raibh maith agaibh as ucht bhur dtacaíocht le linn na paindéime. Lean leis an dea-obair.

Welcome to the 2021 SuperValu Tidy Towns competition. Thank you for your entry and for your commitment to your place in these difficult times. Keep up the great work.

Thank you for your comprehensive application form and for including some lovely photographs and maps, as well as the interesting piece setting out the history of your involvement with Tidy Towns to date and your ethos, objectives and priorities. I was also glad to hear of the philosophy of asking people in the area how they wanted it to evolve rather than having a plan foisted upon them without consultation. Similarly it is good to hear that you have taken on the comments and suggestions of previous adjudicators, but these are only suggestions, and it is for you to decide what is best for your community at the end of the day. It is also very practical to have various subgroups so that even if people can not commit fully to the Tidy Towns Committee, they can get involved in areas where they have a particular interest or expertise, or as you mention for specific one off projects. You engage with a very large number of organisations and businesses, and you are lucky to have got funding from some of these as well as practical hands on help. Your engagement with local schools and scouts will surely instil a sense of responsibility and environmental awareness, and it must have been very exciting for the schools children to have someone come to talk to them about bee keeping. Well done also on your work in progress on the scout hall.

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

The Waterfall Railway Bridge project is ambitious but so worthwhile and fantastic to hear you are using stone from the site as well rather than sourcing it elsewhere, as well as getting a local craftsman, this is a really sustainable way of carrying out a project. I really liked the idea of the time capsule, especially given the times that we are living in. I would love to see how this all turns out when completed.

Some other great work being done involves the restoration of the old graveyard at Inniskenny, and good to know that this is being discussed with the local heritage staff in the County Council. Likewise at the famine graveyard you are making sure that the development here is being done in a manner in keeping with its history. Some more prosaic but extremely practical and necessary projects that you are undertaking is the installation of new footpaths, which you are hoping to extend, and hopefully the future work being done on this will be wheelchair friendly as you are petitioning for.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

There is some really great work being done here with the landscaping at Railway Bridge which you have sought

specialist expertise to ensure that there is colour all year around and create visual interest no matter when you are passing by, and also you are ensuring that as much as possible that you will include pollination friendly plants. You carry out a lot of maintenance work in order to keep your area looking as well kept as possible, and it is noted that you keep a good proportion of the grass verges uncut and 'wild' in order to help with biodiversity. The photographs that you have kindly sent in with your entry shows the perennial plants at the name stones, and they complement these very nicely indeed.

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

The Biodiversity Plan is a really important and worthwhile project, with its habitat mapping and will definitely be a fantastic tool to focus on future projects and what areas are particularly sensitive and may need to be given a bit of extra TLC or have particular issues to address. Having the Habitat Map located at the Ballinora School flower bed is sure to pique the interest of both students and parents alike and will hopefully encourage more people to take an interest in the environment around them and how to best protect it.

You have some very lovely wildlife projects, such as the Red Squirrels project and also the Bats in Ballinora one is one that I am very interested. You mention that in addition to identifying the different species (3 believed to be in the area) you also want to get an estimation of the numbers involved as well as their location. You mention getting local schools involved, could they carry out some of this work in conjunction with someone with more expertise, and hopefully there will be some local bat groups that can help, it might also get the school students interested in there were some bat walks to initiate their involvement. Well done also on your wildlife hedge project, and the Ballinora Pippin Apple Tree Project, this has a really lovely backstory as to its origins, and we look forward to hearing what the yield of apples from the 45 trees is (and how many apple pies were made!)

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

That is really fantastic that you have someone in your community that is a Climate Ambassador with An Taisce, who can help educate on climate change and also give talks on a range of interesting topics, and ones that have been presented on to date have included plastic pollution, rain formation, and solar panels to name a few. The electric cars and coffee day also sounds like it will be very useful for many people who have considered getting an electric car but have some concerns about them such as charging, cost, reliability and mileage coverage, so this will be a very good event in which to have all their questions answered. The idea of village interconnectivity is one that is becoming quite popular as people want to feel more connected not only to their immediate environs, but those nearby as well, without having to drive. Best of luck with your plans to enhance the bus service available in your area, there is a huge amount of congestion caused by the lack of public transport and the subsequent reliance on cars. Other ways in which you are being more sustainable includes the use of water harvesting, composting, online communications to save paper and a Stop Food Waste campaign, well done.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhairacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

There is a huge amount of work being done in this category to keep your village Clean, and this includes the following;

- Regular litter pick ups with a co-ordinator to ensure that there is as much coverage as possible in the village
- Segregation of litter picked before disposal
- correct way to get rid of used masks resulting from the Covid crisis
- Maintaining the bottle bank to a high standard
- Local 'Spring Clean'
- 'Picker Pals' project which encourages school children to not only be more aware about litter, but also carry out some practical work in their area
- Campaign against fly tipping to hopefully deter people from doing this through awareness and risk of prosecution

Tidiness - you are also doing a great amount of work in this area in a very comprehensive manner, including maintenance and repainting of street furniture and planters, reduction of unnecessary signage and poles and faded signs, as well as general care of grass areas, and drainage and weed reduction

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

It is clear that there is a very collaborative approach taken in Waterfall and that this is mutually beneficial, and raises the standards for everyone. As residents see the benefits of the Tidy Towns competition and how well their environment can look it has a knock on effect, and it is heartening to hear that although Covid did dampen peoples spirits, this was countered by the vibrant colours used by many houses to lift your spirits somewhat. It is also good to hear that some of your more vulnerable and elderly residents were looked after as well. It is also great that the NAMA site is going to be maintained and that you will have some influence on the finished landscape.

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

The first (and sometimes lasting) impression of a town or village often comes from the first approach or sighting of a place. You make sure to maintain your approach roads are kept well with a new hedge (biodiversity friendly) rather than the less aesthetically pleasing (and less suitable for wildlife) concrete. The new footpath will improve the visual amenity of the village. Other work that you are carrying out includes the maintenance/washing of all finger and sign posts, working with householder to enhance the visual impact of flower beds and to work on road lining plans in conjunction with Cork County Council.

Concluding Remarks:

Congratulations on carryout out a lot of work despite the difficulties caused by Covid, it was a pleasure to take a virtual tour of your village and see the huge amount of work being undertaken by yourselves. Best of luck in the competition and in achieving all the future planes you have in mind.