

Tidy Towns Competition 2022

Adjudication Report

Centre: Glengarriff - An Gleann Garbh	Ref: 676
County: Cork(West)	Mark: 346
Category: B	Date(s): 11/07/2022

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	49	51
Streetscape & Public Places	80	45	47
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	47	50
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	39	40
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	16	17
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	68	69
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	37	38
TOTAL MARK	550	334	346

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

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu don bhliain 2022. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo. Adh Mór.

Welcome to the Super Valu Tidy Towns Competition for 2022. We thank you for your entry, and wish you all the best in all your future work. Good luck.

Glengarriff An Gleann Garbh, a large village with a population of 585 people – has entered the competition since its inception and has a committee of 15 members. The adjudicator is pleased to note that individual committee members are assigned specific roles and responsibilities in accordance with the competition categories. There is support for your work activities from another 50 volunteers.

- The committee and local community are very active in Tidy Towns and discussions for improvements to the Village take place on a daily basis. Work activities are carried out on a weekly basis including the maintenance of 122 planter tubs and flower beds throughout the village. Your “minder” programme for floral displays is a very good idea.
- Support is received from a total of 24 different national and local agencies and businesses.
- The local newspaper the Southern Star, Glengarriff village website, Facebook, Parish newsletter, public meetings, email, WhatsApp group texts and posters are used for communications with the public and Tidy Towns volunteers.
- There is strong engagement with local schools and you involve the local National Schools in litter clearance activities as part of their environmental awareness activities. The schools are involved in the “bug hotels” project and the schools will run a competition to create an anti-litter poster this year. The engagement with pupils provides a great opportunity to increase their awareness of litter and the damage that it does to the environment and biodiversity.
- It is great to read that the voluntary work carried out by Glengarriff Tidy Towns each year has led to more and more local community involvement and a visible improvement of the village streetscape due to painting and planting initiatives. This has clearly benefitted your community as it has contributed to an increase in tourism numbers, which positively affects the local economy.

The three coloured maps provided with your Entry Form, all at different scales were of very high quality and were helpful to the adjudicator in assessing your village. Thank you for including a coloured legend on the Glengarriff Tidy Towns Active Area map, which helped in navigating around the village and in identifying the location of the main buildings/features and projects undertaken over the last year. For next year it might be a good idea to include a larger A3 size map of the village where you can include a written legend providing precise details of the various projects undertaken, with these identified with the relevant numbers on the same map.

The quality of the application form is very good and the blue text enables the adjudicator to easily identify the Tidy

Towns work activities carried out during the last year, as distinct from the text provided on the form. It would be better to include more photos either on the form itself or on a separate document, highlighting the projects carried out – ‘before and after’ photos are particularly informative in this regard. Where projects are mentioned on the form, which do not have a direct Tidy Towns involvement, it is always good to include details of how these projects were supported or facilitated by the Tidy Towns committee. The adjudicator’s assessment is based on a recent site visit and the details of the application form, which is suitably concise at 21 pages long. The 3–5-year plan for Glengarriff is comprehensive, although it would be good to include some specific target dates for completion of individual items. Your plans for the future sustainable development of the village are very worthwhile and impressive - well done.

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

- Under this category you have included recent developments in relation to specific buildings and sites located in the village. Under public spaces you mention details regarding plans a village MUGA games area, new traffic safety signage, work carried out on public benches, public toilets, the blue pool area and the installation of extra defibrillators in the village.
- The adjudicator visited Glengarriff on a warm sunny afternoon in July. The many properties on the Main Street were beautifully presented and suitably adorned with floral displays, which added to the splendid and very colourful streetscape of the village. It was great to see all the local people and many visitors sitting out sipping coffee/eating ice cream and enjoying the warm summer weather. Some of the outdoor covered dining spaces, fronting the various bars and eateries along the village, are beginning to impinge on the accessibility of the public footpaths in Glengarriff and it would be worth initiating an accessibility audit to identify any pinch points which may exist. Overhead wires and poles are an issue along sections of the Main Street and one wonders are there any plans to underground these in the future?
- The new pedestrian crossing on the Main Street looks very well and the lights/road markings and paving detail here helped to make this area very pedestrian friendly. The entrance to the Blue Pool (Poulgorm) Nature Park is very inviting to the visitor and the public toilets here were very well presented. The adjoining open-air market stalls associated with the Quill’s premises was a delight and this was a hive of activity for the entire duration of the visit. It would be good to plant a hedge in the vicinity of the Quills car park to reduce the impact of the large number of parked vehicles in this area.
- There is a site located between the Perrins Bar and cottages and the Spinning Wheel (Weavers of Ireland) premises which could provide an opportunity to provide a small pocket Park or perhaps linkage to a future nature trail and maybe this could be considered for the future?
- The Eccles hotel premises continues to enhance the village and remains a very imposing feature for the visitor on the way in to Glengarriff from the Bantry direction. The adjoining O’Sullivan’s Garage premises also caught the eye. However, some attention could be given to the quality of commercial signage along the roadside in this area, some of which has seen better days.
- The adjudicator called to the area in the vicinity of Glengarriff Pier and noted positively the extensive works carried out to improve public safety and pedestrian access in this area. There is a floating barge located in the bay here, which is understood to be used by local Mussel growers to store their various work materials. This structure is very unsightly and detracts from the beautiful vista across the harbour at this location. Consideration should be given to relocating this barge to a less visually prominent location in the area.
- A charming timber building, the old ‘Railway Ticket Office’, located in the car park opposite the current Ferry ticket office could be renovated in conjunction with Cork County Council and it is noted that this project is included in your 3–5-year plan. This could be developed as a coffee shop and gift shop, for the enjoyment of the many ferry-goers and visitors and is considered an appropriate future use for this building. The car park area here would also benefit from some resurfacing works and provision of suitable marked coach parking, where space is available, in the not-too-distant future.
- The Sacred Heart Church, Scoil Fhiachna National School, the Parish Hall and adjoining Burial Ground were visited and all were found to be beautifully presented, enhancing the local environs. The Slí na Sláinte sign here is faded and perhaps could be replaced. The rock formation and Grotto, adorned with suitable rose and other floral displays, really enhances this part of the village.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

- Under this category the work carried out at the Eccles Hotel Vegetable Garden, the opening of the Glengarriff Community Garden, future plans for the Glengarriff Woods Nature Reserve, Garnish Island, the Bamboo Park are all mentioned.
- The half-barrel and other floral displays located throughout the village, coupled with the wonderful displays provided on commercial and residential properties, provides the visitor to Glengarriff with a great lift and a real sense that the entire community really cares about the presentation of their village – this was excellent and well done to all involved in the preparation and maintenance of these plantings. It was interesting to note that many of the tubs and displays were numbered and is assumed that this is for identification and maintenance purposes. For the future it would be good to consider replacing some of the barrel flower displays, where they are placed on traffic Islands, with suitable permanent tree planting. Permanent tree planting, provided with adequate space for root establishment, will sequester carbon, visually enhance the streetscape and will help to prevent cars parking on footpaths reducing the need to install metal bollards, which can be a source of visual clutter.
- The area around the blue pool was found to be beautifully presented and information signs erected here were greatly admired and enhanced this spectacular location. The adjudicator called to the adjoining Poulgorm Park site and noted the area designated on the plans for the provision of a multi-use games area (MUGA). This is a very prominent location in the village and the fencing associated with this facility could detract from the general presentation of this area. Perhaps there is a more suitable site for the MUGA elsewhere in the village e.g., at the existing sportsgrounds?

- The adjudicator greatly admired the beautifully maintained and presented planting and the O'Keefe's Supervalu signage, located at the entrance to the playground area. The playground is well maintained and was a hive of activity on the day of adjudication. The programme of Rhododendron ponticum removal in the park was also positively noted. In relation to the existing grass cutting regime, perhaps consideration should be given to reducing the overall extent of grass cutting in the park, so as provide more areas for the establishment of wildflower meadows, located close to existing planted areas. This would have a significant impact on the park's biodiversity. The area in the vicinity of the Glengarriff septic tank, which is surrounded by a low timber fence, could also be screened from view by planting a low native hedge along the fence. The 'Ring of Beara' sign along the footpath along the roadside near the park, has faded and could be replaced.
- A phased reduction in your reliance on annual bedding schemes for your floral displays over time, is an important initiative to consider under this category. Colourful perennial and more pollinator friendly plants e.g., *Alstroemeria* spp. can be used to very good effect as an alternative to the flamboyant but energy/labour and water intensive annuals such as *Begonias* and *Petunias*.

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

- You have identified a number of areas in the village for re-wilding projects and you are well versed in the importance of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, the use of suitable mowing regimes to encourage biodiversity, control of herbicide use, control of invasive species such as *Rhododendron ponticum* and the limitations of the use of wildflower seeding.
- Your coastal location allows you to monitor closely the local marine environment, which has a thriving wildlife population. Your adjudicator is very pleased to read that the introduction of the white-tailed eagle has been successful and they are now a very popular attraction for locals and tourists alike. The population of up to 250 Common Seal (*Phoca vitulina*) which are resident in Glengarriff Harbour, as well as pods of Bottle Nose dolphins are also a very important in this regard. The protection of your maritime biodiversity will be a key priority under this category into the future and it is good to note there is now a greatly increased awareness locally of your seashore surroundings.
- Also mentioned under this category is the Ewe Sculpture Garden, the only interactive and interpretive sculpture garden in a waterfall oasis. It is a wonderful combination of nature, art, literature, natural history and humour. It has been reported that nowhere else in the world can visitors experience an educational nature trail, which is like an outdoor natural history museum. It would be good to include any information and details of how this project was supported or facilitated by the Tidy Towns committee.

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

- The projects you have referred to under this category include the improvement of the Glengarriff Community Garden, Eccles Hotel Vegetable Garden, and the installation of 3 new water butts in the village.
- The adjudicator called to the Glengarriff Community Garden and noted the well-used polytunnel here and the wide range of vegetables and fruit under cultivation and no doubt there will be a bumper crop to share out with the wider community later in the season. This was quite a large area to maintain and perhaps a slightly smaller more compact garden facility for the village, would be more practical and easier for you to manage in the longer term.
- The newly installed e-car charge point at the Parish Hall and defibrillator were also positively noted, and the adjudicator looks forward to the future plans to install additional bicycle stands at Quills and the Parish Hall.
- Other areas worthy of consideration by Glengarriff Tidy Towns Committee for the future under this category, which is in keeping with the Sustainable Development Goals, include the development of small electric microgeneration schemes for Wind, Solar and Hydro in partnership with the Local Authority and these may also attract suitable SEAI or Leader funding.
- You might look at providing additional public e-car charge points and bicycle parking facilities elsewhere in the village, which could be provided in the short/medium term.
- The Committee might also consider in the future initiating membership of the Sustainable Energy Communities programme run by the SEAI which includes engaging in learning networks, preparation of energy masterplans and local energy action plans etc. The following are useful links in this regard.
<https://www.seai.ie/community-energy/sustainable-energy-communities> / <https://www.codema.ie/sec>
- The ongoing management of rainwater and floodwater in village areas in the context of climate change is also an important topic under this category. This is a particularly critical issue in coastal locations which have suffered high-tide flooding in recent years. The committee might like to be aware of the nature-based solutions to the management of rainwater/floodwater and surface water run-off in village areas, water sensitive design, best practice etc. A recent publication by the Dept. of Housing Local Government and Heritage is available and provides important guidance in this regard.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

- Under litter control you have engaged one CE Scheme worker to empty litter bins and who keeps the village tidy. Litter is bagged and segregated into normal waste and recyclable items. Your CE scheme staff manually remove weeds from road/pavement edges, surfaces and walls, to prevent weed growth, rather than applying herbicides. The Glengarriff Tourism and Development Association controls fly posting and inappropriate advertising in the village.
- You have designated a prime person for litter control including along approach roads and have installed ash trays at bus stops and various other locations in the village which are made from recycled fire extinguishers. You have involved the schools in a competition to create an anti-litter poster which has increased the children's

awareness of litter and the damage that it does to the environment and biodiversity and have erected 4 litter control signs. You have also arranged for the repair and painting of the Gazebo at the point in the Blue Pool area.

- The area in the vicinity of the bottle banks was visited and these were found to be presented to a very good standard. However, the future relocation of this facility to a less prominent site in the village might be considered, as it generally does not enhance the road environs here. The site to the rear of the bottle banks, which has a number of old caravans near the roadside boundary, also impacts somewhat on this area.
- On the day of adjudication there were no issues with regard to litter or tidiness in the village -well done.

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

- Improvement works have been carried out in a number of estates including the Mountain View Townhouse Development, Harbour View Estate and you are taking steps to deal with derelict sites and trailers.
- The adjudicator called to Dalewood Estate, which is an infill development of traditional style housing. This estate was very well presented with attractive standing stones and good trees planted on the open space areas. There is a rusting temporary fence surrounding a service cabinet here, which does not enhance the overall appearance of this area.

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

- Under this category you mention plans to install bicycle stands at Quill's and outside the Community Hall, to facilitate parking of bicycles in the village. This is a very important initiative to cater for cycle tourism and active travel opportunities.
- The approach roads into Glengarriff are enhanced with good road surfaces and markings and well-presented road signage, roadside margins and boundaries. The Bantry approach is characterised by wonderful views across the inner harbour with pockets of suitable planting inserted into the stone boundary walls here. A number of unfinished properties on the Castletownbere approach will no doubt be tackled in the short to medium term. All approaches are characterised by extensive lush vegetation and mature woodland which is a very attractive feature of the Glengarriff area, which is greatly enjoyed by the road user.

Concluding Remarks:

Glengarriff village has much to offer the visitor and it is no surprise that it has developed into an important tourist destination in West Cork over many years. A strong Tidy Towns voice and presence in the village reinforces the great community spirit which now exists and helps guide your future development plans in a sustainable and considered way. You are wished well with your future endeavours.