

Tidy Towns Competition 2022

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Carrigans - An Carraigín** Ref: **1283**
County: **Donegal** Mark: **262**
Category: **B** Date(s): **08/07/2022**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	32	33
Streetscape & Public Places	80	37	38
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	39	40
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	24	26
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	11	12
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	56	56
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	29	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	26	27
TOTAL MARK	550	254	262

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

Fáilte An Carraigín 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. Welcome to the 2022 SuperValu TidyTowns competition.

It was with great delight that we were once again able to visit your lovely village. Thank you for your entry form, which was nicely laid out, contained concise information and was easy for the adjudicator to navigate. Ensure all projects are in the most appropriate category as we know many of your works may span over a number of possible competition categories. Your annotated map was a great help on adjudication day. You have a strong Tidy Towns committee given the size of the village and receive assistance from village volunteers on a regular basis, so well done in this. We also note the success you have in gaining support from local bodies and businesses, and many thanks for their support. You have a good working relationship with your schools at Coxtown and Monreagh and they have been actively supporting your work with their sourcing of pollinator seeds. This is great to see and now that a working relationship has been formed, build on the potential for more collaborations in nature and biodiversity and maybe next year sustainability projects also? Carrigans has a good history in the competition over the last 9 years, and we are glad to hear that participating in the annual event has been so fruitful for your community and that our yearly visits and reports provide inspiration. The evidence on the ground in a beautifully presented settlement and historically rich setting shows how positive your participation has been for you all.

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

Your village has a lovely mix of buildings and in spite of being dissected by a busy road retains a real sense of place and community. The Mill Mural along the old store is a lovely restrained art work and of an appropriate scale for the street, hinting at earlier lives lived in the village. Well done to Ms Lewtas for its execution and for her time given freely to complete this large, site specific and wonderful work. The cheeky hen's artwork in the window boards along the main street also made this adjudicator smile. Once again, the Garda station with its quirky bicycle planters was well presented and the red wrought iron gate to the adjoining villa is such a lovely remnant of our rural heritage. Indeed, your appreciation of our rural heritage has been further evidenced by your work to reinstall the old pump at pump street. On our walk through the village, your rural heritage was so well presented including the blue and orange turf cart at the entrance to the Parish Church and the new History sign at the Garda Station. From the mill to fishing the Foyle River has played a vital role in the village's economic life. The Carrig Inn with its blue painted finish and window boxes stood out and the placing of a bench here by the bus stop was nicely considered. Do you know if there is a need for bicycle racks in the village, either for school children, mass goers or passing tourists on cycling tours? The lack of foot traffic over the last few years no doubt contributed to the build-up of organic material on the streets. Certainly, on the day of adjudication footpath were clear and clear. One traffic cone signalled a possible

repair, but we are sure you will have notified your area engineer of any maintenance works required outside of the remit of your group.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Once again, the standard of presentation of your landscape areas was particularly high with sensitive use of colour and good levels of maintenance. How great that you have noted last year's adjudicators advice and have sourced pollinator seeds through your work with the schools. We would urge you to look to the website of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan for advice on plant establishment tips if you are having issues with 'the right plant in the right place'. Good luck with progressing the Ras and Mhuilinn and Mill Park sites. The pretty coloured planters add life to the village street and given the width of the footpath here do not add clutter or impede passage for all users. I would suggest removing the tire at the base of the maturing birch trees at the grass bank by the attractive stone Carrigan sign before they cause damage to the base of the tree by constriction or rubbing. The grass bank here must be difficult to maintain and could have a reduced mowing regime applied to encourage biodiversity, with just the edges kept trimmed? The narrow grass strip between the kerb and the low wall might also be better suited to low maintenance plants as again this busy spot right beside the road must be difficult to regularly mow. A bright bank of perennials perhaps mixed with red roses to complement the Mills red painted timber would be eye catching, lower maintenance and provide better sustenance for our bees and butterflies if the correct species are chosen. Again, look to the plant lists in the All Ireland Pollinator Plan for advice in choosing the correct plant species for this dry exposed position with the valued input of Sigrid, your plant expert.

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

The biodiversity plan is such a valuable tool for your group to identify many opportunities for enhancement across the village given your beautiful setting by the Folye. As you say, a considered approach will mean the projects identified by Mr Bradley, can be implemented on a phased basis. Some may face obstacles, such as your planned nature trail, but others can be advanced gradually over the coming years. Have you had a chance to present this important piece of work to the local schools? The schools can also host swift or bat boxes to increase biodiversity appreciation in your younger residents. As a group we are sure that you are very aware that networks of wildlife sites are more ecologically valuable than isolated habitats. So, consider the whole of the village landscape, both natural and built, as a living habitat.

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

You have been very proactive in taking on advice from previous adjudicators. The establishment of the polytunnel behind the Inn to supply your village planters is great to see and well done to your gardener Sigrid. We know well the amount of work and time it takes to complete a task like this. But it has a very beneficial impact with no travel costs and a low carbon footprint. Given the current hot summer the harvested water will be essential to keep planter displays alive. You are also commended for the efforts taken to segregate the waste your litter pickers encounter. This category can be a difficult one for many centres to tackle but you have an enthusiasm to learn and be proactive. For further advice we would encourage you to consult the Tidy Towns handbook and also to visit <http://localprevention.ie/tidy-towns/>. The Local Prevention website have added a specific 'Tidy Towns' page to their website so you can see what waste prevention projects have been done by other similar groups around the country. There are various case studies to learn from with practical tips, advice, free downloads of brochures etc. this is a great resource to gain advice on how to address this category in many creative ways and learn from other communities.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Once again a high standard of litter control has been maintained in Carrigans. Some roadside plastic bottles were seen thrown by passing traffic no doubt, but we are sure these would have been picked up by your next litter patrol. Where there are planted build outs along the paths in the village core, a sweeping brush can be the best way to prevent debris from accumulating, which then gives material for weeds to take root. The micro space created by the neat bus stop with the black bin and seat must be a nice spot to sit and wait before a journey begins. The Welcome signs were a cheery addition, and we wonder are there any plans to underground the wirescape here as part of future road works?

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

The efforts of residents in townhouses to add planters and colour to their home frontages does much to enliven the street and was much admired. Boundary walls were crisply painted. The play area would certainly be a very welcome addition and a fantastic amenity for children in the community. Good luck with progressing this scheme. Have you considered promoting the planting of trees in residents' gardens, done in conjunction with the annual National Tree Week? A number of large gardens seen on the visit at Imlick View and the road to Monreagh, had ample space to add a medium sized tree or even an orchard tree to front or rear gardens. Help Carrigans residents individually add to a collective Carrigans garden led woodland? A great legacy for future generations and a possible entrant for a future tree project award.

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

The new footpath is an important addition to link the Foyle View to the village amenities. Road work signs were evident on the Foyle View approach on adjudication day which may have been linked to this work. The neatly trimmed grass verge to the old ivy clad stone wall opposite was looking neat but again look to the All Ireland

Pollinator plan to introduce a 6 week mowing regime to these areas. They can still look smart but allows low growing plants such as clover thrive in slightly longer grass. The 50kph speed signs on the road to Scoil An Linbh Iosa are looking faded. Talk to your area Engineers about replacing them on this important active travel route from the village to the school. Can the post and wire fence here be planted with a native hedgerow to replace that lost as a result of the footpath works? Indeed, this is a great stretch to work with landowners to create a strong tree lined avenue which will aid traffic calming and create an attractive approach to the village. Name signs were neat and well presented.

Concluding Remarks:

As a first time visitor I was impressed with the work your group has carried out and more importantly the upkeep of important historical features in your lovely rural and riverside setting. You have a strong link to, and appreciation of, your village's history. This makes your home place very interesting to visit. We thank all of the numerous stakeholders and local residents involved in the works which make up this year's submission and continued good luck for all your planned work in 2023 and beyond. We very much enjoyed our time in your home place.