

Tidy Towns Competition 2022

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Knightstown - Baile an Ridire** Ref: **342**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **348**
Category: **A** Date(s): **14/06/2022**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	48	49
Streetscape & Public Places	80	46	47
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	44	44
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	34	36
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	23	23
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	69	71
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	35	36
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	41	42
TOTAL MARK	550	340	348

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 2022 SuperValu TidyTowns competition and thank you for your application form, map, Long Term Plan 2018 – 2023 and photos. We ask that next year these all be combined into one document. The applications are now sent to the adjudicators digitally and we access the information on site as we visit the various locations. We don't have time to open and close various attachments unfortunately and so ALL should be in one easily read document. Insert the photos into the various categories and put the Plan at the end of the application form. This will assist the adjudicators and make the visit worthwhile. We checked your Facebook page and see that the last time it was updated was 9th June 2018. Ask one member to be PRO and his/her job is to inform the whole community of your activities via radio, newspapers, parish notes, posters in shops etc and social media. Your core committee is 12 and the whole village supports you in various ways when requested. We have seen this in other communities and it is wonderful when the community is united in such a positive way. You have two youth representatives on your committee – are these from the Primary School? Darkness into Light Yoga sounds wonderful, what a way to start the day! Please update your application form and map – Future Projects should not be noted as these will be seen in your Long-Term Plan. You list local businesses and state and semi-state organisations who assist you – these relationships must be fostered and take time but are invaluable to any voluntary committee. Your success in the rankings in the TidyTowns competition was noted well done. This is a competition to assist each community to improve itself and bring out the individual strengths associated with that particular area and local community.

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

All roads lead downhill to the harbour area and seafront with the majority of properties located near the harbour and on the main entrance road. Residents and business are side by side and many have been recently painted which gives your village a very pleasant appearance. We admired the new galvanised steel entrance into the grounds of St. John the Baptist CofI church. Its gesture towards the old wrought iron gate design didn't go unnoticed – please compliment the craftsman. The church itself is quite beautiful and we are amazed that it is not on the Record of Protected Structures – bring this to the attention of the County architect/conservation officer. While the graveyard isn't pristine, we did enjoy walking around and seeing the old and new grave markers. The Gothic Revival RC church of the Immaculate Conception with its turret to one side is quite beautiful. The Heritage Centre in the Old National School was unfortunately closed but we sure it is well used by the community and visitors alike. The flat iron gate in the stone piers was admired – although we couldn't see one of the piers due to the amount of ivy on the structure (bad for open stonework and should always be removed). The harbour area too has its architectural gems

– the Weighbridge and the imposing Royal Valentia Hotel. Are there plans for the derelict, roofless, stone building at the harbour? It is a beautiful structure and so should be retained. Compliments on closing a derelict site from the public view by the green timber fencing and Marine Flags display.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Trees have been recently planted along the road at Renard View. We noted that one had failed and needs to be replaced. The walk through the grounds of the Cofl church grounds we noted is part of a walking route undertaken by locals we met quite a few walking when we visited. The grounds are quite beautiful with its sculpture, pergola, a mix of stunning mature trees, and central to it all the beautiful church. The walkway of Hydrangeas was in full bloom and was very pretty. The planting along the base of the graveyard wall will take some time to mature but be patient, you've done a good job and we loved the variety selected. Cracow Park is a great amenity for Knightstown. A tennis court, adult exercise machines, playground etc. The seating is very haphazard and makes the area untidy – we counted five different bench styles in one small area. Ask for this to be changed. We also suggest leaving some areas unmown and maybe just make a path through so that nature is allowed to flourish – insects and small mammals. Select an area not used for ball play. We noted the area at the entrance is a work in progress.

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

A great collection of drystone walls, hedges, mature trees, the undulating coast etc makes Knightstown a haven for all our wildlife – aquatic, land and air. The school children were involved in 'Save the Bees' programme and planted wildflowers. Just remember to plant native wildflowers so that you are not introducing invasive species into Ireland with imported seeds. Check the origin of all seeds before you plant them. You held an Art Competition in local Primary Schools on local Birds and Wildlife (Held May 2022) - insert photos of the winning poster into next year's entry form. Involving the children in planting trees for National Tree Week is commendable - a Guelder Rose, whitethorn, oak, birch, beech, 2 yew trees and also redcurrant and blackcurrant bushes. Have you thought about organising a guided biodiversity and wildflower walks along Altazamuth Walk? This is not difficult to organise and we are sure that many would take part as people always like to learn about nature and natural habitats. Ask your environmental officer in KCC to advise. Let us know of the success of the birdboxes – and remember they must be cleaned annually.

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

The organic plants for sale were noted – lettuce, mustard, tomatoes etc - with the honest box for donations. We didn't buy any as we still had a few days of travelling to do before returning home. The clothes swap parties seem to have been a success, are there any planned for this autumn?
We looked for the 'large barrels' of water used by the sea scouts but couldn't find them. During Covid quite a number of state and semi-state organisation organised Webinars and many were on subject which relate to this category. Did you take part in any? Some are still available on-line. We suggest that you contact your environmental officer and he/she will assist you. We looked for water butts as we walked around and saw one or two in private homes but none collecting the water from large buildings – is this something you could encourage? ESB fast charge points for electric cars are becoming a normal sight in our towns and villages – enquire about having one installed in Knightstown.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The village, approach roads, harbour area etc were all litter free and very tidy when we visited. Your litter patrols are working well and we commend you on the cleanliness of the whole area. We loved the blue capped walls into Valentia Hospital but suggest that the white sections under are painted annually – white paint always needs attention. Weed growth is a problem in all communities and unfortunately in Knightstown you have your share. The gates into the graveyard are simple and beautiful – they could do with being painted. One of the seats is dangerous with part of the seat rotten and this should be replaced as a matter of urgency. Are you trying to encourage grass to take over the gravel at each side of the pathway into the Heritage Centre? If yes, then we suggest that you remove the gravel and just sow grass seed which will be quicker. Grass cutting has been dumped at Renard View, in Cracow Park and near the water wheel which looks unsightly. We advise on mulching the grass rather than removing it, as when the grass clippings break down, they release potassium, nitrogen and phosphorous back into the soil. The beautiful stone and mosaic sculpture by your local artist, Alan Hall, in the grounds of the church had a lot of stagnant water is there a drain blocked? Remove the sign on the piers at the entrance to Altazamuth Walk as they detract from their beauty. The signs (if they are needed) can be put on the wall beside the piers instead.

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

The houses on the approach roads are a mix of bungalows and two storey houses set in their own gardens interspersed with some farmhouses with yards and outbuildings. All were well maintained and those with gardens had trees, shrubs and colourful floral displays with great varieties of pollinator friendly planting. We noted a beautiful sculpture group in one of the gardens - a billy goat and two rams. Others had vegetable plots some with polytunnels. The former lighthouse keepers' terrace on the road from the graveyard is quite beautiful as too are the groups of terraced houses facing the sea near the former telegraph station building. In addition there are quite a number of small housing estates both old and new close to the village core - An tOilleán, An Faoileán, Renard View, Knight's Haven, Glór na Farraige and Reenellen – which were generally well maintained. It is good to read that the derelict site is being developed as dereliction mars a streetscape. Have you suggested pollinator friendly planting for the residents' associations? Very often individuals and indeed associations are not aware of the plants

(and colours) which attract pollinators. Also advise individuals and associations on environmental weed control methods and grant applications etc.

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

The Fáilte, Baile an Ridire, Knightstown sign on the entrance road from the west is quite beautiful in its simplicity. A large vertical slab of Valentia stone set in a low freshly painted roundabout. We were delighted that you resisted the temptation to include plants and instead allowed the slab to make its statement! A narrow grass margin was trimmed neatly along the entrance road which is a perfect entrance to your village allowing the remainder of the area to grow and become nesting and feeding area for insects and small mammals. We were delighted to see that footpaths extend along the roads from the outskirts right into Knightstown which makes it safe for walkers and encourages parents to take their children on foot rather than by car. Road surfaces were fair throughout the village – the edges had some minor break-up. We love that the footpath is just on one side of the road as this will encourage motorists to drive slowly in the village.

Concluding Remarks:

We enjoyed walking around your village. Please make reference next year to the Sustainable Development Goals in the various categories in your application.

Your map needs to be redone – you are using a map from 2018 and at this stage the numbering system is confusing and out of sequence. We ask that you add a legend to your map referencing the numbers and projects which are listed in the application form. We had to keep scrolling up and down through the application form to find each project – which regularly were out of sequence. Very time consuming and frustrating. Thank you for entering the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2022 competition.