

Tidy Towns Competition 2022

Adjudication Report

Centre: Lixnaw - Leac Snámha	Ref: 346
County: Kerry	Mark: 245
Category: B	Date(s): 30/06/2022

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	41	42
Streetscape & Public Places	80	30	32
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	30	32
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	20	21
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	11	12
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	50	51
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	28	29
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	26	26
TOTAL MARK	550	236	245

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 completed Application Form, photos, map and your detailed Lixnaw 2025 Development Plan. Next year insert the photos into the application form in the relevant categories as this would assist the adjudicators. The colour green used for your project locations was almost lost when we printed out the map – use a different colour next year. We suggest that you also add some photos of events/activities which will not be visible to the adjudicators when they visit – seminars, nature walks etc. Your committee of five is assisted by twenty volunteers. Withing Lixnaw there are ten active voluntary organisations of which you are one. You list state and semi-state bodies who support your activities and projects. Informing the community of your work is done through traditional news channels – parish newsletter, papers, posters etc. We recommend that you open a Facebook account and let the community know (with the addition of photographs) of your activities. We are delighted to welcome you to the competition for the third time and we trust that participation has encouraged a pride of place amongst the residents, which is the true spirit of TidyTowns.

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

There are some wonderful views across the rolling Kerry landscape from your village. Vernacular single and two storey houses are interspersed with commercial and retail properties within the village while in the surrounds, we find farmhouses with outbuildings and yards adding to your architectural heritage. In addition, the beautiful Romanesque style RC St. Michael's church, the Convent complex of buildings, the schools and the Community Centre make up the village structures. You list a number of projects undertaken in this category – well done. We admired the Lixnaw Historical Guide map. The Remembrance Garden at Daughton's Traingle is dedicated to those who died in the 1919/1921 War of Independence and in its simplicity, it is very beautiful. We recommend that you plant some low growing colourful plants/flowers inside the wall so that it will continue to be on view from the road. The gravel will need maintenance to ensure that weeds do not grow. We see that close by there is the shaft remaining of the Fitzmaurice Monument. Do you know anything about this? Will this be part of your Heritage Trail? Check archaeology.ie and you may find information there. We love the double arched bridge over the River Brick/Lixnaw Canal. St Michael's well was visited and the panel about the healing points noted. We admired the grotto – but the ivy needs attention as it is encroaching on the structure. (see litter below)

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The green spaces with the village are located in the various estates and in the school grounds. We were delighted

to see the number of trees in the communal space in Slí na Faiche. You have also undertaken a tree planting regime on the entrance roads to the village. Besides giving us shelter, trees are known to have a positive impact on people's mental health and wellbeing. In addition, they provide food for insects and roosting and nesting sites for birds. They also meet 15 of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals – so all in all a win, win situation. Does Hermitage Park GAA park have a walking route around the pitch which is available for use by the whole community? We didn't see it in the aerial view showing the proposed AstroTurf playing pitch. Leader funds are available for this. There is a dearth of trees in the grounds of the boys' schools – maybe discuss a tree planting scheme with the principal. We noted suckers on a number of trees in various locations within the village and in the residential estates. These should be removed using a sharp knife or secateurs but get advice on the correct way to do this. At some stage undertake a landscape plan for the area in front of the Community Centre, incorporating parking bays, trees and shrubs and safe pedestrian routes – this area is quite unpleasant at the moment.

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

Stone walls, hedgerows, tall trees and the River Brick/Lixnaw Canal give a great variety of habitats around your village. There was a great display of wildflowers along some of the hedgerows on the outskirts of the village which were quite beautiful. We note the Integrated Constructed Wetlands at Páirc Sheoirse – we have visited one Integrated Constructed Wetlands in another small community and were equally impressed at this very clever sustainable, natural wastewater treatment system. You have planted hazel and willow wildflowers (we assume native) in the autumn along the grass margin at the road at Páirc Sheoirse. Is it your plan to have the walkways around the various ponds accessible to the public? You have also cleared the overgrowth along the Tralee Road and planted birch, whitethorn and oak, while on the Listowel Road you planted alder and downy birch. Just for further planting schemes - it's a more dramatic effect if the variety of trees planted is just one variety.

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

We see that you have a wood chipper so that you will now shred all storm damage done to trees and use the chips as bark mulch for your planting beds. We are totally in favour of this as we dislike gravel being used in planting beds. This category Sustainability – doing more with less, is one where many communities struggle but truthfully it is just about being aware of how we use the resources of the planet so that we cut down on our waste. There are many other ways to advance in this category and we suggest that you examine the website <http://www.tidytowns.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Sustainable-Waste-and-Resource-Management.pdf> which may give you some ideas for your community. Also contact the environment officer in Kerry Co Co who will tell you on events/ talks which you could attend to learn more about Sustainability – doing more with less. During Covid quite a number of state and semi-state organisation organised Webinars and many were on subjects which relate to this category. Did you take part in any? Some are still available on-line. What are the schools undertaking with regards to Sustainability teaching – can you help in any of this? You have quite a number of projects listed in your Plan so make out a time scale for the delivery of these.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Like many communities in Kerry, you took part in the Kerry Clean-Up Week in April – we commend the community on their involvement in this as it focuses their attention on the need to be vigilant on litter, fly-tipping and weed growth. Having the youth club to assist this year was excellent as they need to see that throwing litter on the ground is not acceptable – someone has to clean it up. When we visited, the center of the village was virtually litter free but unfortunately weed growth was a problem in some areas. Weeds need to be removed at the base of walls, along road/kerb junctions and in gravel areas. Use an organic weed killer for large areas or a mix of salt, vinegar and washing-up liquid and a hoe/spade or wire brush for the smaller areas. It's slow but effective. Some of the planting bed in Kilcaragh Drive had weeds growing through the gravel which looked untidy. We noted ivy on some stone walls. While ivy is a wonderful for insect life and is acceptable/good on rendered (plastered) walls it is not acceptable on stone structures as the roots penetrate between the joints in the stones, making the walls unstable and leading to their collapse. Natural stone constructions are in themselves great habitats for insect life and also very beautiful in the streetscape. We noted some obsolete poles – do a survey and ask that all obsolete poles and unnecessary signage be removed as this is clutter.

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

The mix of single and two storey houses along the entrances and in the village itself, gives a very pleasant aspect to the residential properties in your village. Many houses had been recently painted and some gardens were full of colour with pollinator friendly flowers, shrubs and ornamental trees for extra effect. For a rural village we were surprised at the number of housing estates – The Green, Clogher Drive, Slí na Faiche, Kilcaragh Lawn, Clanmaurice, and the larger Baile an Gharraí and Kilcaragh estates. The long concrete entrance wall in Kilcaragh Lawn is quite unpleasant and would benefit from ivy or other climbing plants. In addition, trees could be planted along the green area. We recommend that a grass mowing machine with a mulcher is purchased for community use as this will cut the grass into small clippings which then break down and provide nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus to the grass. Could part of the green communal open spaces in the estates, not used for ball play, be left unmown next year to allow wildflowers and grasses to grow?

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

A row of mature trees lines the entrance from the west and with the neatly trimmed grass this entrance is quite beautiful. Your new signs are very pleasant – a little difficult to read until we were up close. Road surfaces are mixed – some areas are good while in others we noted edge breakup and poor road marking. We also noted that

footpaths didn't join one to another in some areas. We loved the array of nasturtiums planted along the gateway. We note in the Lixnaw Development Plan it is suggested to install planting boxes at the entrance roads to the village – truthfully permanent stone surrounded planting beds are a better idea. The picnic area at the integrated wetlands was closed and the gate locked – we assume this is a temporary closure. We suggest the you trim a narrow margin along all the entry roads to notify motorists that they are entering a settlement. This will hopefully help to reduce their speed. We were delighted to see that the footpath extends to the 50km sign on the north of the village.

Concluding Remarks:

We enjoyed our visit to your village and we wish you the best with the Integrated Westlands Project. Please remember to add some photos in the relevant categories rather than sending them in a separate document. This will make the adjudicators' job more rewarding. You also need to reference the Sustainable Development Goals to your work. TidyTowns in conjunction with Limerick City and County Council ran a webinar on the SDGs in 2021 and the presentation is worth reading as it will be helpful for your application next year. The link is: <https://www.limerick.ie/sites/default/files/media/documents/2021-03/sustainable-development-goals-helpful-hints.pdf>
Thank you for entering the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2022 competition.