

Tidy Towns Competition 2022

Adjudication Report

Centre: **The Spa - An Spa** Ref: **2266**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **215**
Category: **B** Date(s): **01/07/2022**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	32	34
Streetscape & Public Places	80	32	34
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	28	31
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	22	23
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	8	9
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	31	34
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	25	27
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	22	23
TOTAL MARK	550	200	215

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 which included a map and photos. It's wonderful to be able to visit the communities this year and see the results of the hard-working volunteers. Your committee of nine has an additional twenty volunteers who help when needed. Hopefully when the community see the results of your work others might join – if only to help in one activity/project. We question the progress of the 5-year plan mentioned in your previous application and we agree with the 2021 adjudicator who advised that 'While it is helpful to get professional advice to prepare a plan, it is important that the community has ownership of it and is familiar with the various action plans that it will contain'. Hopefully by next year it will be completed and give you goals with time frame attached. Don't make it too onerous – just a few actions under each category that you, as a small village, can achieve in the time allocated and add partners who will assist/advise you. We note your reference to the SDGs under each category – well done. This is your second year to enter the competition and your participation can be measured in terms of the improvements to the village and the goodwill generated towards you and your work.

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

You are a small rural village near a large town, Tralee, with a mix of vernacular single and two-storey buildings and two relatively new housing developments, and these with the topography of the village located along the north of Tralee Bay, gives your village its character. The streetscape was very presentable with most residents making the effort to paint their buildings and garden boundaries. Please commend Spa Seafoods (lots of awards noted) and the Oyster Tavern for the presentation of their properties – we loved the murals of the footballers. The new stone Sculpture at village entrance is quite beautiful – take care that the trees don't engulf it. It's an interesting link to the Celtic heritage of Kerry. The memorial to the three local men was noted. Is there a possibility of developing a coastal walk from Cuckoo Lane along the seafront past the new beautiful timber paddock fencing at the Cricket Club and perhaps even further? The grass (near the memorial to the three men) looks slightly trodden so it seems to be semi-established. At some stage make a Heritage Trail of Spa and include the various historical sites and structures including your three ring forts. We admired the stone wall painted yellow on the entrance from the west with its very unusual piers and small rounded stone capping construction - quite a unique stone wall.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

There are great mature trees around The Spa which are quite beautiful and we suggest that you examine and see if

buildouts could be installed along the main road and additional trees added. Perhaps also a row along the road at the Oyster Tavern? You have a large number of planters along the entrance from the east which give great colour. However, we strongly advise that a long stone surrounded planting bed be built instead and all those beautiful flowers are put directly into the ground. Use bark mulch around the plants (not stones) as mulching reduces the need for watering, protects the bare soil, creates new soil over time and creates a habitat for many important creatures. The sedum plants are an excellent choice in front of the stone sculpture as these will be slow to grow and will stay low. We admired the green area with the pollinator friendly planting beds and also the planting bed at the road junction opposite the cricket field. The green space at the entrance to Schoolfield estate would benefit from some tree planting – a row of five or six inside the wall and along the path edge would transform this entrance. You have done a considerable amount of landscaping works – trimming trees, replanting hedges, planting flowers in beds etc etc. and we commend you and the volunteers who help for this.

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

Your village is located in rural Ireland and surrounded by stone walls, hedge rows, trees and of course the sea, so you have nature all around you. The deadwood hedge which used the cuttings from the Ash and Sycamore in addition to those from residents' gardens is a very worthwhile project and looked good. We are delighted that the community approved. You mention you have a Biodiversity Plan developed with help from an expert. Let us have a copy of the plan in next year's application. We assume this will be inserted into the 5-Year Plan for the village? The biodiversity embankment has its share of native Irish wildflowers – photos were noted but insert these into the application form next year. It's always good to have a mix in a hedge and we see you have planted the gaps in the escallonia hedge with Spindle, Guelder Rose and Hawthorn. You mention an ecological corridor but have you undertaken any study of the 'nature' in your area? Do you know what mammals etc have habitats in your locality? It is important to promote awareness of nature in your area but first you must know what's there. Perhaps there is someone locally who could map these habitats. Make contact with Kerry Co Co heritage and environmental officers and ask for advice in undertaking activities/projects in this category.

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

You mention that the village was named after the spa waters that were used for health in the 18th and 19th century. Is there a possibility that some local entrepreneur would set up a business again? Is the fresh water at the shore the location of the previous Spa? We noted the Bee Friendly Garden in the school but didn't see any vegetable beds or polytunnel. Is the school involved in the Green Schools Programme? If not, this is something you might introduce and help with. The school has recently won first prize in the National Applegreen BioDive Competition and will have a €10,000 designed school garden – let's hope this includes raised beds to accommodate a vegetable garden and also some tree planting. We noted the water butt at the school – are there any others in the community? We note that you have been in contact with other TidyTowns groups and also attended various courses and seminars. 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 about events/ talks which you could attend to learn more about Sustainability – doing more with less.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

We assume, as with other villages, that you took part in the Kerry Clean-Up in April this year. We encourage groups to take part in nationwide Clean-Up events as it focuses the mind of the general public on the high amount of litter/fly tipping/ dumping that occurs nationally. When we visited, the village was virtually litter free and weeds were only visible around the areas which are being upgraded by Kerry Co Co. We commend your litter/weed team and we see that several volunteer groups have taken it upon themselves to litter pick regularly along the roads and shore within a 5 km radius of the village. We noted a lack of litter bins – maybe this is something to request from Kerry Co Co as not everyone brings their litter home. We noted that the local school had a dog fouling poster competition and that posters were on display beside the Christmas Tree to remind people to clean up after their dogs. Community Notice Boards are a very good way to have posters of local events advertised. Ask the area engineer to provide a Community Notice board (painted black and measuring 2.4m x 2.4m) at the entrances to the village where all notices are posted and then if some organisation puts a poster on a pole, you can remove this immediately.

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

The village properties and those on the outskirts of the village were, in the main, well presented. Some had been recently painted and were quite beautiful. Residents have made an effort in terms of adding colour/movement and many had an array of flowers and shrubs in pots beside their front doors which gave additional definition to the entrance area. We noted that works to the large open area in The Village Green estate is being carried out – is a pond feature being built? This is a very pleasant open space and we look forward to seeing it finished. We also loved that a pedestrian entrance is located near the village to allow people walk to the restaurant/deli and pub. Don't forget to encourage the residents to grow pollinator-friendly flowers from now on. Have a look at the website http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Gardens_actions-to-help-pollinators-July-2016.pdf for ideas for the garden.

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

The entrance from the east with the great views of the sea is well maintained with a neatly cut grass margin beside

the well-kept stone wall. We notice that roadworks and other improvement works are being undertaken by Kerry Co including the installation of a pedestrian crossing. This will greatly improve the streetscape and safety of the pedestrians. Footpaths are also badly needed or need to be extended or resurfaced in various locations e.g. the footpath from Schoolfield estate should be extended into the village so that pedestrians from this estate can walk in safety along this busy road. But there are many more to be upgraded. The roadway into the Community Centre is in very poor condition – we see that the GAA are applying for Leader grants so we assume this will be upgraded then. In the landscaping plan for this area, we recommend that you arrange to have the large carpark separated by trees in buildouts.

Concluding Remarks:

We enjoyed visiting your village and seeing the work undertaken. Please insert the photos into the relevant categories in next year's application as the adjudicators don't have time to open and close various documents to see your work.

Advise the school to trim back the ivy so that it doesn't go into the attic and cause damage to the rafters and other roof timbers.

Thank you for entering the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2022 competition.