

# Tidy Towns Competition 2022

## Adjudication Report

Centre: <b>Brannockstown - Baile na mBreatnach</b>	Ref: <b>358</b>
County: <b>Kildare</b>	Mark: <b>287</b>
Category: <b>B</b>	Date(s): <b>15/07/2022</b>

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	38	39
Streetscape & Public Places	80	36	37
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	35	37
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	20	22
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	11	12
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	66	67
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	33	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	40	40
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>287</b>

### 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.

After the pause of the last two years Brannockstown Community is starting to reschedule face-to-face meetings. It is good to read in your entry form of the agencies and bodies that have helped you in your work including the Community National School, the Baptist Church, Kildare County Council and the community action group in Kilcullen, as well as local growers.

Communication is important and it was nice to see the notice boards at both entrances to the school.

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

It was our first ever visit to Brannockstown village and what a delight. You have a wonderful array of heritage buildings excellently presented. Even the village pumps looked well.

It was heartening to read that the original school building built in 1885 is to be used for community and school events.

### Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The oak tree planted outside the new entrance to Brannockstown Community National School will be a wonderful legacy for future generations.

Over the past 12-months one of the major works that you have progressed is the need for a sustainable planting plan. You have worked with a landscape architect to consider providing colour throughout the year whilst supporting biodiversity and using native plants. We were impressed that your final planting plan covers a 10-year program and this is welcomed.

We noticed leylandii and laurel planted in a few places. Neither of these plants are beneficial to wildlife. Leylandii trees are very fast growing and were popular in the 1980s as a hedging plant. But they block light and in some countries it's now illegal to sell these trees without a licence. It is good to read that some of these have been removed by the County Council and the area restored to a public green space to be enjoyed.

The linear flower bed along the stone walls was lovely with native shrubs and perennials which looks great.

Planters on the railings of the old school building have a lovely burst of colour here.

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

Best of luck with your application for funding for solar powered irrigation systems, this would be used to water plants along the village. Have you a mobile bowser or a handy trailer to wheel a water tank around to the different flower beds? This could be made by someone handy in the village.

It is heartening to see a lot of trees planted in the new housing developments. It is suggested that you try and recruit volunteer tree wardens in different areas whose role would be to nurture and protect trees in their formative years. For example, a lot of the support straps need to be loosened and a wider area at the base of trees needs to be maintained that is not strimmed or mowed. A lot of new trees get damaged by accidental over-zealous strimming.

The use of weed killer should be discouraged in public places - it was noticed at the edge of some paths.

The boundary of the Baptist Church is surrounded by fantastic mature trees. One nice community project could be to collect the seeds or acorns of these and grow them up as saplings for others to plant elsewhere in the wider community.

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

This category is how to make your area more sustainable and reduce your impact on the environment. The solar powered irrigation system applied for is a really good example of how you're hoping to harness natural energy and resources.

Do many children walk to school or is there a walking bus? Do you have a schoolbook rental scheme at Brannoxstown community national school? Do you use peat free compost or home-made compost? As your planting scheme is advanced you might be interested to share seeds or run a short class on how to grow plants from cuttings? Is there a bus service for the community and does the schedule work for the community? Lots of questions! The Tidy Towns handbook available from their website and has many examples of actions pertinent to this category of the competition.

### **Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:**

Thanks to your volunteers that help out with regular litter picks either as a group or individually. Do you advertise a place for new residents to join and help?

Do you have any specific litter issues that you address?

An old sign on the school boundary wall about parking could be removed. At the junction a couple of the finger post signs are faded and need attention. There were some older text alert signs on display, maybe check that the contact number on these is still valid?

There are quite industrial metal gates at one site. If these were painted a dark colour they could blend in and not be as noticeable.

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

You're encouraged to share the details of your planting scheme to the community. This should help them replicate your scheme in gardens and will make a really good wildlife network across the wider Brannockstown community.

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

You are working on an ongoing project to repair the natural stone walls in the area. Well done.

The name sign at the entrance to the village looks well. We liked the slight angle on the planters at the R413 junction which allows for a better appreciation of the pollinator plants here. The planters looked really well in this area with the different styles in discrete areas.

Continuity of pavement in a community is important as it encourages safe access and healthier lifestyles, and also helps to mark a strong sense of place to passers-by. You hope to continue the pavement from the cricket club to the school. It'll be a long extension due to the existing pavement but could be very beneficial as traffic around the bridge area was fast moving.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

We enjoyed exploring Brannockstown and seeing how well the heritage features are maintained, and appreciated, by the community. In this, your fifth year in this national competition, it is rewarding to see you obtaining expert advice and together building a strong community for all to enjoy.