

Tidy Towns Competition 2022

Adjudication Report

Centre: Stradbally - An Sráidbhaile	Ref: 420
County: Laois	Mark: 323
Category: C	Date(s): 13/06/2022

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	41	42
Streetscape & Public Places	80	42	43
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	45	45
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	36	38
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	18	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	56	57
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	41	41
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	37	38
TOTAL MARK	550	316	323

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 libh. From your submission it is clear that you are an active committee and great to see that you are getting help from the wider community. I did not receive a copy of your 3 year plan, this is an important document to submit along with your application.. If you don't yet have a plan, please consult the TidyTowns handbook. The plan does not require too much detail, the best plans are simple, realistic and specific to the community. One to two pages, identifying a few projects in each of the categories will suffice. In terms of your submission I found the use of social media screen shots a good way to tell your story. I would have liked a bit of preamble and to note which projects were new (N) or maintenance (M). Please pass on my thanks to the cartographer, the map was simply excellent, just how I like it, clear and easy to follow.

From your Facebook page you are prolific in communicating with the public, well done to the administrator of the account. I didn't see a notice board in the local Supervalu. As competition sponsor I am sure the owners would be only be too delighted to oblige you have a space to promote your events.

You have a great relationship with all statutory agencies, keep up this excellent work so your voice can be heard, often the most important work a TidyTowns group can do is to influence policy decisions in their locality.

Great to see you engaging outside of the school setting with your Bughotels and Bluebells event. It is only right that a group like yourselves have special events for young families, I think this fosters a great community spirit, well done and let us know how it went next year in terms of numbers that turned up.

Just to note we ask you to identify one project from any category in the application that you are particularly proud of. This is your opportunity to let us know how great you are! Make sure you complete this section next year.

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

It was my first time in Stradbally and I was very impressed with the Main street and the many fine buildings on it. I also admired that it was a "working town" with the Mill operational, it gave the town a great feel and sense of uniqueness. The only comment I would have is I thought the Mill could work a little harder in keeping the curtilage of the facility a little cleaner especially around the river area. The Malthouse across the road is in excellent condition from the outside, from my research I see it is a music venue, the pictures of the venue inside look incredible. I also liked the nod to the town's agricultural heritage with the tractor seats sculpture. Beside that the River Cottage was a lovely residence. The Market square is very nice and there is a sense of uniqueness and history to the canopy The Crèche and childcare facility are very nicely presented, really well thought out with younger people's needs in mind. Great to see too a "Ramsbottom" pub in town, a name that is in my mind synonymous with Co. Laois. The area around the library is well kept, although the railings could do with a fresh coat of paint. I noted newly erected

interpretive signage in this area that was empty. I am not sure what plans you have for it, but if you place anything in here make sure its bilingual, le do thoil. The "Stradbally steam museum" could do with a bit of TLC. A bit of thought could really bring this building back to life, you might even with the owner's consent consider a mural on the green shutters. There were many other lovely buildings and terraced housing on the very fine main street, credit to all the owner. I can sense great pride in their heritage buildings. Another recommendation I have would be to remove the banner from the railings outside on the Church between Market Square and the Mill

Whilst I have mentioned all the fine buildings there is unfortunately still some dereliction, in particular the old convent. I am only too well aware that dereliction can be complicated but keep at it and hopefully one day it can be returned to some use, like as you say a digital hub or remote working space.

The playpark "full steam ahead" was also nice, it is great to see a move to more nature-based play in playparks like this. I also visited the GAA club, happy to say it too was well presented.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

I thought the information in this category in your submission could have had more details. I thought from my walk around the following sites were good, area beside Bennett's, the play park was well managed as was the area around the library. A good few of the red planters could be replanted with biodiversity in mind. To get some ideas consult the handbook.

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

This is a strong category for you with many fine projects undertaken. I took a visit to Stradbally lake, a real oasis of biodiversity in your area. Lovely to see the swans with her cygnets. Within the town the allotments is I am sure a haven for pollinators, well done to all the plot holders. There was also some planting with biodiversity in mind, try and increase this year on year. From your application I note that you have taken an interest in Swifts, such an incredible bird, it needs all the help it can get. Keep planting those trees and native hedgerows too, again great info in handbook on how to look after young trees to make sure they get established.

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

Great to see you are developing some projects in this category. I admire your promoting of the local St Vincent's shop. This is a perfect example of the circular economy, perhaps you could do an "item of the week" for them on your social media page. Sustainable transport is also a major issue for you, I would be interested to know if there are any active travel projects planned in your area. Please let us know next year. I think the weekly markets is the standout project in this category, moreover I think there are opportunities here for you to make sure stall holders operate in a sustainable manner. You might consider seeing if any "zero packaging" stall holders might be interested in attending, there are a few about.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Many thanks to those who participate in regular litter picks. It is still in my mind one of the most important tasks that TidyTowns undertake. I noted the Mutt Mitts, please try to keep them stocked. The area around the bring centre was litter free, always a good sign. Overall, I found Stradbally to be litter free on the day I visited.

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

From your application I admire Woodview's efforts at Christmas. On my walk around I noted a new housing development beside the national School. All new housing has to be welcomed and I wish the residents well and hope they get involved in TidyTowns. The housing beside Supervalu was looking good, I thought a good use of a town centre site too. Court View and Oakglen were also well presented.

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

I thought all approach roads were well maintained and I liked the welcome signs. It is great to see that you are litter picking them. Litter from cars is a major problem, hopefully an initiative like the latte levy will address this. The one laneway where the allotments are located was well kept and as I have said before all streets have many fine buildings.

Concluding Remarks:

Being my first time in Stradbally, I truly believe there is a lot more to it than just the "Picnic". A really lovely town that has lots of potential in this competition. I would encourage you to keep at it. Develop your plan and create a vision for the town. Focus on what is important to you as a committee, guíom gach rath oraibh leis an obair sin!