

Tidy Towns Competition 2021

Adjudication Report

Centre: Carlanstown - Droichead Chearbhalláin	Ref: 1143
County: Meath	Mark: 291
Category: B	Date(s): 09/08/2021

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	40
Streetscape & Public Places	60	42
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	42
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	24
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	23
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	37
TOTAL MARK	470	291

Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Fáilte Chuig Comórtas na mBailte Slachrmhara Super Valu 2021. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn. Go raibh maith agaibh as ucht bhur dtacaíocht le linn na paindéime. Lean leis an dea-obair.

Welcome back – we missed you but we are delighted you have entered the competition again. Possibly you were too busy working on some of your great projects to submit an entry in 2019!

You are a sub group of Carlanstown Kilbeg Community Development. The TidyTowns competition covers 8 separate adjudication categories that would tie in with many of the aspects of the Development Company's work.

Congratulations on your major achievements over the past 24 months. New paths, planting, picnic benches and a footbridge was constructed in Deerpark. And then in the centre of this you completed construction of the great Community facility - The Hub. To ensure inclusivity, you obtained funds to install a lift in the Hub Building too! To top it all you also installed a fantastic playground!

Your social media was up to date and had some lovely pictures of the community. Butterflies on flowers, bees on herbs and lovely name signs nicely planted underneath. You have a large number of followers on social media and it is great to see the range of projects, and volunteers you have to hand. It also helps your adjudicator get a feel for the community. (Sadly, due to Covid this adjudication is being completed remotely.)

It is hoped that this winter you will have time to reflect and consider your aims to include in your next long-term plan.

You organized successful fund-raisers and through raffles, donations, quizzes and stalls. But mostly your community second-hand furniture shop has ensured a steady income to help secure funds for these capital projects. And how fab to have Mairead McGuinness MEP open your outdoor classroom. She is an inspirational speaker but no doubt she would have been inspired by the voluntary effort and social capital of the community of Carlanstown.

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

As mentioned the development at Deerpark are very impressive. Was this in your long-term plan? It would have taken months from idea to the end of construction so well done to all for driving this to completion.

From google maps there appear to be some lovely mature trees in some parts of the village. With wide pavements, perhaps you could consider planting more down the main streets of Carlanstown. There is a link at the end of this report to a great guide on choosing trees. They have many benefits from helping to manage surface water, reduce

pollution and balance air temperatures as well as looking good and hosting wildlife.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

A major achievement has been to help St Michael's FC with the development of a reflective garden. A lot of time and effort went into developing this and it should make for a peaceful space in the community.

It could be an idea to build a raised herb bed near The Hub for community use at home. In the longer term you could add some more features here such as a communal pizza oven or an outdoor permanent barbeque area.

The water pump looked very well with its mix of annual and perennial planting. What a difference from 9 years ago – and well done to the local volunteer who looks after this.

We loved the before and after pictures of the landscaped bed that is not located where the petrol pumps were! Simple and effective. Some carpet roses here might provide some nice ground cover that provides food and nectar for pollinators.

New trees have been planted in Deer Park. Do check that the stays are loosened as the trees grow, please. Also do give them lots of water in their first few years. Maybe you should appoint a volunteer tree-warden to manage these?

You have put a lot of effort into your hanging baskets on the high street lights. ESB has asked us to advise volunteers to be extremely careful as they do not recommend the positioning and hence watering of baskets on live streetlamps. Perhaps you could look into a long-term solution on an alternative position where passing pedestrians and drivers can more easily see them also. Perhaps come attractive, but narrow, planters could be positioned on the pavement here and help bring some colour to this stretch of road? Planters take time and effort to be managed so the location, size and structure of each should be carefully positioned.

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

To quote one of the staff in the National Pollinator Plan Office – ‘there is nothing more dangerous to pollinators than a ride-on lawn mower!’. So, we were concerned when we read that you had purchased one. But your entry shows some lovely parts of your community managed for wildlife. The lack of intensive grass mowing on the Kells road has resulted in the growing of some lovely native flowers. And with this arrived Saoirse - the giant stone ladybird! What a fun way to re-use rocks removed during construction works at Deerpark.

Have you carried out any wildlife surveys in the village or park? What bird species have you got? Have you erected any bird or bat boxes? Perhaps you can encourage the community to share photographs of wildlife from their community? This could help excite and educate the community about the wildlife and habitats on their doorstep

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

Your community thrift shop is a true success story. From small premises in 2014 you now have large premises and storage in Kells. The Facebook page is great, and what a pity we don't live near to you so we could pick up some great bargains. This is your main income stream and has allowed the development of your capital projects.

This year the TidyTowns unit aligned itself with the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development goals (SDGs). This project is a great step towards SDG 12 – responsible Consumption and Production.

The school gardening club has made scarecrows and bird feeders from recycled materials. Have you cycle parking at Deerpark? Perhaps you could run cycle proficiency classes with the youth club? Is the new community hub fitted with light sensors, push-button taps, solar panels or led lights? Tell us about it next year please.

Your social media allows you to share other messages on topics linked to sustainability such as energy saving, sustainable transport and lowering emissions.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Litter management has been excellent. You have had great support also from the Youth Club.

This year, though saw a problem with dog waste in the park. Thankfully dog waste bins have helped. Perhaps a local dog walkers club can be formed to promote messages and offer incentives to responsible pet owners.

Well done on the painting at the ESB station and we like the tiered planter here – perhaps some native honeysuckle could be encouraged to grow along the green fence here also?

Your social media posts helped highlight some minor problems you have had with littering. By bringing these examples to the attention of the community, you can be more vigilant in the future.

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

It is great to read of the pride of business owners and home owners in Carlanstown. They work to present them at their best.

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

The bridge in Carlanstown has been widened and a new stone wall and pavement added. The before and after pictures show the benefits this will have brought to the community. Maybe encourage some mosses or lichens to grow on the stone wall to help soften it somewhat?

We also like that the name signs are under planted with pollinator-friendly flowers. You did this major work in 2020 and it looks good. A nice welcome to the village.

The daffodils and tulips planted on approach roads will look lovely. It is suggested to also add some crocus and snowdrops as these plants offer nutrition for pollinating insects.

There are many open wire fences on the approach roads into Carlanstown. Perhaps come native hedging plants could be added? There is some great advice from the Heritage Council on good choices of trees and shrubs for villages that can help create a strong sense of place: <https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/planning/publications/tree-design-guide-for-towns-and-villages-in-co-clare-2017-28115.pdf>

Concluding Remarks:

'Build it and they will come' – and they will definitely come to Carlanstown – what a great amenity you have in Deerpark. We are delighted to welcome you back to the competition and have the chance to say 'well done = amazing work'.