

# Tidy Towns Competition 2019

## Adjudication Report

Centre: <b>Ballyvaughan - Baile Uí Bheacháin</b>	Ref: <b>60</b>
County: <b>Clare</b>	Mark: <b>332</b>
Category: <b>A</b>	Date(s): <b>08/07/2019</b>

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2018</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2019</b>
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	48	49
Streetscape & Public Places	60	50	50
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	44	44
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	35	37
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	16	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	68	69
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	32	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	30	31
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>332</b>

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

Céad fáilte roimh Baile Uí Bheacháin chuig Comórtas na mBailte Slachtmhara Supervalu don Bhliain 2019. Welcome Ballyvaughan and many thanks for your entry in this year's Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for participating in Ireland's longest-running environmental project and helping to make Ireland a better place.

A special word of thanks for your submission of an excellent entry to Tidy Towns 2019. This was beautifully put together, relevant and well illustrated. A lot of work went into this and it is acknowledged here. The adjudicator was surprised to learn that Ballyvaughan was a Category A centre with a population of just 191. In that light, your committee, its work and that of your volunteers and other residents is all the more remarkable. The Tidy Towns group of Ballyvaughan sits within the Ballyvaughan Community Development Group, we read. An impressive list of local organisations contribute to your work from school-goers to farmers and even runners. Very good. You help to run the marathon - some of you may even run in the marathon, who knows? The Tour de Burren is another big sporting event for your community. An even longer list of agencies which support your work was given. So too was the means with which you spread the word. You give special mention to your work with the school and young people in the community. One of the major projects that you describe was a village survey supported by CLDC. More information-gathering was through the Biodiversity Training given by the Burrenbeo Trust. Thank you for the map, by the way - absolutely fine for the job. Your provision of two copies shows your experience in this competition.

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

A new project listed by you here is the revival of the old Court House. Also restored is the large 2-storey house (Carter's), an important element of your village streetscape. The unique Pinnacle Well will be the subject of your attention soon. Good luck with the research. A more modern development is the playground, a lovely place to play and indeed where the adjudicator began his visit to Ballyvaughan this year. Ballyvaughan Service Station was neat and tidy. The Enterprise Centre could be more attractive, it is felt.

Hyland's was missing a portion of it's name sign at time of visit. The window-boxes here were lovely though. There was a nice use of a shop window opposite for display of material but this is becoming aged and faded and should be replaced soon. Ballyvaughan Tearooms - Féar Gorta - is just beautiful! Well done to the owners and managers. This is the best planting example of the day. The oldest of the signs couldn't be read. Áras..? Monk's (at Ballyvaughan Pier) looks really well. Modern signage sits alongside the now vintage plastic Guinness sign. A subtle little bit of stonework and planting at the front makes this already place to sit. The adjudicator couldn't but several others could and did. The map on the gable of Monks is out of date and looks faded now. O'Lochlainn's

Pub is beautiful. Mooney's is splendidly kept. Shopfronts that appealed were Quin's, Green's the Sweater Shop, The Spar and the premises adjacent. The Burren Atlantic Hotel was neat and tidy but would benefit from trees or flowering shrubs at the front. The Wild Atlantic Lodge was beautifully presented. The wildlife plaques at the Spar were much enjoyed. The stained glass windows of the church are simply beautiful. The bilingual mural at the Village Stores looked great. The toilets etc. here were in good order. The water pump is a gorgeous centrepiece for the village (and handy for all those cyclists, no doubt).

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

New planters at the bridge were a new project for you this year and you got the green light from the Conservation Officer for this. You mention lighting up this 'dark space' at Christmas time. The author would urge you to check these plans with the Clare County Council Biodiversity Officer as you surely wish to avoid any unnecessary negative impacts on wildlife from such an initiative. Additional tree-planting - noted on our visit - was another new project for you this year. On the corner of Lisdoonvarna Road with the L5040 there is a gorgeous planted bed with plants for pollinators.

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

An excellent entry here Ballyvaughan. Great to hear that you will be hosting a Biodiversity workshop as part of the Burren in Bloom event. Great stuff. A seed-bank of wild plants is another excellent initiative. Thank you for the beautiful photograph of the Bee Orchid and the 'Save the Bees (by planting these)' poster is just excellent. Too many other initiatives were given to describe here. Worthy of note though are the Cardamine impatiens monitoring, the Ballyvaughan Heritage Apple and the maintenance works at the Sans Souci. The adjudicator would point out that there is no need to spray herbicides at the base of trees (such as that pictured). The GeoPark and walking route signage are in good condition and attractive. Out at Sans Souci, the bird-hide took a little while to find - a good recommendation. A gorgeous painted birdlife board stands here (spotlessly clean). All good here.

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

Raising awareness of water conservation issues is high on your agenda now and we should all take a leaf from your book. A number of new and future projects on this theme are described - excellent. Food waste and what to do prevent it and deal with it form another strand of your entry here. Energy conservation, assisting cyclists and Green Hospitality are also detailed in your entry, the last particularly well.

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

Keep up the campaigning for a cable-free streetscape. It will happen some day. Your anti-litter rhyme was read with admiration. The cross-over to water safety is acknowledged here. Well done. Good documentary evidence of the involvement of young people with what you do was given.

There was a missing sign from a sign pole near Hyland's. Road signage should be inspected for cleanliness (e.g. the N67 N). Watch out for random traffic-cones. Generally, tyres shouldn't be used as planters although some still like this technique. Is there an empty sign frame at the Spar? There were Circus posters on telegraph poles (albeit recent ones). The Montessori school shouldn't advertise thusly though. Litter was few and far between but a cache of cigarette butts (quite aged) was seen at the car-park beside the new playground.

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

The Ballyvaughan Workhouse book is a most unusual entry in this category but valid nonetheless. The renovation of the thatched cottage was noted. Well done to Dolmen Village for their wildflower project and to you for knowing the value of rare and unusual plants. Well done for lobbying for the new bollards and footpath. Street Joseph's Road estate was lovely! A lovely feeling here from the trees and well-tended gardens. Bug-boxes were good to see but the birdfeeders should be filled or not out at all. Refer to guidance from Birdwatch Ireland ([www.birdwatch.ie](http://www.birdwatch.ie)) on this. Well done to all the residents. Watch out for the tree ties becoming too tight. Get rid of supporting stakes when they are no longer needed. More perennials and plants for pollinators would be great here. Don't use containers on grassy area - plant in the ground and save on compost and water please. There was a gorgeous bit of planting in front of the modernised house at the corner of Street Joseph's Road. An orchid painted on a townhouse was a lovely surprise.

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

The maintenance of grassy banks on the way out of your village is acknowledged. Have you gone Low-Mow on many of these? Brenda's Garden was not noted until much after the visit to Ballyvaughan and so not visited. Next time. You are taking an active part in making the village safer and more pleasant for pedestrians and cyclists (and for residents and visitors generally) with your work in this category. Well done. Your concerns about the sustainability of transport to and from your village and the GeoPark are well-placed. Do please continue to seek better environmental conditions for your area.

Ballyvaughan pier was just about spotless. The Wild Atlantic Way signage here is beautifully done - a gorgeous design and really good information. How is your village name to be spelled? There seems to be some confusion among those newer and older signs. Lisdoonvarna Road is a good approach. The trees are recently planted and in good condition. The supports here look well done. The unfussy management of your approach roads was much appreciated by this adjudicator. A recently whitewashed wall with planters on the Galway Road looks really great.

Road surfaces were generally very good.

**Concluding Remarks:**

This was the adjudicator's first visit to Ballyvaughan in quite some time and it was great to see how well it has progressed. After over 30 years of participation in Tidy Towns you have garnered great experience and you have brought this to bear on keeping Ballyvaughan looking so good.