Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre:	**Kanturk - Ceann Toirc**	Ref:	**652**
County:	**Cork(North)**	Mark:	**279**
Category:	**C**	Date(s):	**10/07/2019**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2018	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	33	35
Streetscape & Public Places	60	36	37
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	42	44
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	23	24
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	15	16
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	56	57
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	29	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	35	36
TOTAL MARK	**470**	**269**	**279**

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Kanturk – Ceann Toirc páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019. Many thanks for your application, map, photos and multi-annual plan. Thank you for indicating new, maintenance and future projects. The map was quite good but an A3 format might suit better for a town the size of Kanturk and ideally the projects should be numbered both in the application form and shown on the map, where appropriate. I'm delighted to hear that your committee has doubled in size to 20 and you have many volunteers to help out. You were busy this year promoting community involvement in your work which is a great idea. You are supported in your work by a wide range of organisations, groups and businesses. You use a range of methods to communicate with your community, which is so important. I was so glad to read that you feel that Tidy Towns is about knitting the community together for the common good. That's exactly what Tidy Towns is all about. The competition aspect is just to focus efforts.

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

A Heritage Trail in Kanturk is a great idea because there are so many interesting heritage features and buildings in and around the town. I didn't have time to walk all of the trail but I admired the panel and tried to see as many of the listed items as possible. The panel is attractive and well-laid out. It is just a shame that no gaeilge was included as this is such an important part of our heritage too. An Arts Centre would be a great amenity for the town and a worthwhile future project that you have made a start on. While there are many fine buildings in the town and well-presented premises and town houses, dereliction is an issue as it is in many other towns. All you can do is engage with the council as you have done. I noted the dereliction notices from the council. I will mainly deal with parks and green spaces in the next section but suffice to say that Kanturk is blessed with three beautiful and well-maintained parks. The Town Park was the focus of your efforts this year and I must say you have done an excellent job. The before and after photos were most helpful here. The planting is nice and not over-fussy. The green areas are well-maintained and furniture painted. The Hannah Sheehy Skeffington statue is lovely although I think she too might have liked some gaeilge on the interpretive panel! The canal and Mill Race were cleared of excess growth- hopefully under advice from the Heritage Officer in the County Council or someone with appropriate expertise. Hopefully you will be successful in your application to replace the path. Just take care to ensure that any works don't have a negative impact on the river. The sculptures in the Pollinator Bed are really lovely. I also liked the Barry's Mill Plaque (well-placed in a wall). Appropriate parking areas for bicycles are important in towns if we are to encourage people to cycle. The footpath from the town to Kanturk Castle is a great amenity. A 'Walkability Audit' is another good idea. I would also like to mention some particularly well-presented business premises that caught my eye- Scully's Stationary, Burke's, The Stand Bar, Kelly's Bar, Horgan's Pharmacy and Two Rivers Café,

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

As I mentioned above, Kanturk has three beautiful parks, the Town Park, O'Brien St. Park and Greenane Park. O'Brien St. Park is very well-maintained and has some lovely trees and shrubberies. I didn't see the new wildlife panel but I think I could see where it will be installed. There was a sign to remind people not to feed white bread to water birds which is a good idea. The Men's Shed and CE workers are to be commended for their efforts in the Park refurbishing the 'Wise Man' sculpture, installing recycled seating and general maintenance. The park really is an oasis in the town for people who want to relax. It is a fitting site to remember a much-loved resident and Special Olympian, Don O'Reilly. Greenane Park by contrast is a much more natural setting but equally relaxing for those who want to walk or run along the river. The colourful hanging baskets along the boundary wall aren't too my taste but that's just a personal opinion. They must take some effort to keep watered. Some trees were cut in the park near the bridge and the pile of cut stems looked a bit unsightly. There are many other trees in the park that look beautiful. Hopefully you will sort the composting issue. The grassland is well-maintained allowing some areas uncut for wildlife. The overall is effect very attractive. I'm glad to read that you are aiming to reduce the numbers of containers and are installing permanent stone beds starting with four this year. There are some nice young trees on strand street (staked a bit too high) and some colourful planters. The small flowerbed on Kanturk Bridge is very nice with the adjacent lilac bike and planted basket. Perhaps include more perennial planting in the bed next year. The memorial on Percival St. in front of Kelly's Bar had a couple of nice planters.

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

Two rivers meet in Kanturk, the Dalua and the Allow. They are a hugely important wildlife corridors that should be protected and cherished. I love the Pollinator Bed in Cannon's Wood adjacent to the Town Park. The naturalistic style of planting and sculptures are most attractive. The mix of planting with pollinator-friendly plants and the little kitchen garden is great. Please don't nail things into living trees (e.g. mini-bug hotel) though as it can damage the tree. You have lucky to have someone in your committee with expertise in biodiversity to provide nature walks and talks, and to help raise awareness of biodiversity in our everyday lives. It's good to read that there were several awareness-raising events in the past year, some involving young people. You have increased the number of pollinator-friendly plants in your planting schemes and are encouraging others to do likewise. It's good to read that you are liaising with Dulhallow Angling Club to control invasive species along the river in the town. I liked that the riverside vegetation in the Town Park and Greenane Park was left uncut. This is importance because riverside vegetation can provide an important habitat for wildlife and it can help maintain water quality by intercepting any pollutants before they wash into waterbodies. The installation of Swift Towers sounds liked a good idea and future project. You have already installed Barn Owl boxes although I'm not quite sure where. I imagine the town centre wouldn't be ideal for Barn Owl's. I note that you plan to install more bird boxes in the Town Park and it would be good to get advice from your contact in BirdWatch Ireland to ensure there are installed in the right place and using the right methods (not nailed to trees). The uncut meadow areas in Grennane Park are developing well. I presume you cut these areas at the end of the summer and remove the clippings to be composted elsewhere in order to encourage the wildflowers as per the pollinator plan guidance. I'm glad to read that you will also be leaving an area uncut in the Town Park too. You have several other small projects in this category, too many to mention. Do you have a biodiversity plan to guide your work? It might be worthwhile going forward as you are making great progress in this area. A biodiversity plan could help attract funding and ensure a strategic approach designed for best results.

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

You also have several new projects in this category, which is impressive. I won't describe them all but all were noted. Many are small changes or initiatives but they all make a difference and are worthwhile. Linking with Kanturk GNS on their disposable cup project is a great idea. It is amazing how attitudes have changed to re-usable cups. It would be good to monitor the uptake of this scheme. You are partnering with Lidl by taking plants that would otherwise be disposed. This is of huge benefit to Lidl too because it reduces their waste charges. You re-use materials from old projects in new projects. You are growing some of your summer bedding rather than buying it all in. Increasing the number of perennials over time with further reduce the reliance on summer bedding. For other ideas see https://voiceireland.org/perch/resources/admin/zero-waste-community-toolkit-final1.pdf.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Kanturk had very little litter for a town of its size on adjudication day. Tidy Tuesdays and other clean-ups are making a positive impact. The CE scheme and council workers are to be commended for their efforts too. Participating in the anti-litter challenge is a good way to keep motivated and get feedback. It's good to read that you also support other groups doing river clean-ups.
There was some on-street signage in the town but not much.

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

There are many nice townhouses, individual houses and residential areas/ housing estates in Kanturk. Dereliction is an issue in places but you are doing your best to tackle this. There are some beautifully painted houses on O'Brien St. Egmont Woods estate is unfinished but there is a lovely flowerbed with lavender and trees along the road frontage. Dun an Óir has lovely trees and shrubberies and play area. Pairc an Tobar and Scarbh Leathan had very neat green spaces and nice mature hedgerow at the entrance. There is potential to plant a few trees in the green spaces which would enhance them further. Theresa's Place, St. Patrick's Place, Curragh Court and Edel Quinn Place all look well. Collaborating with and supporting residents groups is a good way to work. Some residential areas didn't appear to have a name plate.

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

There are many approach roads to the town, which presents a challenge. In general the approach roads to Kanturk are good with well-maintained grassy verges, trees and planting to enhance the name plates inside nice stone walls. Year-round colour is good to aim for and you might consider permanent planting instead of relying on summer bedding. The footpath from the town to Kanturk Castle is a positive amenity for the town to facilitate walkers. The grotto on the Mallow Road looks very well thanks to the efforts of two dedicated volunteers. Road markings in the town centre need repainting in places. Speed and directional signage is generally good. The boundary wall of the GAA grounds could be softened by planting some evergreen climbers.

Concluding Remarks:

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to Kanturk and exploring your beautiful parks in particular. Just to add, I thought the structure of your multi-annual plan was very good. In relation to the long-term goal of sustainability, you need to think way beyond recycling and start thinking about how the town could reduce its energy consumption and waste production. You should consider including an action targeted at young people under long-term goal 3 and include a long-term goal in relation to nature and biodiversity.