

Tidy Towns Competition 2024

Adjudication Report

Centre: Carraroe - An Cheathrú Rua Ref: 1768
County: Sligo Mark: 292
Category: B Date(s): 15/07/2024

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2023	Mark Awarded 2024
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	48	49
Streetscape & Public Places	80	32	34
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	34	35
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	25	25
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	15	16
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	60	62
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	31	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	38	40
TOTAL MARK	550	283	292

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

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valú don bhliain 2024. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn, agus guimid gach rath ar bhur gcuid oibre amach anseo. Adh Mór.

Welcome to the Super Valú Tidy Towns Competition for 2024. We thank you for your entry, and wish you all the best in all your future work. Good luck.

Carraroe - An Cheathrú Rua, a village covering 17 townlands with a population of 1500 has entered the competition for the last 24 years and has a committee with a core leadership team with 30 regular volunteers with the support of another 39 who volunteer for special events.

- Your committee CADRA holds a meeting each month and an Annual General Meeting.
- Support is received from a range of local and national organisations and businesses and you have liaison meetings with the Engineering, Waste Management and Parks Departments of Sligo Co Council to ensure your development plans are in keeping with the overall plans of the statutory bodies. Sligo County Council is involved in facilitating your Spring Clean, and your 'See Something Say Something' campaign. You continue to have excellent relations and liaise regularly with 5 Municipal District County Councillors.
- You communicate with the public via a What's App Text Group which has 140 members. You use posters and the Carraroe local notes in the Sligo Champion and Sligo Weekender newspapers to publicise your work and the notes provide a mechanism for reaching a large section of the community. In addition, Church announcements, events, meetings etc. relevant to your committees' activities are all advertised in the local Church bulletin. On your website www.cadra.ie and Facebook page, your events are also widely publicized. You post photos to generate interest in projects you are undertaking to increase local awareness and build momentum.
- You engage closely with local schools and meet regularly with the principal of Carraroe National School to keep him updated of your activities. Well done to Carraroe National School which has been awarded 6 green flags. It is noted that the school has a very active and progressive biodiversity programme with its own garden and it is good that you are supporting their work. The involvement of the school children in all your activities is positively noted including the installation of a rainwater harvesting system.
- The adjudicator is pleased to read that your efforts in terms of manpower, investment and action ensures that you can all be proud of Carraroe as a place to live and work. It is noteworthy that your ongoing activities ensure the environment in which visitors are greeted with is welcoming, clean and positive.

The coloured map provided with your Entry Form showing the main roads and features of the village was of good quality although lacked the necessary detail. The insertion of a hand written legend of projects 1-12 on the map was helpful. For next year it would be good to distinguish between the new projects carried out from ongoing maintenance work items on the map.

The quality of the application form was good and concise with photos displaying the work carried out. The use of red text to highlight the timing of projects worked well. The adjudicator's assessment is based on a recent site visit and the contents of the application form, which is suitably concise at 13 pages long - well done. The text inserted on the form was easy to read.

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

- You have included a range of projects both new and ongoing No.s 1-6 under the Community Involvement and Planning section on the form, which should rightfully be included under other categories. Nevertheless, you have performed very well regarding the implementation of these very worthwhile projects, which have all made a difference to the overall presentation and environmental sustainability of your area.
- You are dealing with the issue of building dereliction in a pro-active way and the adjudicator is pleased to read that the derelict house referred to in last year's report has now been demolished and hedging has been planted around the area - thanks are due to the owner of this property.
- We commenced our visit at the centre of the village in the vicinity of the Carraroe Community Centre. The building was freshly painted and very well presented and we noted the nearby stone planter with attractive rose planting and CADRA Tidy Towns 'collection point' sign. Stone boundary walls in this area impressed as did the neat and tidy presentation of all the buildings.
- The adjoining Church grounds were well maintained with attractive tree and shrub planting and nicely paved areas. The rainwater harvesting system was positively noted here. The striking wall mural on the gable of the Community Centre was certainly eye-catching.
- The nearby stone wall and rose planting located facing the car park area in the center of the village enhances this area considerably and this was maintained to a high standard. Consider providing tree planting on the vacant gravel area at the entrance to the Church car park area.
- On the roadside margin between the car park and the road, the grassed area is populated with numerous concrete bollards. It is suggested that these bollards should be removed as they are probably no longer necessary and generally detract from the visual appearance of the area. The nearby overhead barrier would also benefit from a coat of paint.
- We greatly admired the colourful herbaceous planting beds and the trees along the roadside margin near the Weighbridge area, which enhance the roadside environment and perimeter of the car park. There appears to be a sign missing near the seating area and the free library? The free library was found to be freshly painted, clean and inviting with a good selection of books available. The cycle parking facilities here were also positively noted as was the new Sorbus planting and rainwater harvesting arrangements in the vicinity of the weighbridge. Keep an eye on tree ties and stakes here to ensure no damage is caused, which might hinder their future establishment.
- The weighbridge building could do with a refresh of paint in the not-too-distant future. It would be desirable to introduce some wild flower meadows in this area in the interest of biodiversity. The Martin Reilly car sales premises looked well as did the boat planter feature nearby. The removal of the concrete bollards would enhance the general presentation of this area considerably. The Ox Eye daisies located along the footpath to the rear of the Weighbridge were greatly admired.
- The Wellpets.ie premises was well presented with a neat and tidy frontage along the road. The 'Be Green and Keep Carraroe Clean' sign was positively noted and it is evident that this is having the desired effect. The water pump and floral displays also enhanced this area. The colourful planters located on the gravel island significantly enhance the road environs.
- We called to the Carraroe national school, Scoil Naomh Éanna and noted the beautifully presented grounds with attractive tree and perennial flower plantings which were in full bloom. The school garden located to the rear was also positively noted. The provision of additional tree planting on the wide paved footpaths on the approach to the school could be considered for the future.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tirdhreachú:

- You mention two projects No.s 8 and 9 under this category involving the maintenance of planting beds at the weighbridge and at the roundabout.
- We called to the amenity open space with car park area enclosed with an attractive stone wall and admired the central paved area with seating and tree planting. There is an opportunity to introduce some wildflower meadows into this parkland area, particularly around the base of the trees where grass maintenance is more difficult. The wooden seating could do with a refresh soon.
- Floral schemes and permanent plantings in the village, at the large roundabouts and along approach roads were greatly admired adding an eye-catching splash of colour for road users.

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

- You have not included any projects for consideration this year under this category. However, for next year you might first consider consulting the Tidy Towns Handbook which provides very useful advice as to how you may approach Nature and Biodiversity issues in your locality into the future.
- With the recent introduction of the Nature Restoration Law and concerns regarding ongoing biodiversity loss there will be greater emphasis on protecting and restoring habitats across Europe in the future at national level. Are there any habitats locally in or near Carraroe village which merit restoration or further protection? Perhaps you can progress the development of pocket forests using native trees? Are there Citizen Science projects or local flora and fauna surveys which can be initiated by your committee in conjunction with the local school. The issue of invasive species management might also be considered, where this is an issue locally e.g. Giant Hogweed.

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

- Under the heading of sustainability, you have partnered with the Sligo ATU Power for Change project, involving students who are designing an innovative rainwater harvesting system to be piloted in Carraroe. It will be interesting to see the outcome of this project, which involves a rainwater harvesting system, without the usual expansive roof area to catch water.
- As with the previous category, for next year you might consider consulting the Tidy Towns Handbook, which provides very useful advice and information, on how to approach the category of Sustainability - doing more with less. There is a move towards more edible towns and cities into the future and you might consider options for the development of suitable community orchard and fruit/vegetable garden in your area. This could be developed in conjunction with the proposed rainwater harvesting project.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

- It is noted that you have a team of litter pickers who litter pick along each road weekly all year. Well done to them and their continuing efforts to keep Carraroe neat and tidy at all times.
- On the day of adjudication, the village area was found to be generally litter and clutter free

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

- You have not included any projects for consideration this year under this category. However, for next year you might first consider consulting the Tidy Towns Handbook which provides very useful advice as to how you may approach the enhancement of your residential streets & housing areas.
- We called to the estate known locally as 'The Hawthorns' and admired the long access road into this estate. The access road is enhanced with dense planting on both sides and good footpaths for pedestrian access. This well-presented estate has elevated scenic views across the adjoining landscape. Internal open spaces are augmented with good tree planting and attractive boundary fencing and shrub plantings. Some trees have succumbed to Ash dieback disease and will need to be replaced before too long.

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

- You are liaising with Sligo County Council with an ambition to have the road entrance and existing approach to the village at Carraroe Hill landscaped and improved. It is noted that work on this project has commenced with the installation of a major drainage system following which a perennial planting scheme will be carried out.
- All approach roads in the vicinity of Carraroe village are maintained to a high standard with attractive floral displays and permanent planting enhancing roundabouts and roadside margins. Where possible consider planting native hedges along concrete block walls and providing wildflower strips where this is appropriate on the wider margins. The removal of concrete bollards which detract from the appearance of the road environs should be considered. In the interest of biodiversity, it is suggested that you encourage the development of good natural vegetation along roadsides. The spraying of herbicide was noted along sections of road safety fence and this impacts on biodiversity and generally detracts from the presentation of margins. It is suggested that the planting of suitable trees and the roadside margin near the section of double timber fencing at the entrance to the village should be considered for the future.
- We called to the Tobar Nalt Holy Well site. This is a very peaceful space centred around the very ancient Holy Well located in a wooded area near the road. The site is very accessible with good visitor signage and a neat and tidy car parking area. Mature trees provide shelter and shade, which together with numerous shrines and gentle lapping of the stream, conveys a great sense of serenity and joy to the visitor. You are commended for your continued care and attention to this important site.

Concluding Remarks:

Carraroe has good potential to progress well in the competition. Keep an eye on the categories of the competition to ensure they align with the information you provide on the form. All of your projects and ongoing actions are helping to improve the local sense of pride and belonging, which is quite evident from reading your entry form. You are wished well for the future.