

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: Lecanvey - Leic an Anfadh	Ref: 2232
County: Mayo	Mark: 252
Category: A	Date(s): 23/06/2023

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	24	26
Streetscape & Public Places	80	28	29
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	38	40
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	23	25
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	19	20
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	54	56
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	25	26
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	29	30
TOTAL MARK	550	240	252

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

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu don bhliain 2023. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo. Adh Mór.

Welcome to the Super Valu Tidy Towns Competition for 2023. We thank you for your entry, and wish you all the best in all your future work. Good luck.

Lecanvey - Leic an Anfadh, a small village with a population of less than 200 people – Lecanvey Tidy Towns has entered the competition for 6 years and has a committee of 5 members with support of another 21 volunteers.

- You arrange fortnightly meetings from Jan – June, and monthly meetings thereafter. Voluntary litter pickers meet regularly, every week. It is noted that Lecanvey National School pupils are involved in a scheme called “Walk A Mile and Pick Litter” to develop environmental awareness amongst the children and to encourage a strong commitment from an early age.

- Support is received from a wide range of local and national agencies and businesses including; RSS Tus, Lecanvey Alliance, Foras Na Gaeilge, O’Dowd Media, Ger & Terease Dawson of Staunton’s Bar, Tom & Mona Staunton of RS Marine, Chris & Gay Harper of Harper’s Signage, Rev Father Bill & Father Charlie McDonell, Mayo County Council, & The Hazel Hut.

- You communicate with the public via a Church Newsletter, Facebook Lecanvey Tidy Village & Wildlife, WhatsApp groups, Mayo News, Village Noticeboard.

- You engage with the children attending the local national school who are involved with the Green Schools Flag scheme along with the upkeep of the village and litter picking. A new pollinator project has been launched and a new biodiversity garden has been planned that will require the support of the National School to create insect hotels, burrowing bee habitats and to paint a mural on the wall.

- It is pleasing to read that the healthy competition which has developed with neighbouring villages as a result of your Tidy Towns involvement, has kept the community involved and keen to progress new initiatives. The competition has also ensured a greater focus on sustainability, local wildlife and the need to protect the environment.

Thank you for the very impressive coloured map of the village with photographic representations of the various projects carried out and a numbered legend, listing the features and landmarks in the village. The use of photographic representations on location maps can make it difficult to pinpoint the exact locations of specific projects on site. However, despite this, it was quite easy for the adjudicator to navigate around the village and the map provided aided the assessment process.

The quality of the application form was very good. The comprehensive 3-year Tidy Towns plan has been noted – perhaps consider subdividing the plan in accordance with the 8 competition category headings and include more

specific the target dates and assignment of responsibilities, so that progress can be more easily monitored over time. The Lecanvey provisional Wildlife Report and the Pollinator Nectar Station project were also positively noted. The adjudicator's assessment is based on a recent site visit and the contents of the application form, which is suitably concise at 12 pages long (excluding photos) - well done. The bold text inserted on the form using numbered bullet points under each category also made it very easy to read.

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

- You have listed 2 new projects under this category this year, including the holding of a Loop Walk which you wish to extend further in consultation with the Mayo Walks organisation. We wish you well with plans for the future development of a 'Peace Biodiversity Garden' at the Community Centre.
- On entering the village from the Louisburgh direction, one is struck by the beautifully scenic views towards the coastline available from the road. Lecanvey has an idyllic setting on an elevated position overlooking the coast, affording wonderful maritime and landscape vistas at every turn. The Lecanvey village name sign is not immediately identifiable here, due to the vigorous growth of vegetation and floral displays. It is recommended that the name sign could be washed prior to the summer months and the plants underneath pruned back regularly, so that the sign can be more easily seen by visitors. It was heartening to see the signs saying 'Welcome to our litter free Village' on both approaches. Indeed, the village was completely litter free. Kearns's public house and adjacent private residences and gardens looked very well on this approach.
- A proper footpath is needed on the way into the village from the Louisburgh side and no doubt this is being considered for the future. The Lecanvey Pier and adjacent beach area were visited. The sign providing information on fish species found locally is a valuable resource for anglers who visit this area to catch their fish. Consider placing some picnic benches at the beach for the benefit of visiting anglers, families and other groups. The car park area will need a more suitable surface treatment before very long. The Convent House looked well with an attractive boundary facing the road. The Lecanvey National School was presented to an excellent standard with freshly painted boundary walls and fences and an enclosed play area. Consider providing some native tree planting in the school grounds here, which will be of significant educational value and will also enhance this site. The adjudicator particularly admired the attractive stone wall located on the opposite side the road, facing the school.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

- You have listed a total of 5 new projects under this category this year including the replacement of timber edging to the flower bank and the planting of Virginia creeper along the old wall at Staunton's Garden.
- The path leading from the school along the main road, complete with attractive colourful seating and ornamental planting beds looked very well. The colourful wildflower meadow established at the end of this walk was particularly admired. The ornamental railings along the roadside boundary of Joyce's House would benefit from re-painting in the not-too-distant future.
- Staunton's public house and the surrounding area was beautifully presented and we noted positively the solar panels installed on the roof of these premises. Also noted here was the new concrete kerb installed along the frontage of the biodiversity planting bed, which slopes down to the road. We had a very pleasant walk along the upper path of the biodiversity planting area and admired the ox-eye daisies and shrub roses, which provide a riot of colour and significant habitat for pollinators and other wildlife. The new wildlife signage here was of very high quality and the adjudicator was pleasantly surprised to be able to enjoy wonderful views towards the coast from the concrete seating area. The Christmas tree is very well protected with the steel railing surround.
- We called to the Church grounds and admired the nicely painted sculpture representing the passion of Christ. The nearby bell tower structure was newly painted, also looked very well. The Orchard Garden was visited and we were very impressed with the overall presentation of this area which was maintained in a pristine condition. Gravel footpaths were nicely defined with timber edging and seating and picnic tables were all freshly painted. The young fruit trees and bushes growing here have established very well, with good crops of apples and blackcurrants.
- There is a small stream which traverses the boundary of this garden and is somewhat obscured by vegetation. It is recommended that the streamside vegetation be carefully removed to allow full visual access to the stream from the garden. A small tree is also blocking a view of the attractive stone arched bridge under road and consider relocating this tree to a suitable location in another part of the garden.
- There is a garden to the rear of Staunton's Pub and the Lecanvey Community Center, which contains raised beds used for the cultivation of a wide range of vegetables for culinary purposes. It was not so clear whether this area was open to the public or was to be viewed as part of the assessment process. Suffice to say, it was presented and maintained to an excellent standard. The herbaceous perennial planting along the road to the rear of the pub provided a very attractive feature, and enhanced this area considerably.

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

- Your main project under this category is the recent preparation of a Lecanvey Wildlife Report which documents species and habitats worthy of conservation in the village. It is pleasing to note that the creation of wildlife habitats in your local area remains an important priority for your community. In relation to the Wildlife Report, it would be a good idea to include a habitat map of the area as part of the final report.
- It is noted that a pollinator initiative was recently launched with free wildflower seeds given out to the National School, as well as user groups in the Community Centre, and at Staunton's pub. This a very good idea but be cautious about the source and provenance of seed, as some wildflower seed used in Ireland is imported and can include non-native invasive species. Best practice would suggest to let bare patches of ground develop with a natural flora grown from seed already present in the soil. This provides the most environmentally appropriate solution.
- The adjudicator is pleased to read that all weed control is carried out by hand and pesticide use is minimal.

To avoid onerous hand weeding in the future, you might consider acquiring a mechanical wire brush machine, which provides effective weed control particularly along kerbs and walls.

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

- You are making good strides under this category with a number of interesting projects in the pipeline, which will improve the overall sustainability of your village community.
- The mulching of flower beds improves growth and reduces overall maintenance requirements. You are progressing a bike stand project and are considering the feasibility of installing solar panels on the roof of the Community Centre. You are wished well with plans to secure funding for the promotion of a local greenway and provision of an e-car charging facility in the village.
- When considering new projects under this category, it is worthwhile first of all considering how the proposed project will align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The information provided in the Tidy Towns newsletters and Handbook is very informative in this regard.
- Other areas worthy of consideration by the Lecanvey Community Centre group for the future under this category, which is in keeping with the Sustainable Development Goals, include the development of small electric microgeneration schemes for Wind, Solar and Hydro in partnership with the Local Authority - these may also attract suitable SEAI or Leader funding.
- Your committee might also consider in the future applying for membership of the Sustainable Energy Communities programme run by the SEAI. This includes engaging in learning networks, preparation of energy masterplans and local energy action plans etc. The following are useful links in this regard.
<https://www.seai.ie/community-energy/sustainable-energy-communities/><https://www.codema.ie/sec>

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

- It is noted that Litter control remains a high priority for your committee/local residents, in the village core and along approach roads. This is always important when a main road passes directly through a community. Regular litter picks and litter control signage are used to maintain a high standard of presentation in the village and environs. The new shed for storing maintenance tools at the Community Centre is a worthwhile improvement, ensuring no unsightly clutter remains in that area.
- On the day of adjudication, the village area and approaches were found to be suitably tidy and litter free - well done.

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

- The painting of the boundary wall and the residence following the removal of the oil tank at Staunton's has been an important but complicated project for your committee under this category this year. It is noted that the streetscape of Lecanvey continues to improve year-on-year. It is good that residences in the village have benefitted from recent renovations and the pub continues to maintain a very smart exterior and the adjacent Orchard Garden is well-tended and inviting.
- The Village Enhancement Grant is currently being investigated by your committee and you are wished well with any future developments in this regard.

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

- The overall standard of presentation of approach roads into Lecanvey Village was very good.
- The approach to the village from Louisburgh is characterized by attractive stone walls, nicely maintained roadside margins and good road signage. One wonders whether some projects could be initiated to secure improvements on this side of the village in the future. You are wished well in your discussions with Mayo County Council in relation to the provision of a road crossing and traffic calming scheme outside the National School

Concluding Remarks:

Lecanvey is a gem of a village and you have been able to optimise its future potential, despite proximity to a very busy national primary route. You have great potential to progress further in the competition. The information in the provisional wildlife report, included in support of your application, confirms you are on the right track. We hope you find the comments in the report helpful and encouraging and we wish you well with your efforts over the coming year.