

# Tidy Towns Competition 2014

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Bodyke** Ref: **1791**  
County: **Clare** Mark: **229**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **03/06/2014**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2014</b>
Community Involvement & Planning	60	26
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	31
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	38
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	10
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	11
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	30
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>229</b>

### Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Ta Fáilte Romhat Lubán Dige - Welcome Bodyke to the Super Valu 2014 National Tidy Towns competition. Having 11 people on your committee is a great achievement in a small village. It is interesting to note that you have maintained the same level of commitment as last year. This must mean that people enjoy work working with you and your working methods are engaging people. It also means that people have a pride in their local village. We noticed that the work is shared between a Community Employment Scheme and voluntary work. We are particularly impressed that you are aware that the village is also the responsibility of the people in the local surrounding areas and not just those in the village itself – after all it is where they come to conduct their business and to use its services.

Your list of agencies, bodies, and businesses that have supported your activities is very impressive and universal in its variety. In relation to your communication through a parish newsletter - we hope that you include any other minority church parish newsletters which may be represented in your area. You use the local media, texting, and you also have a presence on Facebook. This is impressive.

You have a small local primary school which is a great support to the Tidy Towns committee in your village. You are justifiably proud of the school in having attained two Green Flags and is their working on a third flag. Having one of your members involved in the Parents' Association, the Green Flag committee and the Tidy Towns committee is a great opportunity for liaison between each body.

It is very important that people enjoy being involved in the competition, and we are glad to see that you acknowledge this. We can assure you that the judges did see 'all your places' and were impressed. We note that you understand the importance of the competition socially and economically within the village.

We note that the adjudicator in 2013 mentioned that the map you had submitted was most helpful. However we do not seem to have received any map from you with your entry form. It is absolutely critical that a map is submitted annually. In particular the map should show your current projects 2013/2014 as well as the important landmarks in your village. This is still important even in a small village like Bodyke. We do not appear to have received any Tidy Towns Plan either, despite the fact that the adjudicator in 2013 said 'you must include a three-year plan in next year's entry. This plan need only be two or three pages setting out a simple programme of work you intend completing each year'. A plan helps you to focus on what is achievable under each category heading -over a three or five-year period – whichever you choose. A plan can be a very simple document. We would refer you to the Tidy Towns Handbook again in relation to guidelines in drawing up a Tidy Towns plan. In the absence of a plan and a map you are also denying yourself progress under this category heading.

### **Built Environment and Streetscape / An Timpeallacht Thógtha agus Sráid-dreacha:**

The school is well presented with good walls, although a lot of tarmac around the school would benefit from some landscaping. We noted two Green Flags flying at the school –well done! However one flag is frayed and might be replaced.

We would encourage you to propose a painting scheme for all gates within the village – including farm gates. An overall gate painting scheme would result in a unified tidy appearance – and also give a sense of delineation to the village itself. Choosing a uniform colour for field gate painting within the village is recommended.

The church grounds looked very well on adjudication day. The front elevation of the church might perhaps benefit from a clean before 2015, and the white wall capping is beginning to wear a little. Well done on the clear colourful notice board on the church grounds. We particularly admired the beautiful grey gate forged by 'T.Minogue'. visited the church and was interested to see the holy water font commemorating the reinstatement of evicted tenants from the area in 1909.

The project you mention under this category (to clean up an area near the church) has not commenced yet, although you have been trying to get it 'off the ground.' You have however put up flagpoles to remind people of the projects you have in mind. However, sadly, on adjudication day the flagpoles were empty. You do not list any other projects undertaken in this category during the year.

The galvanised roof opposite the church and the associated elevational walls and signage on either side, (all being in a very prominent position) would benefit greatly from repainting. The food market is in particular in need of repainting.

The whitewashed gable facing ones approach to the village at the Limerick/Broadford junction would benefit from roof whitewashing before 2015. The cream-coloured bungalow adjacent was admired for its neatness and landscaping.

### **Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:**

Some lovely areas of landscaping and planting were noted in the village – in particular the approach to the village from the junction of the school road with the main village road, along by the stone wall with its beautiful raised stone bed linear planting - which includes the area containing the village pump. The picnic bench here looked very well in its sheltered stone enclosed location. The adjacent enclosed stone seat looked inviting.

We also very much admired the landscaped area opposite the Limerick/Broadford junction with the clean tricolour flying. This area of neatly trimmed grass with raised stone beds and luxuriant shrubbery looked very well. We applaud those who keep these two spaces in such good condition. The delightful shrubbery across the road at the STOP sign is also excellent, as is the lovely recessed picnic area between that junction and the school.

You are fund-raising to purchase replacements for the trees which the February storms destroyed. You are maintaining grassed areas, and you have cleaned up the area around the Bodyke sign on the Ennis approach road. As this is an approach road project you have gained additional marks for that work under the Approach Roads category below.

You do not seem to have got around to planting along the bare concrete wall on the Ennis approach as suggested by last year's adjudicator under this category heading.

### **Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fiadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádúrtha:**

Although you mention the collection of roof water for horticultural purposes this work really belongs to the Sustainable Waste and Resource Management category and is considered and marked therein.

You mention the walkway through the woods near the church as having a lot of wildlife. Have you conducted any survey of the actual wildlife therein? You could engage with the schools on simple wildlife surveys – if the school were happy to work with you on this. Engaging with the schools on even elementary nature study surveys can lead in time to the further analysis and interpretation/presentation of the findings. We would recommend also that you speak to the County Heritage Officer who can advise you as to how to go about such surveys and give you advice and encouragement on all aspects of wildlife and natural amenities. You should also read the Tidy Towns Handbook which is quite detailed on this category. The Heritage Council's 'Wildlife in Towns and Villages' booklet is also a useful resource.

You mention the policies which the Gun Club have in place to protect the wildlife in the area. Perhaps you could elaborate on this for 2015. It is good to see that one member of the Gun Club is on the Tidy Towns committee.

Despite your knowledge of the necessity to trim hedges during particular times of the year only - we did notice - what appeared to be some very recent hedge trimming on the Ennis approach.

We noticed some evidence of chemical weed killing .Chemical weed killing is not recommended, as it is injurious to the environment. We would recommend that you use nonchemical treatments for weed treatment which you might

discuss with your County Heritage Officer.

### **Sustainable Waste and Resource Management / Bainistiú Acmhainní agus Dramhaíola Inbhuanaithe:**

We noticed your solar powered school lights. You are also harvesting rainwater. We know that the national school is very involved with many projects in relation to recycling. You also mention your involvement in the National Spring Clean, and you also have domestic recycling bins. Nonetheless, although recycling is part of the waste pyramid it is rather lower down on the pyramid. Sustainable waste and resource management is about trying to reduce the amount of waste produced in the first case. You will find lots of helpful advice in the Tidy Towns Handbook and in recent guidelines sent to you in 2013 on this topic. We recommend that you make contact with the Environmental Awareness Officer of your local authority who we are sure would be more than happy to help you and perhaps organise a Sustainable Waste and Resource Management seminar. The officer can also enable community groups to participate in the Green Home programme based on the Green Schools programme. You have potential to increase your marks in this section before 2014 by addressing the Guidelines which you received in 2013 and by following the advice already mentioned in the Tidy Towns Handbook.

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

The concrete block wall opposite the church awaits your attention, as does the wide unsurfaced road edge along this space.

The STOP sign opposite Maxol still has rusty uprights. Last year's adjudicator also referred to this sign negatively. There is a second rusty upright pole adjacent. The space behind these premises - adjoining the road approaching from the council depot - is quite untidy with crates and blocks and other untidy items casually thrown in the wall area of the recess. The clothes banks in this location are sited against a dirty wall, and have weeds growing in their vicinity. The long hay barn wall and roof -forming the back of this space - are in urgent need of repainting. This area also needs surfacing, and the walls need painting. Across the road a (tidy) triangular type clothesline appears directly inside a stone wall. Perhaps this drying area could be screened? A two-storey house at a slight angle to the road opposite was well presented, although a corrugated shed nearby would benefit from a repaint

Some boundary walls in the village would benefit from a repaint. Approximately across from the pump area to slightly rusty gates could be improved.

Some sweeping of the footpath area around the turquoise coloured walls near the Tuamgraney/Tulla/Scariff/Ennis sign was needed, and there was a possibility that chemical weed killer had been used in this area. The boundary wall was also cracked at this point

It appears that you have a daily litter check organised by the Community Employment Scheme. This is a good policy. We noticed that the footpath is swept on a weekly basis and you also attend to weeds at the same time. We are delighted to see that the promise your politicians made in relation to election posters has been honoured. None were noticed on adjudication date. Only one piece of paper litter was noted in the village pump surrounds. So, as well as maintaining a good on-the-ground record in relation to litter - to progress in this category we suggest that you prepare a litter management plan for the village. The County Litter Management Plan will give you ideas, and you can dovetail your village projects into the broader County projects. The Environmental Awareness Officer of Clare County Council, we are sure would be delighted to help you in preparing such a plan.

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

The presentation of houses in the village is generally good. Beechwood Lawn estate is generally neat. There is still one derelict house and garden. The green areas are well maintained and yes, it would be useful if you named the estate on-the-ground, and also to show it on the map which you will submit hopefully next year. We would strongly encourage you to consider applying a bilingual estate name plate as it will also enable you to progress in the Built Environment and Streetscape category where the use of Irish is considered. Within the estate cars were parked on the footpath creating an untidy appearance and proving an impediment for footpath users.

We note that you ask individual people to clean outside their own hall doors

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

The Broadford approach via the school is neat but does not appear to have a name sign. This approach has a good clean footpath and nice stonewalling, complimented on the opposite side by mature hedging. As one leaves the village towards the school there appears to be perhaps excessive signage for the school?

We noted the Bodyke sign on the Ennis road. This approach had no weeds and no litter and looked well. We very much admired the lovely planted bank along this approach. There are also some lovely views to the surrounding countryside as one

We notice that you trim all approach roads but that you are aware of the necessity of dealing with the hedges and proper biodiversity standards. Nonetheless we did spot some hedge trimming on the Ennis approach. You are grateful to the local authority for their sweeping lorry work on the approach roads.

On the approach from the county council depot side we would suggest that the walls outside the said depot be planted to lessen the effect of the long length of bare concrete wall. The set back area here should also be surfaced

for the full length of the wall. On the other side of the road at this point there is also a quite an untidy area of road side near the small concrete building.

On the Tulla approach road sign at the seated area in an old called needs the upright pole painted. The sign at the seated area in the alcove needs paint for its upright pole.

Some unfinished footpath areas – in particular close to a disability marked area footpath need attention, and some areas of road surfacing need renewal.