

Tidy Towns Competition 2014

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Lissycasey** Ref: **1741**
County: **Clare** Mark: **277**
Category: **B** Date(s): **01/07/2014**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014
Community Involvement & Planning	60	40
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	37
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	42
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	30
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	11
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	61
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	28
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	28
TOTAL MARK	450	277

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Ta Fáilte Romhat Lissycasey - Welcome Lissycasey to the Super Valu 2014 National Tidy Towns competition. You hold committee meetings every month and you name all the members of the committee numbering 17 people. This is a very large committee.

You list a large number of agencies, bodies and local businesses who have supported you. This extends from public bodies to sports groups - to the schools and others.

Your communication methods are a mixture of the reliable traditional methods and also modern methods. This is good. We hope that you circulate any minority churches represented in your area with your newsletter.

One of your committee members is a teacher in the local school. This is a good liaison arrangement. You say that the village has thrived since entering this competition. We are very happy to hear this, and it gives us - as adjudicators - great encouragement. It is obvious that your community gets a lot of satisfaction from entering the competition. We enjoyed the photographs of your fundraising efforts.

We thought that the interactive heritage trail was an outstanding project. It contributes to many categories of the competition, and we credit it under each relevant category. We hope to have time to return to the website www.explorelissycasey.com when time permits - and certainly before our next visit to your village. We are glad that you gave us such specific instructions as regards codes to be entered etc on your information panels so as to access all the information. We photographed the instructions!

Whereas your map did show the main buildings and features in your village, it did not show the projects which you have completed this year clearly and separately. In the guidelines which you received this year you were asked to number each project for this year's adjudication year sequentially through the Entry Form and to mark these projects - where applicable - with the same numbering system on your village map. Your map should also name all approach roads and housing estates. We look forward to such a map in 2015.

You have not submitted a Tidy Towns plan. You have listed future projects in the Entry Form which should only include 'projects undertaken for this year 2013/2014.' (This can include a phase of a project which is stretching over more than one year, but only the phase for the current year). All future projects should be included in a Tidy Towns plan. We would encourage you to submit a Tidy Towns plan - a three or five-year plan will focus your mind on what you can hope to achieve. A plan need not be prepared professionally, but you should consult locally in preparing such a plan. You should also consider any statutory and non-statutory plans applicable to Lissycasey in drawing up your work programme. Please refer to the Tidy Towns Handbook for advice in relation to the preparation of a three

or five-year plan. It is essential to progress in the competition and to gain extra marks under this particular category that you submit such a plan in 2015. In places you enter projects under non relative category headings, but we deal with this by considering them under the correct heading.

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

The interactive heritage trail conveys information about many aspects of the built heritage. This is excellent. It is informative, educational and good for tourism. We wonder if you liaised with the County Architectural Conservation Officer and the Heritage Officer as well as with the Biodiversity officer in putting the information for these panels together. We also commend you on the visual simplicity of the actual information panels. These are very much in keeping with the scale of your village, and are not intrusive in any way.

Under the Built Environment category you talk about the wishing well and the wildlife garden - together with works at the Cascades. We discuss these under the relevant category headings later- together with other projects which you have inserted under this category heading which belong elsewhere.

We are not clear as to what you mean by 'Street lighting along by Lissycasey sign at East of Village Centre' etc. We assume that you mean you were involved with promoting provision for this lighting. You also mention some projects which are future projects under this category heading which should be included in a Tidy Towns plan, and not in a list of projects undertaken for this year 2013/2014.

The Credit Union was well presented. The Post Office was neat

The gate post at the school (at the Kilrush end of the village) was a little rusty. The flags – both the Clare and Green Flag at the school were frayed and should be replaced.

The Playschool was clean, apart from the fact that there was an old notice in relation to the construction thereof on a pole outside the boundary which should be removed. The Talty/Topaz premises were very well maintained - despite a busy through flow of traffic.

The playground was well presented and used on a nice summer evening.

You appreciate that the Maxol site needs attention.

The Executive Travel compound security railings were obtrusive, and would benefit from screening/landscaping.

A derelict cottage was camouflaged with tree growth.

Halpin's is well presented. A certain amount of clutter was noted here, but the site is big. Advertising should not be located outside the site boundaries.

The Lizzy Casey building beside O'Dea's requires repainting and attention. The large unsurfaced area adjacent does not enhance the general impression. Across the road the bus stop and long shed adjacent looked very well maintained. We particularly admired the lovely red village pump here - with its lovely floral displays. There was a riot of floral colour around the pump, which contrasted beautifully with the ochre wall. This is an example of where a hanging basket looked well. (See our later comments). A two-storey house with mushroom-coloured walls, separated from the pump by a roadside stone wall looked very well presented. Well done to this property owner! Could this be 'perfected' with the painting of the black corrugated gate?

Fanny O'Dea's was admired. We particularly liked its lovely (now rare) marble lettering. As well as being an interesting building it is maintained in superb condition. The red seating outside looked resplendent.

The funeral parlour was cleanly presented, but we would strongly suggest the formation of a landscaping scheme for this site curtilage. The Church and graveyard were maintained very well. The Church is a nice modern building. The simple cross at the well-paved roadside kerbing looked very effective against a clear evening sky.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

You planted new native trees in the wildlife garden and along the two-mile route this year you also have planted hawthorn hedges throughout the village to replace the concrete post and rail. It is not clear as to how much of this hedge planting took place during this 2013/2014 adjudication year. You have many beds throughout the village and planted pots along the roadside.

In the wildlife garden you added a wishing well this year. We would suggest that the wildlife garden now is very full and we would suggest that you restrain from inserting additional items, as the space is quite small. The juxtaposition of a ornamental wishing well actually seems quite strange with the wildness of a wildlife garden. We think you should concentrate on emphasising the rural aspects of your village as items such as the wishing well can make it look a little 'twee'.

You keep the grass margins and grass trimmed throughout the growing season. As your village is a rural village we would be inclined to suggest that you limit the addition of hanging baskets. Planting in the soil is much more

sustainable, and also much more appropriate for a rural village. Certainly hanging baskets in the wildlife garden seems rather strange. One is a natural type of planting. The other is much more formal and contrived.

You maintain verges in an appropriate manner.

You mention the 'Lissycasey' box hedge. However last year's adjudicator referred to this and we know from looking at the hedge that it is not a project for this year and should not be listed under projects undertaken for this year 2013/2014. No doubt you did maintain this hedge, but this would be covered under general maintenance accredited to you in the landscaping category.

The area around the River is well maintained.

Landscaping- including floral planting at the school was admired.

Well done on your work which is currently ongoing in relation to re-establishing the native hedgerow at the Kilrush end of the village. We particularly admired the gravel bed outside the school which had some lovely lavender planting.

The adjudicator would make the following comments about the Cascades area. Firstly we hope that this area is a project 'in the making.' Less intervention is better than too much intervention, as this is a rural area and should be left in its natural state insofar as it is possible. The rails raw metal looked poorly. There was a dirty notice falling off a black bollard at the entrance to the bridge. These surfaces are rough and have not matured since works were carried out. A pipe was visible coming through the ground out onto the riverside bank. The seating area on the roadside was positively inaccessible down a sharp slope without protection to the water below. Whereas we do not concern ourselves with safety issues - as it is not our area of expertise - or indeed our business, we would feel that the water's edge is very unprotected on the roadside and on the access to the bridge. The outdoor piece of gym equipment was placed on a very rough surface, and was being encroached upon by vegetation. Dead vegetation needed to be removed. To be quite honest this area is a very unfinished project.

The Forest Walk is a wonderful amenity, and we would suggest that you keep this in its natural state without adding anything to it – simply maintaining it.

We admired the nice raised beds opposite the Cascades exist at the main road.

Landscaping at the Riverside Park was well maintained. However it is necessary to repaint the black handrail, and to repaint the picnic table. There was a little graffiti on the litter bin. A little litter was noticed in the Park but nothing very significant. With regard to attaching hanging baskets to your stone bridge, we would suggest that attaching such - to a stone bridge can damage the fabric of the bridge. It is not necessary and should be avoided. We were interested to see that the picnic seat has been supplied locally by the Vandefleur Gardens in Kilrush.

It is a good idea to have the main interpretive board in the wildlife garden at the village centre, because here people can read the content peacefully and safely. The Lissycasey Cascade Walk board was attractive, very clean and legible.

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

Well done on involving the pupils at the school in this category content. Bringing them on nature and wildlife trails will give them a great interest in their natural environment, and an appreciation of same.

We are pleased that all landscaping is being carried out with great consideration for its wildlife potential.

The ecology park appears to be a project 'in the making,' and we simply noted a rough path of chippings inside the road side boundary in this area. Moreover a lorry parked on the hard shoulder partially blocked the village side entrance to the pathway. We look forward to hearing more about this project in 2015.

Some dead trees were noted in the village centre Park. We were rather surprised by this. These should be replaced.

You live in a very rich area environmentally and you can move forward with plans to study/survey, interpret and manage your natural environment for the good of your village and its wildlife. We suggest that you consult the Heritage Office and the Biodiversity Officer of your local authority in relation to how to move forward with plans. 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. Engaging with schools (or colleges) on even elementary nature study surveys can lead in time to the further analysis and interpretation/presentation of the findings. We understand that Clare County Council has launched a biodiversity plan for the county. We suggest that you look into this plan and see how you can be part of the overall future of Clare's bio diversity.

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

Well done on joining Greenhomes. We note that you segregate litter. Is there another way you can inform people about events other than with flyers? If so it would save paper and recycling.

Your bring centre is well used.

You have other plans in relation to recycling – for example battery recycling. You also have a compost area and a tunnel for producing your own flowers. We think that you would benefit from advice in this area. Whereas you are aware of the waste pyramid most of your projects involved recycling – which as you can see comes midway down the waste minimisation pyramid. Talk to the Environmental Awareness Officer in the local authority. You will get advice on how to try to prevent waste in the first case.

Well done to both schools will have achieved a Green Flag.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You took part in the National Spring Clean and you have great help for this. You try to get the message of 'litter free' across to residents and businesses alike.

Despite the fact that much work must go on around your poly tunnel, you have kept the entire area very clean and presentable within the small park.

You have twice weekly litter picks along all roads. We are not surprised that you that discovered the largest offenders were passing traffic. We wondered how long this survey took and how you conducted it. Certainly on adjudication day it appeared to the adjudicator that the small amount of litter seen, lodged in the roadside verges, certainly appears to have been thrown from passing traffic. To combat this you have one litter pick everyday. This must be a difficult job given the traffic on the route. Generally centres who achieve in this competition do carry out daily litter picks. Once again you list plans as well as projects under this heading in the Entry Form - which simply and only asks you for this year's projects.

The clothing banks beside the Riverside Park were clean.

Paths near the school require verge trimming. You paint the bridge railings on a regular basis.

The recycling centre was a bit shabby - despite the flowers. The large building behind would benefit from repainting. There was a dirty faded Clare County Council sign with graphics missing at the bring bank.

We noted a bingo fly post opposite the riverside area.

We would strongly suggest a gate painting programme, including field gates, for the entire village. You mention that the provision of hedging unifies the village, and we feel that painting all gates in a chosen colour would also give unity to this elongated village and look very clean and tidy.

Just outside the Ennis side speed limit sign The Clare County Council depot needs screening, as the site looks a little untidy from the roadside.

Inside the speed limit sign at this point there was a very weedy untrimmed area with a small scattering of litter.

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

The standard of residential property presentation in the village is good. We are glad to hear that a resident from each of the two housing estates is on your committee. Both estates have an annual spring clean day, and also get involved in the village spring clean.

Cúl Daire is nicely landscaped with a simple stone wall entrance and roadside boundary, which looked very well.

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

Your village is in a rather unusual situation in that the approach roads become the village as one approaches from Ennis on one side and Kilrush on the other.

On the approach road from Kilrush some verge trimming on the immediate approach to the 60 K pH speed limit sign would be beneficial. At the 60 K pH speed limit sign there was a rusty pole on a traffic cone for the adjacent garage, and also a small lorry was parked on the hard shoulder here. Fly posting (for the County Clare Show) was attached to a public light just before the school. The simple green and white Lissycasey sign at the school was admired. A vast expanse of mown grass on both sides of this approach was meticulously maintained. The boundary wall at the school facing the Kilrush approach would benefit from repainting. A flower bed at the clean school sign were admired, but the footpath here was a little bit weedy.

It must be very difficult for you to carry out any work on the approach roads due to the constant incessant traffic. We hope that your local authority assists in relation to main road work due to this difficulty which you experience. In fairness you have not complained about it, but this adjudicator found walking along the road carefully – particularly at the Kilrush end to be challenging.

Approach roads and connecting roads are trimmed on a weekly basis

You have floral displays in beds on both entries to the village, and you have trees and hedgerows strategically planted along the main route uniting the village visually. This is a good approach.

There is a poor surface on the road parallel to the main road near the school. Footpaths in the vicinity of the school are all quite rough.

We noticed a few 'headless' traffic sign poles. Signs should be re attached or the poles should be removed. The Clare County Council (?) depot needs screening, as the site looks a little untidy from the roadside.

We admired a nice stone low wall, but there was weedy gravel also at the Clondrinagh school junction approach. A bent Ballynacally road sign was also noted here.

The surface of the road leading to the playground and the corners thereof were very rough. Across the road - the Ballynacally junction was green and verdant. We admired the floral display at the directional sign here.