

Tidy Towns Competition 2014

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Coilldubh** Ref: **279**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **219**
Category: **B** Date(s): **23/06/2014**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2014 |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Community Involvement & Planning | 60 | 34 |
| Built Environment and Streetscape | 50 | 29 |
| Landscaping and Open Spaces | 50 | 32 |
| Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities | 50 | 18 |
| Sustainable Waste and Resource Management | 50 | 6 |
| Tidiness and Litter Control | 90 | 44 |
| Residential Streets & Housing Areas | 50 | 32 |
| Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes | 50 | 24 |
| TOTAL MARK | 450 | 219 |

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Welcome back to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2014. We have noted that your committee of nine people hold monthly meetings throughout the year and have links with residents, voluntary groups and schools. You receive support from local businesses and public bodies and you have a newsletter for communicating with your community. Many thanks for attaching the sketch map. However, we found it difficult to follow and suggest that you prepare a better one for next year's adjudicator. We encourage communities to prepare a three year plan to assist them in identifying projects for each criteria of the competition and to help in obtaining funding from private and public interests. Such a plan helps you to prioritise the projects on a yearly basis. We have noted your positive comments on the competition; they are much appreciated.

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

Daybreak and the Post Office complex looked closed but were neat and tidy. Credit union building was clean and tidy. The wall would benefit from painting to brighten it somewhat. The Community Centre is a fine building. There is a grass margin on one side that can accommodate a line of trees to reduce the impact of the rear of adjacent houses. The adjacent hurling field looked well. The National School was difficult to find being located at the rear of houses. It was well painted, had one Green Flag and we observed children recycling paper. No litter to be seen here or in this back laneway. We admired the willow planting in the school grounds. The play school looked well; an adjacent site was untidy. Woodlands Golf Course complex seems closed as evidenced by the untidy entrance with weeds and litter.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Trees are the main structural elements in the landscape and it is important to utilise opportunities to plant trees for future generations to enjoy. We admired a number of good tree specimens in private gardens. There are large open spaces in Coilldubh which look quite bare and would benefit from tree planting for which we recommend ash, oak, lime, maple, beech and horse chestnut because they would make significant impact. Existing lime trees on an avenue in Coilldubh make great impact and you have space to have more of that landscape type. Another benefit would be a reduction in the amount of grass maintenance when the trees establish. In planting new trees it is best to use a single species on a road or street for uniformity as is the case mentioned above. However, we advise against the use of flowering cherries as they do not harmonise with your location and from a design viewpoint it is best to use only one or two species which have purple foliage. Also, it is important to ensure that the base of new trees is maintained free of weeds and grass and also flower beds to ensure early establishment. When trees are established it is important to remove the stakes as the stems can get damaged from the ties or stake; this is an issue at the Credit Union. Guideline for plant containers is to use them only where planting directly into the ground is not

possible. The use of permanent planting is encouraged rather than relying on annuals which are more time consuming.

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fíadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádurtha:

We note that you are aware of the wildlife in your area and have some survey information available. That information is best utilised by the children in the local school for projects designed to increase their awareness of our environment. Researching and raising awareness is more important than 'doing' at the early stages. Biodiversity is under threat globally and sadly Ireland is a part of this trend. Habitats of value include specimen trees, hedgerows, treelines, streams, woodlands and wetlands. List the plants and animals to be found in your natural environment and recognise their significance (native, protected, or alien invasive?). Appreciating your local wildlife resources and implementing promotional activities is vital in order to achieve under this category.

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

This category is becoming more and more important and the available marks are now increased to 50 to highlight the need for communities to address the issues involved in tackling the growing waste mountain that is creating problems of pollution, unwanted land use, and the use of dwindling resources. It is noted that your activity under this heading is associated with a recycling bin in the grounds of the Community Centre for clothes and mobile phones. There are a number of other measures that your community can take in regard to sustainability. Contact your waste contractors and try to find out what is being thrown away and armed with this information you can start to think about how waste can be reduced. Examine the waste pyramid and note the recycling is only the fourth most preferred option after avoidance, reducing and re-using. One third of our waste is organic in nature, such as grass clippings. You can avoid collecting mown grass by more frequent cutting and using mulching mowers which shred the clippings and facilitate faster decomposition. In regard to water usage, self-watering hanging baskets are a help in reducing the amount of water used and also the task of watering. Other waste minimisation projects might include working with retailers to cut down on packaging, reminding people to re-use shopping bags, discouraging junk mail, encouraging the re-use of water bottles and coffee mugs at school and at work. We note that chemical weedkillers are used a great deal in Coilldubh and we encourage a policy of reducing their usage. In response to an over use of chemicals for weed control, many useful products of the past are no longer available and therefore communities are encouraged to use other means such as hoeing to maintain weeds. In some cases, allowing wildflowers to develop is an acceptable alternative. These activities will highlight the fact that you are focussing on this category and when you develop more projects in the future your marks will increase. We also advise that you examine the maintenance regime for the large open spaces and consider reducing the mowing operations in some sections to allow wildflower meadows to develop. This would add delight and would also reduce the energy usage required for mowing operations.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

In general, we were very pleased with the management of litter and tidiness in Coilldubh so congratulations on that effort by the Village Caretaker and we note that you recycle material collected on the annual clean-up. Well done to teachers and pupils of the local school for achieving the third Green Flag. We were particularly pleased to see the back lane of the houses beside the school looking very clean. It is often very difficult to have all back lanes clean and tidy. Some weeds observed at the base of the wall at Daybreak and a small amount of litter was there also. The 50kph sign was dirty on entering the village. A derelict site opposite the Credit Union and the adjacent building seems unused. Where dead trees exist they look untidy and should be removed.

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

Houses on the approach from Allenwood all looked well. Coilldubh estate had plenty of flowers and the houses looked well. There were fine established lime trees in the margins. We were surprised to find an extensive residential scheme with large open spaces and provision for car parking provided at the rear of houses. This was no doubt an innovative scheme in its day and it seems to have worked. The impact shows houses, gardens viewed across large open spaces. As mentioned above, we advise that the management of these spaces be reviewed to include large trees and to encourage the development of wildflower meadows. These spaces are larger than many parks in urban areas and have the capacity to provide more opportunities for landscape and recreation. In Willow Lawns, the houses had nice archway features and some gardens were well maintained. The signs need refreshing. Some ongoing works were noted and some shops are closed down. There is scope for hedges in private gardens. No weeds to be seen at the kerbs and no litter. The road surface was in need of improvement. Woodlands Park and Tudor Court have large open spaces and plenty of scope for more planting. Woodlands Grove has an attractive stone wall entrance; some weed at the wall base need attention.

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

In general the approaches to Coilldubh are well maintained, including road surfaces. From Allenwood direction we saw graffiti on the signs and the bus stops.