

Tidy Towns Competition 2014

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Eadestown** Ref: **101**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **250**
Category: **A** Date(s): **18/06/2013**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014
Community Involvement & Planning	60	37
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	32
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	31
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	28
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	11
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	28
TOTAL MARK	450	250

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2014 and congratulation on participation for the eight time. We have noted that your committee of six people hold six meetings throughout the year and source help from others as you need them. It is good that you receive support from local businesses; including a local nursery and public bodies and that you avail of the parish newsletter as your means of communication. The green schools officers liaise with local schools which is very important. Many thanks for attaching a map of the area with the project locations marked. We are pleased that you regard the competition as useful in assisting your community to keep the area clean and tidy. For the future, please consider amending the plan prepared in 2012 to highlight the stages of the various projects. This will help you to prioritise works on an annual basis and may also assist in obtaining funds. It will also help the adjudicator to understand when various works are done or are planned. Thank you for attaching some information on your activities. Please note that the available marks under this heading is aimed at encouraging communities to improve the standard of their presentation.

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

The community of Eadestown is spread somewhat and even takes in the area known as Rathmore. The church is a central point. The Church and small car park were fine and we admired the tall Eucalyptus tree. The bed of iris and wallflowers could be replanted for summer colour and would make better impact than some plant containers. There is sometimes a mistaken perception that marks in the competition by adding more plant containers. This is not the case and in fact additional containers in most cases just add to your workload. The well surfaced car park across from the church is a case in point. The use of plant containers here does not harmonise with the rural location and in fact only adds clutter and untidiness, especially as they are not looking their best. We suggest the removal of the containers and the planting of a hawthorn hedge as being a more suitable boundary on all sides instead of the evergreen trees on the mound beside the road. Alternatively, a low stone wall would greatly enhance this car park and add to the character of the village. We noted the Captain Ticknell monument which is interesting. The buildings around it are in good condition. The mural was admired. The cemetery had well painted walls and gates, all in very good condition. The graves are well attended and we noted the convenient tap behind the pier for watering flowers on graves. The crèche, Community Hall and school is an impressive complex. The Green Flags proudly flying made a great impression as did the grounds which are well maintained. No litter or weeds to be seen. Eadestown GAA scores well for its impressive clubhouse and grounds. The carpark was well surfaced and clean and the stone wall entrance and well painted gates is impressive.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The main structural elements in the landscape are trees and you have many good examples in Eadestown. In

planting new trees it is best to use a single species on a road or street for uniformity. In that regard, we noted the line of new trees on the Blessington Road. They are all the same species and look well. 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 has to be done in a few places in Eadestown. A guideline for plant containers is to use them only where planting directly into the ground is not possible so be careful not to provide too many plant containers. It is better to have fewer well planted containers than a large number in which the quality of plants is inferior. In this regard, please note our comments above in regard to plant containers in the car park at the church. Also there are some old plant containers opposite the wildlife area; they seem to be forgotten; we suggest they be removed. We admired the method of highlighting the post box with some shrubs in container on each side. However, the 12 window boxes filled with bedding plants and fixed in the hedge nearby really don't fit in with the rural character of the area and they take too much time to plant and maintain. In considering seasonal flowers the use of permanent planting including herbaceous perennials for floral displays is encouraged rather than relying on annuals which are more time consuming.

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

The rural setting of Eadestown provides you with a rich natural area surrounding your community and it is important to promote an awareness of its many traits and to map these habitats. Appreciating your local wildlife resources is vital in order to achieve under this category. In this regard 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. Thank you for attaching the information obtained from the Biodiversity walks done with members of the Regan and Fenner families. The experience seems to have been enjoyed. We noted the explanatory notices placed at the wildlife area and the old hayrake. The Annagul river was visited but it is almost covered over with vegetation.

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. Under this heading you have mentioned that all houses have recycling bins and that clothes and batteries are recycled through the school. It would be helpful if you could find out how much material is recycled through these means. Congratulations to pupils and teachers of Rathmore School for being awarded their 5th Green Flag. That is a great achievement. There are a number of other measures that your town 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. 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.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

We note your actions under this heading which includes a Spring Clean undertaken in April and daily litter picks as well as a check on Graffiti and fly posting. We also note your action in cleaning signs. Just one sign we found needed cleaning; the Failte sign on the road to the GAA grounds. The wall on the right needs repair.

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

In Eadestown, the typical estate is essentially an access road leading to private houses which are well concealed behind private boundaries as in Rathmore estate for example. Caureen View estate is an area of individual houses with strong enclosures, an example being Ryefield House. All looked well. In Carter's Hill estate, we admired the houses, hedge, lights and mature trees. We suggest that grass beneath trees here be controlled by use of mulching. Supporting stakes and ties should be checked to prevent damage to tree stems.

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

The approach to Eadestown is very rural but the volume and speed of traffic was a surprise. Perhaps this is due to the road being a link between Naas and Blessington. The 50 kph sign needs cleaning. We noted your plans to have the Council implement road improvement works in the coming years, including restoration of the wall damaged during flooding.