

Tidy Towns Competition 2014

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Prosperous** Ref: **780**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **212**
Category: **C** Date(s): **13/06/2014**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014
Community Involvement & Planning	60	31
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	31
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	31
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	18
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	5
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	40
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	24
TOTAL MARK	450	212

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2014 and having noted that you entered for the past three years, we hope that you found the experience useful. This adjudicator's report and others of past years are intended to provide guidance on how you can continue implementing improvements in your community in accordance with the criteria. We strongly advise the preparation of a three year plan to guide your forward planning and help prioritise projects for the years ahead. This can be helpful when you are seeking funding. The available marks for this section are now extended to 60 to enable communities through their applications to provide a more detailed account of their area which means providing information on what works you have undertaken over the past year. In particular, we want you to understand that the adjudicator who may never have visited your village before will be much less familiar with its history and layout. In that regard, a map is essential and we wish to compliment you on the sketch map that you provided. It was quite legible and very easy to follow. On the principle that a picture is worth 1,000 words please feel free to include some pictures with next year's submission. We have noted that your committee of five people hold monthly meetings in association with the community and have links with FAS and schools. Your means of communication include a newsletter, posters and church bulletins. The involvement with local schools is commendable. We wish you good luck and look forward to your application again in 2015.

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

The most prominent building in Prosperous is the fine stone built church and the adjacent parish centre both of which look very well and are in an important setting, especially the church which forms a strong focal point at the junction of the old and new Main Streets. Dowling's Pub is well painted but could do with softening by the addition of floral displays. This comment also applies to many other commercial premises. The primary and secondary schools are fine buildings. We admired the stone façade of the primary school and the large sculpture in the grounds. The boundary railings were in good condition but the base of the wall needs cleaning. On the Clane Road boundary there is scope to remove some tarmac and plant some low wall plants or herbaceous plants to enhance that part of the village. The secondary school (St. Farnan's) has some well-established trees to the front that add interest. The boundary wall needs cleaning. The cemetery looks very well, the boundary wall is well painted and the car park was clean and tidy with only some minor problem of weeds. We noted that the GAA entrance and gates were painted in the team colours. Larry's Pub and the Post Office looks very well.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The main structural elements in the landscape are trees and you have some good examples in Prosperous. There are some nice established trees on Old Main Street; this contrasts with New Main Street which would benefit from a tree planting scheme. In planting new trees it is best to use a single species on a road or street for uniformity. 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. Guideline for plant containers is to use them only where planting directly into the ground is not possible. In that regard we advise that there is scope for enhancement on the wide footpath outside the primary school opposite the church. However, rather than using plant containers, this is an opportunity to remove some tarmac and import soil to make beds either against the wall or in some other position. In regard to plant materials, the use of permanent planting such as herbaceous plants is encouraged rather than relying on annuals which are more time consuming. The Neighbourhood Watch sign and pole is sitting in what looks like a site that is in need of landscape development. We admired the beech hedge alongside the boundary of Morans and other premises. We noted that you planted large numbers of daffodils on the approach road and have plans to continue this in future years. Please include some pictures of these in next year's application.

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

This criteria aims to highlight that in all communities there is a rich natural area surrounding 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. List the plants and animals to be found in your natural environment and recognise their significance (native, protected, or alien invasive?). This would be a very useful project for schools. We note that you plan to devise some project for this criteria in the coming year.

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. In noting that you have not listed any projects under this heading we wish to advise that there are a number of 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. 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:

Under this heading you mentioned the school patrols which assist in litter collection with community workers and your committee. This work is certainly important but there is also a need to focus on preventative measures that may assist in reducing the volume of litter and thus reduce your task of collection. We do realise that litter collection is a task that requires constant vigilance. Some litter was evident in a number of locations, of particular note was in the vicinity of the Mace shopping area and near the pedestrian path on the site labelled "Community Field" on your map. The Tyre Centre is very untidy and conveys a disappointing image of the village as do the grounds around the Garage on the corner of Allenwood Road and Newbridge Road. In particular a low curved wall on the corner is in need of attention. A derelict house beside the secondary school takes from that area as does a vacant house adjacent to Keenan's. At Brooke's Mill housing estate, an adjacent old rusty shed is conspicuous and weeds are established in the gutters of a newer building closer to the road. It is also important to look up from the ground and check the various signposts and information signs. In this regard we found a number of signs that just need to be cleaned, particularly the large brown sign promoting Prosperous as a tourism centre. Other signs that need attention are the school patrol sign, Neighbourhood Watch, 50km signs and finger post signs. Boundary walls that need cleaning take from a scene and some are mentioned where they exist under The Built Environment heading.

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

The residential estates form an important component of Tidy Towns. Goretta Terrace looked well and we noticed the new trees. The old pump here could become a feature of the estate. St. Joseph's Park was clean and tidy and the grass well maintained. We noted the unfinished estate at Brooks Mill and hope that the reported improvement in the economy will assist in its completion. Anne Street entrance has some trees that need attention. This estate here would benefit from improved maintenance. We admired the 1798 mural at the entrance. Corrachoill Park has a nice entrance. It is well planted and litter control is very good. We advise that planting of climbing plants at the screen wall be considered. In Emerson Court we admired the old pump. The stakes on the trees need attention before they damage the tree stem. Church View Lawns is another nice estate that is well maintained. At Barrington Court there are fine trees on the boundary and in roadside margins which greatly enhance the area. The Downings estate also looked well.

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

Many road surfaces throughout prosperous are in need of improvement. We noted that a start was being made on the Allenwood Road from the junction with the Newbridge Road so perhaps this work will continue in the coming years. This is an example of something that could be mentioned in a three year plan if you know for example that Kildare Council have proposals for implementation on a phased basis. We look forward to seeing the improved road and footpath on next year's visit. The approach to towns and villages makes an important impact on visitors and we advise that in particular you consider the condition of signage which as mentioned above in many cases needed cleaning.