

Tidy Towns Competition 2014

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Sallins** Ref: **384**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **261**
Category: **D** Date(s): **13/06/2014**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014
Community Involvement & Planning	60	43
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	28
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	37
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	28
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	9
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	48
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	35
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	33
TOTAL MARK	450	261

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2014 and we note your participation has been for eight years. Your committee of eight people is supported by two TUS workers and you have monthly many meetings and more frequently in spring and summer. You have links with residents, voluntary groups and schools and receive support from local businesses and public bodies. Your means of communication include newspapers and newsletters. The involvement with local schools is commendable. Many thanks for attaching a map of the area with project locations marked for our attention. We note your addendum to the 3 year plan.

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

The Bridgewater Inn and Lock 13 are both looking well and festooned with flags and flowers. On the opposite side of the canal the canal bank and properties are well maintained. It was disappointing to see work stopped on the canal bank improvement scheme. The numerous stone wall boundaries are a feature of the town. Scoil Naomh Larcán was well painted and clean. We noted the Green Flag. Good quality railings form the boundary. The well maintained church and car park are somewhat hidden away from the Main Street. We admired the well painted railway station building. The rear car park presents a rather hard image; it would benefit from some tree planting to soften the impact. Footpaths around the town were generally in good condition. The Waterways Shopping Centre has a number of empty premises; we hope they can return to business soon. The SuperValu shopping centre section of this estate is busy. The car park there would benefit from some tree planting. Beside a Chinese take away, we noted the well-disguised vacant dwelling where we admired the window boxes. Well done on this effort.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The main structural elements in the landscape are trees and you have some good examples, especially in residential estates. 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. This is an issue in some residential estates mentioned below. 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. We were impressed with the rose bed near Castlesize estate was very good. Opposite Flanagan's Mill and the Tyre Sale yard there is a great planting of Pyracantha. Flags and flowers on the Bridgewater Inn were of a high standard. We could see that preparations were underway to plant a floral display on the grass margin near Hunter's Wood.

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

We note the initiative to promote and enhance an awareness of wildlife and natural amenities to locals, including school children through field trips, an art competition and surveys. You have a rich natural area surrounding your community including the canal 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 information should be revealed in the planned survey and would be a very useful project for schools.

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. We note that you have signed up to the Green Home Programme, Freetrade Ireland & Kildare Discussion Forum with a focus on sustainability and look forward to an update in years to come. Good luck with the planned survey among school children and commuters. 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 the litter patrols three times per week and the use of bring banks. The removal of obsolete signs/poles is very good and the plans to do likewise with advertising signage. Des Kelly Interiors has excessive signage that takes from the otherwise attractive area. We didn't see any graffiti so well done on that campaign and weed control is also very good. We can understand your concerns for traffic calming as we found traffic volumes very large. Some gardens at the exit from the rear car park of the railway station were badly maintained and weeds were quite visible on the walls. An area opposite the railway station building is derelict and looks untidy; it takes significantly from the well-kept station building and surrounds.

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

We note your support for some residential estates where possible and comment as follows on those we visited. Oldbridge estate and Hunter's Wood houses were in good condition with well-maintained gardens. We suggest softening of the walls with some climbing plants. Some trees need attention by checking the supporting tree stakes to prevent the tree stems from being damaged. We admired the estate sign. Osberstown View and the Court were well planted and tidy estates. The standard is lower in the Drive because of weeds but trees at the entrance are impressive. Sallins Wharf and Sallins Pier were attractive estates with a large open space, nice street lights and no overhead wires. The apartments and houses at Millbank were also visited and we were pleased with the standard of maintenance. Willow Grove estate featured with fine hornbeam (*Carpinus*) trees at the entrance. St. Bridget's Terrace and Castlesize estates were in good condition and the latter has a large open space with good quality trees and no weeds but there is a need to check the tree ties to prevent the tree stems from being damaged. We were impressed with the fine poplar trees in Sallins Park estate

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

We noted your work in maintaining the approach roads and back laneways. The grass margins are well maintained. The relocated canal boats were seen and work on the canal bank is stopped at present. The heavy constant flow of traffic was a surprise for us; you will no doubt benefit when the by-pass is implemented. Sallins is fortunate to have a number of attractive stone walls at many locations throughout the town. The welcome/information signs were clean which is important especially for tourists. The stone bridge over the canal is a significant feature and allows a good view of the street and canal. Future road improvement works will benefit when funding is available. We admired the rose beds at the ESB sub station.