

Tidy Towns Competition 2014

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ferbane** Ref: **621**
County: **Offaly** Mark: **272**
Category: **C** Date(s): **11/06/2014**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014
Community Involvement & Planning	60	45
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	38
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	36
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	29
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	20
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	37
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	35
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	32
TOTAL MARK	450	272

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

The adjudicator welcomes Ferbane to the 2014 Tidy Towns competition and thank you for your well detailed submission and annotated map. The map has some errors with St Cynocs noted twice but it was very helpful on the day of the visit. We are glad to hear that you were successful in reaching many of the goals in your 2012-2014 town plan and build on this to develop your next list of tasks to cover the coming 3-5 year period. You seem to enjoy a fruitful partnership with the Local Authority and various agencies and sporting and other youth organisations in the town. Well done to the transition students for joining the committee as this helps give a voice to younger members of the community. Your overall approach to the competition is good and it is obvious that the main committee, following the recent 'reshuffle', and your sub committees have dedicated members who receive good support from volunteers to keep up the high level of care witnessed on adjudication day. Good luck with developing the Ferbane.ie website. Look to links on the Tidy Towns website to other centres that have been successfully using their website to promote their works to the wider community. Your Ferbane Tidy Towns progress report 2014 was noted in a window on the main street and was very professionally done and communicated your progress very effectively. A nice idea for other centres to use to promote their work. We are glad that you have decided to continue on with your involvement in the competition as it can be a great forum to learn from other centres in addition to gaining national recognition for all your work and efforts through out the year.

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

The Church of Ireland is an architectural gem in your town and we note your very interesting plans to convert it to a building which can be used by all in the community as outlined in the Engage with Architecture report. Good luck with your planned works here. The bollards outside the Library should be cleaned and painted as part of your next years works task in this category. Once again the Garda station was very neatly presented and the grounds to the community school were immaculate. Both the Parochial Hall and the bridge have benefited from their recent painting and were lovely set pieces in the town. Congratulations to Hennessey's pub with its win in your best shop front competition well deserved. The Medical Hall was also noted with its restrained modern frontage and also admired was the muted traditional frontage of Flemings which was very neatly painted in smart red and white. Well done in the progress in addressing the derelict sites in the town especially the pub at the corner of Main Street, as it is so visible in its position. Hopefully this will be developed following its recent sale. The Ulster Bank is an imposing building in the town but its bins should be stored out of sight as they were cluttering up the path at the bank machine access on adjudication day.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Open spaces within the town were maintained to a high standard thanks to the efforts of your CE scheme workers.

The timber playground, in such a central spot in the village, was well used on adjudication day and the adjoining car park and its planting beds looked very attractive. Good luck with progressing the Crows feet project as part of your medium term tasks and how nice if this could be incorporated into a new public space for the town. The long wall and associated niches to the GAA boundary seem to present an opportunity to establish an avenue of trees to enhance this approach to the village opposite the garage. Could a line of trees be planted to just inside the boundary here without impacting on the use of the pitches? Remove tree ties on all roadside trees on the approach from Birr and weed out some self seeded seedlings from the clipped shrub bed to the base of the town sign here. Tree ties should also be removed from recently planted trees at St Cynocs. Window boxes along the main street added a splash of seasonal colour.

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

Thank you for including your comprehensive wildlife audit and management plan, this has gained you additional marks in this category. It is a great resource for you and the proposals and biodiversity objectives for the chosen sites in the town give you great pointers to develop future projects and continue to gain marks in this category. You have a wealth of habits surrounding you which have so much potential. The purpose of this category is to help towns promote and understand why their habitats are important and help local residents value them. The wood and nature walk area is progressing nicely and can be a showcase of best practice with regards to habitat creation and management. The neatly trimmed grass strip along the new concrete path serves to highlight the diversity of the meadow beyond. The Ostan Feithidi was a nice feature at the entrance to the Lana Feithidi. Well done to all the volunteers who helped plant trees here and the programme of watering you are carrying out will help their successful establishment to ensure the children who helped plant them can enjoy their presence for years to come.

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

The Green School programme seems to have been a great success for your schools and we wish St Cynocs all the best in striving to obtain their first green flag. Have you had any thoughts about joining the Green Homes programme also run by An Taisce. This could be promoted through your network of residents committees and this would be a great way to progress the success of green ideals in the town. The inclusion of sustainable elements into the design and building for the new build at the GAA ground is a practical example of your committees input into practical application of the spirit of this category into your town. We look forward to seeing this completed for next year. From your wormeries to wee recycling days you have many projects ongoing in the town. Although it was exam time the car park at the community school was pretty full but there was not one bicycle in the covered bike stand. Are there any ways you can promote more cycling in the town. Take part in bike to school/work week next year perhaps.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Well done on your pro active approach to litter control with and the efforts of your litter task force sub group. On the day of the visit the adjudicator was happy to see no obvious litter in the core town area. All bins passed on the adjudicators visit to the town were emptied though some could benefit from a power wash. Some bins were placed in less than ideal locations where they cluttered already narrow footpaths such as the one opposite the road sign at o'hUigins. Consider carrying out a simple litter survey to ascertain the level of bin use in the town. With the results of a survey you can have confidence in the location of bins and the removal of any surplus bins and so help declutter the streets. The fuel sign on top of a pile of old blocks at the corner of the Ferbane Enterprise centre should be removed as it is unsightly. The mutt mitts scheme is another example of your proactive approach to this category and your stated aim of keeping Ferbane tidy and litter free now and in the future. Wiring at upper floors is a concern on the main street so good luck with progress in tackling this issue with property owners.

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

Well done to all the resident associations on the hard work they carry out over the year and thank you for including details of the winners of your best garden and residential estate competition. Please indicate the winner's location on a map for next years visit to ensure we don't miss viewing the gardens on adjudication day. This type of competition is a great way to keep the momentum going; healthy competition is always a good way to get residents motivated! The newer residential areas were maturing well but we thought the open space to the housing area opposite the play ground on the Belmont Road was crying out for more tree planting. Check tree ties and stakes on trees planted as part of open space planting in newer estates. Ties should be loosened or removed as a tree grows as a scar from a tight or rubbing tree tie leaves a tree susceptible to disease. Ties can usually be removed after 2-3 years or once a tree is stable. There was no name sign on the estate just past the name sign on the Cloghan Road. Devlin Park was well presented with neat verges.

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

Verges and name signs on the approaches to the town were appropriately maintained on adjudication day. The boundary wall to Gallen United is prominent on the approach into the town and was well presented. Perhaps you could plant some trees to the verge here. Low species such as the native bird cherry could be chosen to avoid impacting on the overhead power lines. We look forward to seeing the planters in place at the new centra car park to help soften the boundaries here and great to see that native climbers are proposed for added habitat value. As ever the heritage centre car park with the bring centre was immaculate.

