

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballon** Ref: **526**
County: **Carlow** Mark: **295**
Category: **B** Date(s): **10/07/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	45	46
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	35	36
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	39	40
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	28	30
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	18	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	61	61
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	30	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	33	33
TOTAL MARK	450	289	295

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Many thanks for your entry in this year's Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for a truly excellent entry this time round. This was clear, concise where possible, descriptive where needed and so well-illustrated. Well done on judicious use of Gaeilge. Your list of supports is comprehensive, the list of communication methodologies extensive. You engage well with schools, youth and generally across the board. It's great to read your positive feedback on the competition. Thanks for the plan which is detailed and 'no-nonsense'.

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

You have some very substantial projects on the list submitted. I won't simply read this back to you but suffice to say that the church painting and hall refurbishment (and the funding thereof) are major undertakings. Well done on the communications re the 'ghost' estate. This is a very important function of a group such as yours.

This was a busy day, both traffic wise and also for several of the business premises. The Texaco service station was bustling but neat. The Top petrol station / Centra was really neat and tidy. Scoil N. Peadar agus Pól has an amazing garden. There is spectacular planting at the front of the school with a birdbath, nectar-bearing flowers, a tyre composter and even a scarecrow.

Jimmy's Takeaway was spotless and has lovely window-boxes. McAssey's supermarket looked bright and busy. Joe Doyle's is a simply gorgeous shopfront. Kavanagh's was clean and neat. An Siopa Glas was all that this adjudicator had heard it was. The Chapel is a beautiful little building finished in really nice colours and subtle planting. The treatment of the old graveyard with archaeological murals is brilliant. The stone stile here was much appreciated.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Again, numerous projects and some with long-term benefits such as the tree-planting and graveyard improvements. Spring bulbs will of course continue to give joy for many years. The adjudicator is impressed with the scope as well as scale of your work and BIG does indeed seem to be 'embedded' well within the functioning of your community. The landscape planting up to and at the Wexford Road roundabout is lovely - so bright! The mini-sensory garden was admired. Lovely! However, the junction of the Fenagh Road and the N80 was the best junction treatment seen in a long time. The Millennium Garden was a riot of colours. There was also a pirate. Planting on the other side of the road was more restrained but still beautiful.

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

Dúlra Bhalana is precisely the kind of project we would hope groups will take on. Excellent. The honey bee project will also be very important as an awareness-raising tool as much as a boon to pollination. The Ballykealey Lane wildflower project is also extremely pertinent in this regard. The barn owls project is fascinating. Please update us on this as it develops. Unfortunately, hedgerow cutting was noted on the Carlow Road so a point is deducted here.

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

What can be said that hasn't already about the Siopa Glas project? A fantastic culmination of energy, imagination and creativity. Hard work too, no doubt. Eco fashion and composting, buses and bikes... A great entry here, Ballon. The adjudicator doesn't feel you need any guidance in this category. More points will be forthcoming.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The anti-litter, anti-cigarette litter and anti dog litter project posters were noted on the day. The junior litter committee is potentially a very important investment in terms of buy-in. You participate in Spring Clean, well done.

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

Well done on the community orchard project - a great initiative. You've also done really useful work at Mullaunmore estate and at the Oaks. An Teach Pictiúr Linn has a beautiful paint job. Great efforts have been made with hanging baskets and planters and the colours have paid you back. Chapel View was so neat, a credit to the householders. Ballon Hill was probably one of the most colourful residential spaces yet seen and No 1 the most colourful garden! Could the Harris fencing opposite the community centre be replaced with something else?

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

The hawthorn and beech hedging was noted. Did you undertake the footpath repair and bin removal yourselves? The Carlow Road is a lovely approach. There is some really gorgeous landscape planting on the left hand side on the way into town. Your wildflowers were admired. Surfaces were generally very good, as were footpaths. Wexford Road is also a very pleasant approach road. Road signs were spotless and the planting at your sign was admired. The field of poppies cut a lovely dash. The adjudicator loved your name stones (e.g. for the wildflower meadow). The Peter and Paul walkway is a fantastic little project. It's great to see so many parts of the community linked in this way. The route of the footpath in front of the community centre was admired too, very well done.

Concluding Remarks:

A lovely entry which was a great introduction to a fascinating little place. As you are no doubt aware, points are harder won at this level but they will come. This year's are richly deserved.