

# Tidy Towns Competition 2015

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Clarecastle** Ref: **1082**  
County: **Clare** Mark: **282**  
Category: **C** Date(s): **13/06/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	39	40
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	36	38
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	38	39
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	33	36
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	12	15
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	47	51
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	34	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	29	29
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>282</b>

### Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Well what a delight it was for your adjudicator to have Clarecastle as their first centre to judge in 2015. Thank you for your entry and the pictures of the numerous events and openings throughout the year. Clarecastle is an idyllically situated community with a wealth of amenities throughout the village that you have managed and enhanced appropriately. The energy of your voluntary committee jumped off the application and the extent of projects and achievements for 2014/2015 should be applauded – well done to all involved.

You work with a great range of businesses, organisations and are very inclusive. On adjudication day one volunteer met your adjudicator (who of course, did not realise that this was the case) and was so enthusiastic about Clarecastle they invited the adjudicator back to an open day event at the community garden later that weekend. He talked of many different events, the achievements of the men's sheds and the local committee. He highlighted the work of the reps from the residential estates. How refreshing and lovely to hear of someone within a community who was so proud of the work and achievements of all volunteers and groups throughout a town. It seems that in the five years since you returned to the competition that much community spirit has been focused and channelled into major benefit for the community.

Particular thanks should be given to the volunteers on the following committees:

Tidy Towns Committee  
Heritage & Wildlife Group  
Clarecastle pastoral Council  
Clarecastle Community Development Group.

The breadth of communication including traditional and more modern types such as FaceBook. This is to be commended. However, the notice board in the Post Office was not located and the post mistress did not seem to know about this. Your long-term plan was noted – it is suggested that you theme the actions in this under the adjudication categories please.

We were sorry that last year's report caused concern and your adjudicator would like to reiterate that as a voluntary committee you have done great work- onwards and upwards.

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

Your sustained efforts within this category of the competition should be commended – well done. The work and efforts of participants in the Gateway Activation scheme are again to be admired. Business premises were nicely presented throughout especially the Castle and Arts shop. This makes a big impact situated on this focal corner of

the village. The presentation of the barracks was wonderful – allowing one to easily to image the garrison here in previous centuries.

The completion of works at the Famine memorial is to be commended – the inscription here from 1846 is harrowing. It is great to see this project finished after a number of years completing the different stages of this. The outcome of the discussions to enhance the visual appearance of the flood barrier will be welcome as it was disconcerting arriving in this area to know whether or not you could proceed. The concrete landscaping here felt very utilitarian. It was only because the adjudicator had a map, and knew there was river-side parking beyond the ramp, that they were encouraged to drive on. Thankfully they did proceed as the public area here is a delightful part of Clarecastle. Thus, you are encouraged to maintain discussions on this.

The playground was in full use by many members of the community on adjudication day.

The gates to the old hospital have been covered in corrugated iron and re painted over the years – it is suggested that this should be enhanced? The 'little ducks crèche' was brightly presented as you would expect of such a facility. Nearby there were more lovely wrought iron gates on the premises of the home opposite here.

The hoarding by the derelict site north of the bridge looks clean and bright – well done on the work here.

### **Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:**

What was particularly nice about Clarecastle was the number of mature trees in the central green areas of the village. You are implementing a tree planting programme that will ensure more trees are in situ for future generations to appreciate. The competition is moving towards more sustainable planting schemes that provide year-round structure so it was good to see this also reflected in your planting around Clarecastle. There was a lovely display of hanging baskets all along Main Street that work together to make a big impact.

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

The formation of your Heritage & Wildlife team has meant an increase in the number and quality of activities to raise awareness of the wonderful habitats and species of Clarecastle. Are the biodiversity leaflets available online also? Maybe you should have a link to them on your FaceBook pages? Best of luck with the BioBlitz that you are running for Heritage Week. This will be a great way to find out more about the various species of wildlife found in Clarecastle, and should also involve the public and raising awareness of the range of species in the locality. Take care that support straps on some trees are not needed in many areas. These can be removed after a number of years as they can indeed harm the tree that they are there to support by damaging the bark. For example, the silver birch trees at the Famine memorial would need their stays removed.

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

Well done on attending the sustainable waste seminar organised by Clare County Council – no doubt Lorraine Power gave you some good tips. The school is now working on its fifth Green Flag - all of which relate to activities relevant to this category of the competition. Your links with Roche were noted and should be commended and your adjudicator read with interest about their '5s' programme.

### **Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:**

There were some redundant poles in areas such as at the barracks that could be removed. Lamp posts and posts on the bridge on the river Fergus were rusty and need to be addressed. There was also some fresh litter in parking area in front of the Church Park but this should be picked up quickly by the litter patrols. The bin in this car park was full and needed servicing. Banks at the sports complex appeared clean. There were cable ties on nearly every lamp post in Clarecastle, no doubt as a result of the recent referendum. Garden View road has a 'no litter' sign that is covered in sap that needs attention. The sports complex and scouts hall was relatively litter free. The riverside amenity had some dog waste and some fresh litter here.

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

Clarecastle has a surprising number of residential estates for a small town though it is imagined Clarecastle would be a popular place to live! The work of the estate representatives and their achievements were noted. Homes in Aonach an Chláir were nicely presented and the nice trees in Orchard Drive were noted. There was a fenced-off area here that looks as if has been fenced off for some time so perhaps the residents could be supported in having this area finished to enhance this lovely part of town? The flagpoles and flags at MFC seemed a little over-the-top for the entrance to this area. Bright, stylish semi-detached homes on both St Michael's Terrace and Madden's Terrace caught the eye.

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

The lovely cluster of trees on the Skehanagh Road as you approach into the village looked very good. The road-side grass verges were not too tightly mown. It was good to see the grass here being allowed to grow longer on approach roads. It was also lovely to see the large numbers of yellow flag irises and the silver birch trees in this area. This approach provides a sense of place, feels very natural and in tune with the rural setting at the mouth of the estuary. The Old road needs some resurfacing.

**Concluding Remarks:**

It was a delight to adjudicate Clarecastle. You have fully embraced your natural heritage. The village is full of lovely amenities, the streetscapes looked very well and you have worked very hard throughout the year. The energy of your voluntary committee jumped off the application and the extent of projects and achievements for 2014/2015 should be applauded – well done to all involved.