

Tidy Towns Competition 2016

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Cross** Ref: **1930**
County: **Clare** Mark: **203**
Category: **A** Date(s): **09/07/2016**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016
Community Involvement & Planning	60	25
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	28
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	31
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	15
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	10
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	44
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	24
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	26
TOTAL MARK	450	203

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Cross is most welcome to the 2016 Tidy Towns competition. Our records tell us that you last entered the contest in 1987! We are thrilled that you have taken this important step and hope that it will be only be the first of many. You did not fill out much of the form so your mark this year is a base mark to get you started. Don't be discouraged that it is low as you can build on it quickly as you start to get projects done. You are urged to get a copy of the Tidy Towns handbook and familiarise yourselves with the various headings. With your committee try to devise a simple three-year plan, this could be on one page but would simply layout a number of longer term actions under the different categories. As you tick things off you will no doubt see a growth in community support. Your communication will be key to this however. Circulate this report, wear Tidy Towns high viz vests when on work duty, make sure people know that your committee is active and that their contribution is always welcome. Some are put off by meetings and committees but can contribute in other ways. If there is someone in your community with a particular interest in wildlife or resource minimisation use their expertise in those areas. Above all try to make it fun, meeting new people and growing civic pride in getting things done can be most rewarding.

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

The Old School B&B is a welcoming site on arrival to Cross and was looking well with flowers and a fresh coat of paint. Old farm buildings are a nice element of your heritage and are complemented by low stone walls which have been nicely preserved. The old postbox near the church would be enhanced if painted. The church is a lovely building if a bit bare looking. Large tubs with shrubs may soften the effect on tarmac areas. Painting the gates and cleaning the statue would also be worthwhile. The pump is a small but important heritage feature in need of TLC. Foley's Bar and the village shop were well presented. The national school is looking fresh and well cared for. Some derelict buildings will need attention e.g. Danny's and the old shed across the road from here. Work with the owners and Clare county council if needs be in addressing these areas. The GAA pitch is a wonderful facility for the area.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The Loop Head climate is no doubt a challenging one for plants but trees and shrubs do grow. The trick is to look in the surrounding landscape – fields and gardens – to see what is doing well. Sycamore seems particularly resilient to the wind and salt spray but Ash and Hawthorn can also be found. More trees are always welcome in providing visual relief as well as shelter. On choosing the best species get advice on the best locations and how they should be maintained (many sapling trees do not survive their first year). We look forward to hearing more about your community garden plan but this should not be your only focus. As a rural location you would want to enhance those features that give Cross it sense of place. Summer flowers look well on windowsills or particular points of interest. On stone walls (where the wall itself is an attraction) they have little impact.

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

This category is looking for ways in which local people engage with and celebrate nature. This could be through an event, such as a guided walk, or project with the local school. Your location provides many opportunities for exploration of this topic, especially since Loop Head is an important area for nesting seabirds and other marine life.

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

In this heading the adjudicator wants to see how you are thinking about waste generation and ways to avoid this. A little research would reveal a number projects to get you started but this will always be an area of continual improvement. The green flag program, active in many schools, has been leading the way in Ireland for some time. Does your local school take part? If so provide full details here. If not try to encourage them to take part – it can be most rewarding for all parties. For more helpful tips and case studies from other Tidy Towns entrants please take a look at <http://localprevention.ie/tidy-towns/>

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The town is generally tidy. Watch out for fly posting such as posters for the circus and remove as appropriate. A lamp post at a housing estate is to the 'Kildare side' and should be straightened. The bring bank was quite clean but it would be worth trying to collect the number of small items such as bottle tops etc. Across from Danny's pub a rusty metal container and other debris including discarded beer kegs creates a very untidy impression. Much of this stuff could be reused or recycled so perhaps could be the target of a cleanup in 2017. Litter control on adjudication day was to a very high standard.

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

A number of attractive housing areas were admired in Cross on adjudication day. These areas did not appear to have names however. It is most welcome that stone walls have been retained in many areas and this is so much better than timber fencing which is out of place in our countryside.

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

On arrival from Kilkee the stockpiles of tyres and heavy machinery stand out against the open countryside. Perhaps some hedging or trees could screen this over time. On the Loop Head side the iron welcome sign is really a unique feature – this should be repainted and cherished.

Concluding Remarks:

We are thrilled that Cross has rejoined the Tidy Towns effort and it was a pleasure to spend some time here admiring your village. We very much look forward to returning in 2017 to check on your progress.