

# Tidy Towns Competition 2016

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Knock**

Ref: **78**

County: **Clare**

Mark: **280**

Category: **A**

Date(s): **10/07/2016**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016
Community Involvement & Planning	60	39
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	36
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	44
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	22
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	15
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	58
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	36
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>280</b>

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

Knock is most welcome back to the 2016 Tidy Towns competition - after not entering in 2015 we are delighted to be invited back to visit your wonderful village. You continue to have a dedicated committee and you benefit from the local CE scheme. You do not list Clare county council as one of your support agencies and it is an important partner, especially where there are longer term projects upon which you plan to work. Have you considered working against a three-year plan? This would allow you to set actions under each of the contest headings. Do refer to the Tidy Towns handbook for more information on how to go about this. Your simple map was very effective in drawing attention to the areas upon which you have been working.

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

It is hard to separate the built from the rural in Knock as the two seem so intertwined. All buildings are so well presented, with freshly painted facades and appearing well maintained. Well done for painting the unoccupied cottage – it looks superb. The street with M. Culligan's seems little changed in 100 years. The Fisherman's Hut is looking well but the remains of an old county flag needs to be removed.

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

Knock benefits from a number of outstanding landscaping features. Not least among these is the wide mouth of the Shannon. The pier is reminiscent of times gone by, no doubt this was once used for fishing. Some heritage information, perhaps some old photos of the area would be welcome. Facing the land there is a wonderful enclosure of mature trees and these provide shelter as well as visual relief. Your small green amenity areas draw these features together very successfully and the adjudicator is most impressed with the way you have presented these - just enough flowers to add a splash of colour without overdoing it; just enough mowing to create an inviting space without being too manicured. New seating is very welcome. Overall this is excellent presentation.

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

You are facing onto one of the most important areas for wildlife in Ireland, i.e. the Shannon estuary, which is home to a wide diversity of species and habitats. Hedgerows and small woodlands are also important areas for wildlife. Your focus should be on these areas and raising awareness of their value. The idea of an information board at the pier would help in this regard. Ensure that herbicide use is avoided as it is so bad for the environment. In one location a whole hedge had been sprayed in this way killing off the wild plants and leaving and unsightly yellow bank.

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

You identify rainwater harvesting and re-use of plastic bags as important projects for reducing resources. This year you have embarked on a new composting initiative and this is excellent. Do persevere with this and get guidance if needs be. The Irish Peatland Conservation Council provide workshops on composting and this could be organised through your county environment officer in collaboration with other Tidy Towns groups in your area. 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 village is very clean and litter control on adjudication day was to a very high standard. Well done on this excellent presentation. Very few tidiness issues present themselves. A faded road sign near the pier should be refurbished. An empty pole near the speed limit sign on the Killimer side should be removed. Contact Clare county council or the ESB to arrange this. These are minor matters however.

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

The housing estate on the Killimer approach is most attractive with its handsome homes overlooking the estuary. Stone boundary walls and neatly trimmed verges enhance the appearance further. It has no name however and perhaps this could be remedied with the bilingual marker made from local stone. The green areas are very well maintained but does such a large area of grass need to be mown? Try to integrate some areas which remain un-mown for the summer months, cutting once in autumn and again early in spring. This not only reduces energy and labour but give some space for insects and wild plants.

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

On approach from Killimer this simple but eye-catching name sign was admired. It is a little too close to the village as it seems to come after the housing estate. On the Ennis side a 'Fáilte' sign does not include your village name. A matching sign to the one on the Killimer end would be most suitable here. Verges and planting here meanwhile create a very good impression.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

It was a pleasure to be back in Knock after a short break to admire this tranquil corner of Clare. We look forward to our return next year so do keep up the good work!