

Tidy Towns Competition 2016

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Labasheeda**

Ref: **79**

County: **Clare**

Mark: **305**

Category: **A**

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

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2015	Mark Awarded 2016
Community Involvement & Planning	60	46	46
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	41	43
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	41	42
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	34	34
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	14	16
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	58	59
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	28	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	35	35
TOTAL MARK	450	297	305

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Labasheeda is most welcome to the 2016 Tidy Towns competition. Many thanks for your entry form and additional information. There is a great sense of energy emanating from your application form. You have a long pedigree in the Tidy Towns competition and it is wonderful to read how you think this has resulted in the renewal and reinvigoration of the community. We hear so often in the media that 'rural Ireland is on its knees' but clearly this is not so. You are scoring highly in the contest and deservedly so but at this level it would be expected that you have a three-year plan. Your page entitled 'long-term projects' and 'issues faced' shows that some thought is being given to the future but a three-year plan would be set out under each of the contest headings - identifying actions, timetables and responsible persons. Do refer to the Tidy Towns Handbook for more guidance on this process. Your map was a little schematic and could be improved. If there is an artist in your midst why not draw a scale map showing all the main features? A copy of this could be used each year with coded markers showing where projects have been carried out. This is carried around the village by the adjudicator so should be on a loose sheet. Your many festivals and social events were admired and the impression is one of a vibrant community embracing its future.

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

It is impressive how you engage with your heritage and celebrate the past, without being moored in it. The interpretive panels are wonderful in this regard. You have been very active over the past year, painting and renovating. Well done for all the hard work that has gone into this. The enhancement of derelict sites is especially welcome. Do feel free to use before and after photos in future applications as this shows the adjudicator the impact of what was achieved. The lovely school was very well presented on adjudication day with a fresh tricolour, neat lawns and colourful flowers. St Kieran's church is another fine feature. The community centre is also well presented. Some loose cabling coming out of the wall and left on the ground should be removed. Casey's bar was looking well not least for the Tidy Towns inspired artwork in the window. The old pump is nicely maintained and adorned with pots of flowers.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The proximity to the estuary waters and rolling countryside with trees and hedges are the prime landscaping features in Labasheeda. Your interventions therefore a need to be mindful of this and should always complement it, rather than contrast with the surroundings. In practice this means a muted approach to horticultural or suburban garden styles, choosing appropriate species of shrubs trees and maintaining existing features like hedges. At the pier for instance the view towards the estuary is allowed to stand on its own and it is excellent. Looking towards the village planting is predominantly appropriate but the large thistles are out of place. Fuchsia is not native (it originated in South America) but is nevertheless good for bees. Well done on the Gairdín na nÓg development and the new

planting of an oak tree – make sure it gets plenty of water. Remember to remove rubber ties from trees where no longer needed, e.g. near the pier as these can damage bark.

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

As pointed out in last year's report the Shannon estuary is among our most important wildlife areas. The adjudicator is looking at how you raise awareness of this among the local community. Your panel at the quay showing the birdlife and sea life was admired. Some of these species such as the angel shark and the common skate are extinct from this area now while others such as tope and bass or breeding curlew and lapwing are very rare. When this loss of biodiversity goes unnoticed nothing is done about it. Try to ensure that herbicide use is avoided as it is very bad for the environment and human health, as well as leaving unsightly dead vegetation.

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

You have many actions under this heading which could be better described as changed behaviours. This is excellent as eliminating waste needs to become second nature, in the way preventing littering has. The book exchange of the post office is especially eye-catching. Well done to the school on their green flag success – do detail the stage they are at so we can give them full credit. You are making great inroads in this area but there will always be a requirement for continual improvement and innovation. You should look at the www.greenyourfestival.ie website for ways in which you can reduce the environmental impact of your events. 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:

You have an active approach to tidiness and litter collection and this is essential to maintain the high standards which are expected at this level of the contest. Well done for these efforts which are clearly visible on the streets of Labasheeda. There are few issues of note but as always for a village of this size improvements are possible. The 'keep your area litter free' sign at the pier should be removed as it is faded and adds clutter. A yield sign on the road from Mountshannon Park is faded and needs to be refreshed.

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

It is heartening to read not only that new families are moving to Labasheeda but that they are getting involved in Tidy Towns! Houses old and new were admired throughout the village on adjudication day and all were presented to a very high standard. The abundance of colourful flower displays on windowsills greatly brightens up these areas. Individually painted motifs on many of these boxes were especially admired. Mountshannon Park is a beautiful housing area overlooking the little inlet. The amenity area is well-kept but stone bed is in need of some weeding.

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

New surfacing on the approach from Kilmurry McMahon was admired. The welcome sign here is a little drab and does not reflect the beauty of the village that awaits. Near the church roses look very well – a new native hedge would be perfect for screening the post and wire fence here. At the Ennis entrance to the village painting the lettering on the welcome stone would make it more legible. Hanging baskets on poles along roadsides are not so suitable for rural locations. Begonias should not be planted at the base of trees, e.g. at the Ennis road junction. The trees and native roadsides needs no adornment.

Concluding Remarks:

It was a pleasure to visit Labasheeda again and spend some time admiring your beautiful village. Best of luck and we look forward to returning 2017.