

Tidy Towns Competition 2016

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ruan** Ref: **86**
County: **Clare** Mark: **305**
Category: **A** Date(s): **15/06/2016**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2015	Mark Awarded 2016
Community Involvement & Planning	60	47	48
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	38	39
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	42	42
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	30	32
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	13	13
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	66	67
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	28	28
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	35	36
TOTAL MARK	450	299	305

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Ruan is most welcome to the 2016 Tidy Towns competition. Many thanks for your entry form with additional information. Ruan is at the higher levels of the contest and at this stage additional marks become harder to win. You have an ambitious and energetic committee and are commended for building further on this in 2016. There is some duplication and repetition in your entry form. The adjudicator needs to know specifically what projects were undertaken in the last year, and each project should be succinctly described once under the most appropriate heading. Projects which are older than the last judging period cannot attract additional points. Greater clarity will help you progress in the contest. Your map is well drawn and successfully highlights the locations of work areas. Your three-year plan is progressing well and the format you have chosen is clear and easy to interpret. Your big development this year under this heading is your new junior Tidy Towns section. This is wonderful. Do make sure the children are given some freedom to express their creativity and innate innovation, your group can learn a lot from them.

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

Please be specific when describing projects: what was done, where and by whom. Feel free to accompany brief descriptions with photographs – as you have done to good effect with the derelict house. The adjudicator can really see the dramatic impact that this has had. Morty Kelly's pub is picture perfect with a fresh coat of paint, flowers and traditional name sign. Dalcassian Ruan Bar is a strong visual presence in the centre of the village. It's not in bad shape but removing dead plants and weeds from gutters and renovating the add on the gable wall would relieve it of its neglected appearance. The church is beautiful and lavishly decorated with flowers. The monument by the old church is remarkable – it would be nice for the visitor to have some information on it origins. The area is well maintained however (although a store of plastic bags and old wooden planks was discarded inside the ruin – these should be removed and reused appropriately). The school is a beautiful building and benefits from superb sports facilities. One enhancement would be to paint its boundary wall and entrance gates

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Well done on the completion of the new landscaping area along the Ennis Road, how is it envisaged that this area will be developed and maintained? Your move towards perennial planting and away from annuals is commended. It is good that you are minimising herbicide use, going herbicide free entirely would send a strong signal to the broader community regarding the health and environmental concerns surrounding these chemicals. There is a line of trees in a field near Morty Kelly's. Some of these are dead and should be removed. Others may no longer needed the supports and these should be taken away. Indeed rubber ties could even damage the trees if they cut into the bark. Eye-catching flower displays were admired at the road junction. It is good that you have used a uniform style

here. Remember that in a rural setting such as this the principle landscaping feature is the countryside with its stone walls and hedges. Your work should aim to complement these.

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

You have a rich local natural heritage upon which you can draw inspiration. You have done a lot in terms of building homes for many of the animals with which you share your community! Your focus should shift to awareness raising measures which increase people's appreciation of these areas. Work with the Vincent Wildlife Trust or other organisations in arranging public events. The school is indeed fortunate to have such a programme of monthly nature walks and a wildlife week. This is really the way to go in this category. You mention invasive species – are these an issue in your area and if so how are they being addressed?

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

Tree planting and other landscaping projects should be detailed under that category. As the workshop was held during the previous judging period it unfortunately cannot attract further points. Recycling is considered standard practice and so the focus should be firmly on how waste can be eliminated. Your water harvesting system is an excellent way of saving on valuable resources. Well done to the school for embarking on the green flag journey – this is a really important development for your village and do keep us posted on your progress over the next year. 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 extensive programme of litter picking and monitoring and in this way you are maintaining such a high standard of presentation. You are commended also for acting on recommendations in previous reports. Hopefully the ESB will respond to your request to remove the rusty pole. The yard across from Morty Kelly's is looking better thanks to your intervention. The village is very neat and tidy and there are a few issues of note. Litter control on adjudication day was to a very high standard, well done. The bottle bank is very clean although bottle tops etc will need to be picked up periodically.

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

Ruan is endowed with a number of attractive residential areas. Tuar Mór was admired for its stone wall and simple but attractive entrance display. New trees here have support stakes but are not attached to them. The native area at the back of the estate is a nice feature. Some of the trees planted near here are dead and should be removed. Homes further along this road were admired for their attractive stone boundary walls.

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

Planting ivy and honeysuckle is an excellent way of screening unsightly walls. The approach from Ennis is a stunning combination of mature trees, stone walls and colourful planting. Your new landscaping bed was admired here and will no doubt mature with time.

Concluding Remarks:

Ruan is a charming rural village and you are doing energetic work in enhancing your local environment. It was a pleasure to spend some time here and do keep up the good work.