

# Tidy Towns Competition 2016

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Leixlip** Ref: **376**  
County: **Kildare** Mark: **301**  
Category: **G** Date(s): **09/07/2016**

|   | <b>Maximum<br/>Mark</b> | <b>Mark<br/>Awarded 2015</b> | <b>Mark<br/>Awarded 2016</b> |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Community Involvement & Planning          | 60                      | 52                           | 52                           |
| Built Environment and Streetscape         | 50                      | 36                           | 37                           |
| Landscaping and Open Spaces               | 50                      | 38                           | 38                           |
| Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities  | 50                      | 33                           | 34                           |
| Sustainable Waste and Resource Management | 50                      | 16                           | 19                           |
| Tidiness and Litter Control               | 90                      | 51                           | 50                           |
| Residential Streets & Housing Areas       | 50                      | 35                           | 35                           |
| Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes           | 50                      | 35                           | 36                           |
| <b>TOTAL MARK</b>                         | <b>450</b>              | <b>296</b>                   | <b>301</b>                   |

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

Leixlip is welcome to the Supervalu Tidy Towns competition 2016 – your 11th year in the competition! There are many positive changes happening in Leixlip and we enjoyed our visit to see some of them. Thank you for your entry form, which was clear and concise. Well done for taking on board previous recommendations with regard to the presentation of your information. This and a good map are particularly crucial in a large area such as yours, so that we don't miss pertinent information. The map is excellent – could you please just provide a key on a page beside your map so we can at a glance what the numbers refer to instead of having to search the entire entry form for each one. Your various photographs gave us an insight into your recent activities. Your colour coded Tidy Towns Plan (2016 – 2018) is brief but effective. Do ensure you are giving equal focus to all categories if you wish to progress. You might consider laying out the next plan under the category headings. Some of your plans are a little vague – e.g. 'paint the town'. Try to keep them as specific as possible so you know when they're completed!

Your committee structure is very organised and shows strong linkages across the community. Please give us an idea of the number of volunteers you have in your contacts list that you can call on for specific tasks. Your committee is forging good links with outside agencies such as Kildare County Council. Your participation in their public participation network strengthens the relationships. You are well supported by several local businesses, some of which sponsor your various activities. You are engaging well with many of your local clubs and schools. Do you have a School Liaison officer to focus on schools/youth outreach? You communicate your messages through various traditional channels as well as Facebook and text alert. Your St. Patrick's Day Parade is a fun way of raising your Tidy Towns profile and letting others know of the wide range of projects you cover.

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

Your recent win (2015) in the Intel Pride of Place Awards has enabled you to progress with the planning and design of your new Heritage Trail signage. The photo sample looks great – we look forward to seeing the completed project in the near future. We are delighted to hear that the Salmon Leap Inn reopened its doors after being closed for a number of years. You are engaging with local businesses with regard to presentation of shopfronts – well done. This can make such a difference to the whole ambience of the streetscape and make it inviting or not. We loved the brightly coloured toy shop – however the fake plants jarred somewhat with the lovely presentation. The painted junction boxes are a cheerful touch. All was neat at Supervalu apart from a pole near the entrance requiring attention. The Elixir House Hotel is a fine building. Both the Bank of Ireland and Credit Union look very well. So too does the Ryedale Tavern – we were sorry to learn that it is now closed for business. Murphy's pub is a blaze of floral colour – however this adjudicator is not a fan of the non-transparent window and feel it makes the streetscape a little unwelcoming.

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

Your move towards more permanent planting is a sensible approach that will lower your maintenance, give year round interest while at the same time supporting your local biodiversity. This is improving the overall appearance of Elixir. The Linear Park is a lovely stretch that has great potential in terms of providing welcoming amenity space and also connecting up various part of the 'village' in a scenic way. We look forward to an update on this project. Your prize of a consultation with and landscaping expert is also helping you to make the right decisions with regard to planting and landscape design – a very useful prize indeed! Further tree planting at the church car park is noted. The wildflower meadow at the mass steps is a wonderful sight. Maintenance of the newly planted area opposite Hewlett Packard is noted. We look forward to seeing the completed 1916 Commemoration Garden text time – work so far was impressive. The new park furniture near the Scout's Den looks great. Old 'Sponsored by' labels on nearby planters should be removed as they are illegible and only look untidy.

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

Thank you for your clarification in relation to the Biodiversity Park. You have done a lot of good work here. Did you seek expert advice in relation to establishing a wild flower meadow? It is not normally recommended to grass seed these areas as the grass is competing with the wild plants. On the other hand, your decision to scarify the area at Old Hill before seeding with wild flowers appears to be the right approach. Remember that nettles are bee-friendly plants and that briars would be encouraging for wildlife. We acknowledge that you need to tidy up these areas – it is a tricky balance to maintain. Have a look at the following link to the recently launched National Pollinator Plan – it should give you some practical guidelines, also it is no harm to show the adjudicator your awareness of this important document. [http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/projects/irish-pollinator-initiative/all-Ireland-pollinator-plan/Your significant maintenance work at the Rye river walk](http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/projects/irish-pollinator-initiative/all-Ireland-pollinator-plan/Your%20significant%20maintenance%20work%20at%20the%20Rye%20river%20walk) is ensuring the pathways here remain clean and accessible to all. Well done for joining the Kildare Bat Group Bat Box scheme. Keep us posted on local bat activity. Wildlife interpretative signage was in good order. Some of your photos are quite dark and difficult to make out.

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

Leixlip is making good inroads in this category – considered efforts have been made to reduce water use by reducing number of planters and installation of water butts. Your woody cuttings are being mulched for use on beds. Your partnership with the local farmer to feed the goats your green waste is an innovative one as is the reuse of coffee beans from the café! Both your charity shops also provide a wonderful opportunity for residents to pass on (or purchase) items for reuse. Well done for taking a stall at the car boot sale – you really are practicing what you preach and hopefully raising a few euros in the process! Thank you for the update on Leixlip schools – well done to all the students – we know they are bringing tips home to their families on how to reduce waste, water and energy use. Well done to the students of Confey College for their drive and enthusiasm – it is not always easy to maintain this with 2nd level Green Schools programmes. We wish them success with the Young Environmentalist Award and congratulate the Junk Kouture finalist.

The findings from your Food Waste survey make for interesting reading – we look forward to hearing about your follow up on this. Some groups have organised practical 'taste it don't waste it' type workshops, where recipes from leftovers and 'zero waste' cooking is demonstrated. Perhaps the active Comfrey College students could run a competition for best recipe from leftovers. There are lots of practical tips available on [www.stopfoodwaste.ie](http://www.stopfoodwaste.ie) Leixlip has good bus and train links so promoting sustainable travel is possible. The new bicycle lockers at the train station make this option even more feasible. Your committee efforts to car pool are also noted. No doubt the school children are conducting 'walk on Wednesday' and similar initiatives as part of their Green Schools Travel Flag.

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

Litter control was fairly good throughout the village and surrounds (apart from minor occurrences in a few areas) so well done to all involved in your ongoing clean ups and tackling of illegal dumping in conjunction with Kildare Co Co. Litter and illegal dumping is an ongoing challenge for you – your perseverance is lauded. Can you get Residents Associations to 'adopt a road' near their entrance? Do other groups/clubs/companies 'adopt' certain stretches of road? You have a large catchment to cover. Well done to the Leixlip & District Anglers who carry out an annual clean-up of the Rye river. You are persisting in your efforts to combat dog fouling by changing behaviour among dog owners. The fact that only segregated materials are collected by Kildare Co Co ensures that quality recycling results. Your signs are a good reminder that is volunteers from the community that are cleaning up other people's mess.

You are keeping both graffiti and flyposting under control. We note that you cleaned all signs in May of this year. Your 'before' and 'after' photos of the mass steps shows the difference a coat of paint can make in improving the overall appearance of an area. Unsightly bin storage should be screened off near Imperial Confectionary, adjacent to the car park. Bins were overflowing at Ralph Square. Outside the Indian Kitchen was quite weedy.

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

Residential areas were well presented overall. You have a large number of attractive housing estates. You are working very well with your many Residents Associations, some of whom are very proactive. Well done to those that have gone the extra mile with planting around their entrance and in other key areas. The painted boxes and mix of planting at Avondale caught the eye. Weedy kerbs and minor littering were observed at Woodside. River Forest has lovely neat greens with some attractive tree planting. Rye River was neatly presented. Leixlip Park, Elton Park and Castletown have all made great efforts with colourful entrance planting. Well done to all involved and keep up the good work.

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

Your many approach roads were generally well maintained and roundabouts landscaped for visual impact – important to give a positive first and last impression of your town. You are constantly striving to improve them in conjunction with other stakeholders through clean ups, tidying up and planting. We acknowledge the completion of the old stone wall recapping from Pound St (was this included last year?), also the painting of the Confey Cemetery wall since last adjudication. Further landscaping efforts at the Gleneaston Road enhances this approach. The Arthurs Way fingerposts are in good order. The Grand Canal Way is clearly highlighted. We felt there could be increased connectivity to the river.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

We are delighted to note that Tidy Towns is increasing community spirit in Leixlip and giving various groups the platform to work together for the greater benefit of the town. Keep up the good work and we wish you well with future projects.