

# Tidy Towns Competition 2016

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Carrick-on-Shannon** Ref: **543**  
County: **Leitrim** Mark: **320**  
Category: **D** Date(s): **12/06/2016**  
**13/08/2016**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2015	Mark Awarded 2016
Community Involvement & Planning	60	49	49
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	45	46
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	46	46
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	31	31
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	23	23
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53	55
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	29	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	39	40
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>320</b>

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

Many thanks for your extremely comprehensive submission and clear map all carefully sealed in a plastic folder which were very useful on adjudication day. The cover photograph on your submission entry form of the Famine Pots was extremely poignant. Your introduction made for very interesting reading and the importance of the pleasure craft industry is obviously a most significant and important to the town. In recent years the town has become extremely important from an arts and crafts perspective. The annual raft race looks like a lot of fun. The Tidy Towns Committee seems like a very organised group to judge from your description of your frequent meetings and organisational days. The schools art competition seems like a very good idea as does your Best Kept Estates competition, which hopefully will bear fruit-competitions such as these have proved very successful in towns and villages throughout the country in the past, so it is good to see that they are being re-activated. The idea of using social media is an innovative and clever one. You would appear to have a very strong working relationship with both Leitrim County Council and Roscommon County Council, due to your unique geographical location, which must be very useful in terms of getting things done! The concept of the calendar was a good one and we were pleased to hear that you had donated proceeds to the Historical Society in order to help them with their fine work at the Famine Graveyard. You appear to have a deal of support in terms of sponsorship from the local businesses in the area. Congratulations on your Purple Flag Award. It is indeed an achievement to keep the town bright and clean when it is such a popular destination for weekend nightlife.

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

The many buildings of the town and its approach roads look extremely well on the day. These included public as well as commercial buildings. The main streets look extremely colourful and busy. Despite the ongoing expansion of the town it still maintains its unique charm and character. St Mary's church in its prominent location on Main Street creates a strong impact with its fine sweep of steps. The Dock area and market place were vibrant and busy on the day. You show an obvious and deserving pride in the architectural heritage of the town and the walking tour is certainly a very interesting one. It was interesting to read of Leitrim County Council's development of the Cultural Quarter. This will be a fantastic facility for the town. The undergrounding of cables will pay dividends in years to come. New paving and footpaths will also make a strong impact on overall presentation. It was good to hear that you have consulted with a Conservation Architect in relation to your protected door surrounds. The extremely unique Costello Chapel is a most fascinating set piece to have in the centre of the town. It is interesting to note that the upper levels of buildings have been restored to accommodate weekend visitors – this certainly makes for important 24 hour activity within the town. You show a great interest in the various heritage buildings throughout the town, particularly in relation to their lime stone surrounds and railings which shows a great sense of awareness of their importance. Scoil Mhuire looked very well apart from its boundary wall and railings which looked a little stained and should be painted before next year's competition. The Community School looked very well on the day.

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

Landscaped areas throughout the town looked extremely well and this is an aspect of the competition that you obviously enjoy! This has been a strong category for many years. The three and five tiered floral displays throughout the town were noted and admired. The many well maintained roundabouts on approach roads make a strong impact in this category of the competition. The auricula project is an extremely interesting one and it was impressive to hear of your work in this regard. The participation of junior members in the work of the committee is extremely impressive-it's important that all members of the community-and particularly the younger ones-get involved-after all, it is their future! It was marvellous to note that you had managed to do extremely worthwhile work in cleaning up following the flooding of the Shannon earlier this year. Well done to all concerned. You are extremely fortunate to have such an innovative horticulturalist on your committee. His work in relation to biodiversity is particularly impressive.

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

The activities on the river Shannon obviously play a strong part in this category of the competition. The very active walkway beside the river was being fully utilised despite the unpredictable summer weather. This is an extremely fine and marvellous natural facility to have throughout the town linking as they do your various open spaces and parks. Your work in relation to pollinator plants to attract butterflies and bees is commendable. The new wildlife information panels are extremely informative and attractive for visitor and resident alike. The swift survey was an interesting one and the erection of the four Swift boxes is commendable. We were pleased to hear of Scoil Mhuire's bug hotel. The allotments at Breffni Resource Centre are an excellent idea and we were interested to hear of their gardening classes, which are a fine idea and very beneficial to the local community. The wildlife nature art competition for schools is a clever and interesting one. The bird boxes and wildflower meadow are also fine projects in this category

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

We were pleased to note that all three schools participate in the Green Schools programme. The fact that they are registered with an Taisce is also to their credit. The work of Breffni Resource Centre in relation to dog fouling is commendable. This is an endemic problem throughout the country. The work at the Bush Hotel sounds very interesting and obviously is paying dividends in relation to economics at the hotel. Congratulations on the numerous awards in relation to this work. It was good to hear of the continued sponsorship of the segregation bins. Work in relation to the Food Cloud by the local supermarkets is highly commendable. Your work in relation to segregation of litter and waste is also applauded. We were pleased to hear that there are almost 7000 brown bins in use throughout the county

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

The town generally looked neat and ordered on the day. The dog fouling project has been mentioned elsewhere in this report. The audio message device certainly sounds like it is working! The Purple Flag project and your award in November last is extremely clever and unusual and congratulations are due in this regard. The ambassadors obviously do very good work. High volumes of visitors can cause major headaches for committees so it was great to hear of the success of this project! Congratulations on your participation in the Spring Clean and your Tuesday evening projects sound like they are also paying dividends. Good luck in relation to your effort to get more areas to become involved in the Adopt a Road-this scheme is proving successful in other centres. The Keep Cup project is an interesting one that appears to be being taken on board by many towns and villages throughout the county. Work at the Oil Depot is commendable – congratulations to the volunteers concerned. The mural behind the Landmark Hotel is attractive and unusual however it will need some maintenance work before next year, as it is beginning to deteriorate. Weeds were also noted growing at its base. Generally the town is very well-controlled in terms of litter and tidiness despite its high volumes of visitors both along the waterways and for stag and hen weekends – the town is certainly a very popular spot!

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

Both one off houses and housing estate on approach roads were generally maintained to a high standard on the day. The many street houses along the streets of the town were also generally well maintained. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the Best Kept Estates competition is obviously paying dividends. It was pleasing to hear that you are devoting more time to this particular practice. The new name stones at the various estates of the town are a very good idea and that to Shannon Lodge was particularly interesting and unusual. Congratulations to Prior's Point, Glas na hAbhainn, Mount St Joseph and Summer Haven in relation to their awards in the Best Kept Estates competition.

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

The approach roads of Carrick on Shannon are generally welcoming and attractively presented. The Adopt a Road initiative is obviously paying dividends and hopefully this can be expanded as planned. Congratulations on your new signage. The new crossing areas at Bridge Street hopefully makes for better road safety. The new footpaths and paving have been noted elsewhere in this report. Congratulations on your new fencing on the Leitrim Road-this will make a big difference in terms of presentation. The Smart Travel initiative is a very interesting one and certainly people seemed to be using it to great advantage of the day. The boardwalk is a fantastic facility to have in the town centre and is well used in its marvellous situation right at the water's edge. The water feature at the upper level of

Market Square as it leads up to the Dock area has been blocked off from access-has this proved a health and safety issue in the past?

### **Concluding Remarks:**

It's always a pleasure to visit the vibrant and attractive town of Carrick on Shannon. This year didn't fail to disappoint. There is obviously a keen level of community involvement within the town to judge by its appearance on the day. Congratulations to all concerned.

### **Second Round Adjudication:**

It was this adjudicator's first visit in many years to Carrick-on-Shannon so we admired the many positive changes that have taken place in the intervening period. Congratulations on your achievements to date in the competition and for reaching the top echelons. Carrick was a hive of activity on the day of our visit. The highlight for us was observing how Carrick-on-Shannon has really embraced the majestic Shannon river and sensitively developed the riverside as attractive and accessible amenity areas for both locals and visitors to enjoy. The strategically placed mixed flower beds and the timber boardwalk at the Linear Park were particularly impressive. Tree planting efforts were noted throughout our visit – a wonderful investment for the future of the town. The clever design of the Cumann na mBan bridge enables visitors to have a wonderful vista of the river and marina. The well-maintained seats here are a welcome addition. On the Roscommon side of the bridge, all was in excellent order at the Cortober Riverside Park. Information panels on flora and fauna were clean and colourful – further helping to raise awareness of your rich natural environment. You are commended for the positive way in which you are embracing the challenges of working within two Local Authority areas. Carrick residents and volunteers are also commended for keeping the town so clean – we were pleasantly surprised at the absence of litter in most areas of your tourist town – well done to all involved. There was just a couple of bins full to the brim – one in the Town Park inside the gate (Marina side) and one down at the riverside. This needs to be closely monitored in order to avoid serious littering. The town itself has a mixed quality of shopfronts – we would encourage you to continue your lobbying of business owners to maintain their premises to a high standard. This makes the town more welcoming for all. Some buildings that caught the eye included Dunne's Bar, Reynolds butchers, The Bush Hotel, Flynn's bar and the newly opened Barrel Store. The AIB was very neatly presented; however this adjudicator would personally prefer no flowers to the plastic alternatives on display! The town has some lovely civic spaces and heritage buildings at the end of the St. George's Terrace including the County Council offices, Court House and The Dock. It is wonderful to see some of your fine buildings being put to good use such as the charming Victoria Hall restaurant and the newly opened Georges St Restaurant. The Market Yard is another lovely space that was busy on the day. However the information sign inside the gate looks tired and could be refreshed. The historical trail gives a welcome insight into the town's interesting history. The new paved footpaths on Bridge St and Quay Rd enhance the streetscape. Hopefully funds will be made available to carry out similar work on Main St and enhance the overall appearance here. Some of your pathways are narrow in this area and attention should be paid to sandwich boards and other items being placed on the street, so that they don't impede access. The nearby recycling banks were busy and some attractive screening was observed here – unfortunately there was one black bag dumped here. All was in neat order at the fire station. The lovely St. Mary's church was admired with its imposing situation and clever use of landscaping. The corner at the Main St/Church lane junction would benefit from further enhancement – it has an unfinished look to it. The poignant little Memorial Chapel in the midst of the bustling street was admired. The high standard of presentation at the Landmark and Cryan Hotels enhances the attractive by-pass road. The colourful buildings and small businesses along this stretch also contribute to this positive impression. As you are at such a high level in the competition, we would recommend that you increase your focus on the SWRM category and raising awareness of ways in which Carrick-on-Shannon residents can cut down on waste, energy and water. Promoting sustainable travel is another important aspect. The KeepCup initiative is a good one to include here as it cuts down on use of disposable cups (you included under 'Tidiness & Litter'). Dog fouling initiatives should only be included under 'Tidiness & Litter Control' – they have no relevance to the SWRM category. The wonderful planting on the Dublin Road roundabouts give a wonderful first impression from this approach road. Your map is excellent and would be even more useful if it included a key/legend. There is also potential to improve the layout of your weighty appendices folder, ensuring that all information is concise, relevant to the current year and visible to the adjudicator. Please remember to submit a copy of your 3 Year Plan each year. Thank you Carrick on Shannon for a wonderful presentation and we wish you well with future projects.