

Tidy Towns Competition 2016

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dromod** Ref: **314**
County: **Leitrim** Mark: **322**
Category: **B** Date(s): **11/06/2016**
13/08/2016

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2015	Mark Awarded 2016
Community Involvement & Planning	60	44	45
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	43	44
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	44	45
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	32	32
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	20	21
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	65	65
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	31	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	39	39
TOTAL MARK	450	318	322

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Your documentation was clearly neatly presented in bound copies and clearly showed your plans and intentions for the village's future under every aspect and category of the competition. This being its last year, running from 2013-2017, we look forward to seeing your new 5 year plan with your 2018 entry. Your map was very clear and helpful on the day. It was also most helpful that you had clearly highlighted any new projects. It was particularly heartening to see the strong use of the Irish language throughout. The level of community spirit is evident both in your backup documentation and in situ on the day. The setting up of a Junior Tidy Towns committee is a great idea, as it is their own future within the village that they are ensuring.

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

We were delighted to hear of new programmes in relation to the conservation of heritage buildings in conjunction with Leitrim County Council. The cleaning of gutters and painting of buildings makes a strong visual impact on the visitor to the village. It was good to note that you also include gateways and outbuildings in your scope of work. The emphasis on the appropriate use of colour is most commendable. Do ensure that external render is not removed from traditional vernacular buildings to reveal the stonework below. This is not only inappropriate from a conservation point of view but can lead to structural problems with water penetration. There are a number of empty premises at the retail area beside the Brandywell. Hopefully these will be occupied and working again in the not too distant future. The Brandywell looked attractive as did Tot's Haven, with its magnificent floral displays to the grassy area to its front. The marvellous modern Primary Care Centre is striking in its timber clad façade. Harkin's Bistro at the harbour was smartly presented. Hunt's supermarket and the Copper Still were also well presented. The thatched building was admired, as was the old garage and petrol pump, the retention of which is commendable. Cox's pub was well maintained and busy on the day.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

This is a category of the competition which you obviously enjoy! There is an abundance of attractively landscaped spaces throughout the village. Of particular note was the area in the vicinity of the harbour which has matured nicely. The landscaped spaces around the Cavan and Leitrim Railway and the working modern railway station was also marvellous. Individual landscaped incidental spaces throughout the village make a strong impact as the visitor travels along, adding areas of interest. The relatively new ash trees on the Roosky approach were coming along well. Planting in its gravelled area by the bridge was admired as was the "Dromod" box hedging sign. The Sensory Garden is a wonderful facility, as is the communal orchard, edible hedging and community allotments, all of which encourage the active participation of all members of the local community.

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

The marvellous walks of the village such as the Old Coach Nature Road and River Walk are a fantastic facilities to have for both resident and visitor alike. An abundance of wildlife was evident, naturally enough, at the harbour area. Of particular note being the ducks who seem to have a good relationship with all the busy boating community! We look forward to seeing the new bird houses when the schools have completed them. This is another strong category of the competition where you show a keen interest in the promotion and maintenance of existing habitats and species. You would appear to work closely with Waterways Ireland in relation to the conservation of the fine natural waterways within the village environs. The wildlife enhancement plan is a marvellous idea and you seem to have a clear objective in relation to this category.

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

You evidently have a strong commitment to the future of the village in relation to its sustainability and commitment to the environment. The new Zero Energy Information Stand at the unoccupied shops is a great idea, making use, as it does, of otherwise empty properties that would look neglected and uncared for. The presentations on climate change, sustainability, recycling etc at your meetings are also fine ideas and obviously pricing very popular. We were delighted to hear that the Green Flag Initiative continues to prosper and that Annaduff national school have both their energy saving and litter flags. Rainwater harvesting was evident at the harbour. The Stop Food Waste and Coffee Keep Cup initiatives are all proving popular throughout the county. Many thanks for all your submissions in relation to this category of the competition which show a high level of awareness and concern for the village's future. The community allotments are a particularly fine concept.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The standard in this category was generally good on the day. Litter control was generally very good, apart from the very odd paper on the Carrick on Shannon Road. The retention of the old Bruscar litter bin on Main Street is commended, although it would benefit from a repainted before next year's competition. These are becoming a rarity throughout the country, so it was marvellous to see it had survived. There were many small scale recycling bins throughout the village which is commendable. Quite a lot of weeds were very evident at the kerb to the car park at the harbour. The heron mural was admired but its backdrop gable should be painted before next year. The targeting of problem areas is a good idea to focus your efforts. Many thanks for all the information in relation to the National Spring Clean statistics and your Pick it Up and Bin it Camoaign and Weed U Pick for Free campaign. The latter is particularly laudable given that it encourages the reduction in the use of harmful weed killers.

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

There are a large number of new housing estates throughout the village which are generally in good condition with well maintained gardens and fresh facades. It was good to note that these appear to be filling up in terms of occupation levels. The housing stock around Dromod Harbour was particularly admired for its high level of presentation and design. Warren Lodge in the old church was very smartly presented and created a good impression on this category. Clear and simple signage throughout the village makes for a clear and logical means for the visitor to find all the fine facilities that the village has to offer. We were delighted to hear that many of the new residents get involved in your work. The housing estate opposite the Brandywell was well maintained as was that at Tot's Haven. The Waterfront Holiday Village was beautifully maintained with a floral display incorporating a boat. Do be aware of gables when considering presentation as these can be apparent to the passer by- some were visible gable on route to harbour.

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

Approach roads were generally well maintained and created a good impression. The Mohill road was well maintained with well cut verges. The relatively new trees and attractive open space at the village nameplate was admired along this road. However, the signage beyond was a little faded. The directional signage from the Roosky approach was somewhat obscured by overgrowth and had a little green staining. The ongoing maintenance of street furniture is commendable, as their appearance can make a strong positive or negative impression depending on their standard of presentation. The new LED lighting on the Old Coach Road is a fine initiative. Work with Leitrim County Council in relation to the maintenance of the children's playground at the Primary Care Centre is commendable-co-operation and teamwork make all the difference in ensuring the best possible outcome. Attractive timber fencing at Cul na Sraide on the Carrick on Shannon approach was well maintained and the structure incorporating purple pergolas on this side was admired with associated planted area.

Concluding Remarks:

It has been a number of years since this adjudicator has had the pleasure of visiting Dromod and it was a pleasure to note that despite the intense development and construction during the Celtic Tiger years it has managed to maintain its unique charm.

Second Round Adjudication:

It was a pleasure for this adjudicator to visit Dromod for the first time. You really have made the most of your stunning setting and have created an attractive destination for visitors to enjoy. There was a strong sense that Dromod residents are proud of their village. A very clean and tidy presentation was evident throughout. The lovely 'welcome' signs give a sense of arrival – just be careful that your planting doesn't obscure the village name. The

newer residential developments blend in well, made even more welcoming by their impressive landscaping and neat open areas. Businesses are also commended for their obvious efforts. Cox's was particularly impressive and their car park neat and nicely landscaped. Walsh's looks closed down but looks well all the same. Walsh's Properties is not up to the surrounding high standard. The Brandywell is made more welcoming by its vibrant flower displays. Clever use of planting further up the hill draws the eye away from the vacant shops here. The newly paved footpaths improve the overall appearance of the streetscape. The cycle lanes are a welcome addition. It was lovely to read the brief history at various points of interest – including the former Garda Station. It would be wonderful if this finds an occupant soon. The nearby butterfly garden, edible hedging and community allotments were admired. Awareness signage was excellent here. The recycling centre was in excellent order – the use of colourful planting to enhance the area works well. A little weed control is required along the base of the GAA wall. Dromod has some charming heritage buildings that lend Dromod its unique character. We admired the lovely Warren Lodge. On the tree-lined road to Dromod harbour, we observed the clear signposting for your lovely nature walk. The harbour area was busy but clean – a hive of activity. The public toilets would benefit from closer monitoring. The Waterfront Holiday Village further enhances the area with its attractive buildings and expansive grounds. The scenery here is breath taking. Finger posting was excellent throughout the village. You have put great work into making a focal area at the centre of the village through clever landscape design and ornamental features. There is a nice variety of planting here. We particularly enjoyed listening to the sounds of the wonderful water feature. We feel that you have enough ornamental features now in the village centre as any more would look too 'busy'. The modern Primary Care Centre sits well into the landscape. The beech hedge here would benefit from pruning to fence level to give a more cared-for appearance and to complement the clean lines of the nearby building. All was in excellent order at the playground – effective tree-screening of utility services was noted. The lovely old train station was admired. It would be great if the temporary fence could be removed here. The timber fence opposite would benefit from treatment soon. The old petrol pump/building was neatly presented. The derelict thatched cottage is still an attractive village feature – perhaps just weed around the door and gutters before they start to take over. Well done to Crowe's garage on the Carrick-on-Shannon Rd for a very neat presentation. Do ensure that you clearly emphasise your recent work in your application and be clear about what was achieved since your last entry. It was somewhat vague in some instances and we want to award you marks for year on year improvement. Well done Dromod for a wonderful presentation– keep up the excellent progress.