

# Tidy Towns Competition 2016

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Castlebar**

Ref: **512**

County: **Mayo**

Mark: **309**

Category: **F**

Date(s): **23/06/2016**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2015	Mark Awarded 2016
Community Involvement & Planning	60	49	49
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	42	42
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	44	45
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	35	36
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	16	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	51	51
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	33	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	35	35
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>309</b>

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

Many thanks for your entry in this year's Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for a very detailed and well thought-out submission. This was well-illustrated and comprehensive. It may be a little too weighty and its bulk may readily be cut down by the use of double-sided-printing. Please be aware that points may be deducted if some slimming down isn't achieved. The map was very good -thanks very much, but would have been better with a key for the 15 points of interest on the map sheet itself. The adjudicator apologises for having to rip it from its very secure cover but there was no way of carrying the whole entry around Castlebar for the duration of the adjudication. You supply a good level of detail on your group, your partner organisations and your ethos. Many thanks for the plan. While detailed, it was a little hard to read. The same may be said for your entry. While the content is great, the text is a little dense and could be spaced out a little bit more. Excellent pictures help you through it, though and screen grabs and other pictures help too.

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

Some serious work is underway here in Castlebar and this is so evident at the Mall. It has been some years since the adjudicator spent time here and it was great to see the improvements. More (e.g. Hopkin's Road) is on the way. The Spaces Between Initiative is excellent. The Greenway has been a transformative project for you.

There were many fine business premises seen on the day. Carolan's Meats is a lovely traditional shop. Linenhall looks lovely and the sign advertising the sunny courtyard was very good. Cox's and the Cobweb Bar were admired. KIX showed a good blend of old and contemporary. Sloyan's was flying the flag for an upcoming visit. McCarthy's is traditional and so neat. Heatons' full window posters looked very poor, however.

The church railings are in need of attention. Many street name signs are missing. LED street lighting was noted. McHale Park looked very good indeed.

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

Some excellent landscape planting work has been achieved. Examples of this was seen at John Moore's grave and again at the Mall. There is great structure and planning in these as well as some very bug-friendly planting.

Watch out for dead and dying trees at St Patrick's national school. There are several. It is felt that ring road maintenance needs to be standardised - either formal or informal. There is a gap in continuity of planting here. The Town Park is lovely. The box hedging could be better defined. The park was very much in use on day of visit and the playground being enjoyed. The two signs here are really excellent. Pooper scoopers were to hand.

The 1916 commemoration is gorgeous. The willow sculpture was drawing admirers. There was fantastic use of plants at the Sea God Sculpture but could use some evergreen plants to give structure during the colder months. There is very good container planting at the civic buildings. It is recommended that a new line of trees is planted inside the horse chestnut trees at the Mall as long-term eventual replacements.

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

Your submission here is better than it looks. By this it is meant that the structure of your submission in this category doesn't lend itself to any great impact. For example: You are undertaking or assisting/involved with some excellent projects such as the lake maintenance, swift conservation etc. However, these are somewhat buried in the text. Your submission starts with a rather bland comment on native wildflowers that isn't quantified or qualified (e.g. what species and how many) while other, really excellent projects such as the woodland path creation, the Dark Skies designation are way down the list. Please don't take this as criticism but rather advice for reformatting of very good information. Incidentally, we don't generally look upon duck releases as terribly positive but you might check in with your National Parks and Wildlife Service advisor on this. Is the Birdwatch Youth a local or national organisation? GMIT is an excellent partner for this category and the Green Campus a project you can rightly claim. The swift boxes at Linen Hall were seen.

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

Very good submission in this category, Castlebar, well done. This was comprehensive and habitat on any number of waste-preventing and saving projects. Again, the layout was fighting the reader and here some pictures within the text would have been welcomed. The Greenway is an excellent vehicle for smarter travel. 2nd hand Saturday is great, well done. Green Hospitality is exactly the kind of programme we would encourage. Stop Food Waste is such an important project and we would urge you to keep this going.

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

Public awareness and encouraging youth appear to be high among your priorities. Excellent. Keep this up. Your efforts didn't start yesterday. The adjudicator liked the historical picture in amongst the newspaper clippings. Your involvement of 20 groups in your work is telling, as is your efforts in the Mayo County Council anti-litter league. Very good. Litter control was adequate on day of visit. Some fly-tipping and burning was noted near Fr Meehan Place. Watch out for proliferation of commercial signs.

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

The Big Doowupp - love the name, and the ethos. The adjudicator thinks the gist of this is got but more details would have been good. Ditto the Love Castlebar Estates Campaign. This was mentioned but never explained. The adjudicator feels that there is a lot more going on than is properly laid out for the reader.

Some of the estates and other residential areas were visited and the standard was generally high. Manor Village was acceptably neat. Trees need to be replaced at College View whereas good quality tree-planting was noted at Rathvale. The name stone at Lakeview looks well and weed control was good at Rathbawn. Good garden maintenance was noted at Snugboro and good quality tree-planting at Greenfields.

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

The Greenway is a major project for Castlebar and the adjudicator was delighted to be able to try it out on a bike as part of the adjudication. A variety of surroundings, riverside and lovely riparian willows make it very enjoyable, even before you've left the town. New fencing and good surfaces noted here. Castlebar now seeks to link up cycleways and this is a major development too. The roundabouts are now an object of interest for people and you are rightfully devoting energy to this area. The ground cover rose and statue at the Westport Road roundabout was admired.

On the Westport Road, the Experience Castlebar sign is now faded. The Tidy Towns sign needs to be painted. Weed control here was uneven. The Newport / Lannaugh bit of has too much nettle growth. The bike lane on the Newport Road is rather stop-start. Watch out for dead trees on this road. Better bike lanes were noted on the Pontoon Road. There is a missing sign at the junction with Rossmore here. The R310 sign needs to be replaced. The N60 roundabout has too much hard landscaping. Take out two thirds of this and replace with distinctive soft landscaping. There is great landscaping on the R373, adjacent the N5 roundabout. This includes plants such as Salvia need lupins, good for pollinators.

#### **Concluding Remarks:**

Well done Castlebar, a fine display. More points will be coming your way if this progress continues.