

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Moneygall** Ref: **930**
County: **Offaly** Mark: **276**
Category: **B** Date(s): **10/06/2017**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2016 | Mark Awarded 2017 |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Community Involvement & Planning | 60 | 39 | 39 |
| Built Environment and Streetscape | 50 | 37 | 38 |
| Landscaping and Open Spaces | 50 | 39 | 39 |
| Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities | 50 | 24 | 25 |
| Sustainable Waste and Resource Management | 50 | 16 | 16 |
| Tidiness and Litter Control | 90 | 53 | 54 |
| Residential Streets & Housing Areas | 50 | 30 | 31 |
| Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes | 50 | 33 | 34 |
| TOTAL MARK | 450 | 271 | 276 |

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Moneygall is welcomed to the Spupervalu Tidy Towns Competition.

Thank you kindly for the excellent application form and isn't good to see a handwritten document which detailed the work completed and planned with great clarity.

The sketch map supplied was clear and concise and identified all the relevant areas that were included in the application form.

The number of committee members is quite modest but that said it is a very effective grouping judging by the work being undertaken under the main categories of the competition.

In last year's report reference was made to the lack of a 3 year plan and a suggestion was made on how the committee would go about producing one.

Whilst there is an abundance of excellent work being undertaken a simple 3 year plan under the headings of competition would give the committee more focus.

Do refer back to the Tidy Towns Handbook for guidance on how to draw up such a plan.

You have developed good links with a cross section of relevant agencies and of course with Offaly Council.

These links are critical as there are a route to advice, resources and possible funding for specific projects.

It would be good if you developed stronger links with the local national school with a view to forming a junior tidy towns section,

Methods of communication are varied and effective for the community that you are part off.

There is no mention of various forms of social media!

The adjudicator suggests that you assign the social media element of your communication process to one member of the committee.

Thank you for your positive comments on the competition.

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

Moneygall will always be associated with the Barack Obama presidency and indeed that era somewhat heralded the re birth of the village.

The infrastructural and re painting work that was undertaken at the time totally transformed the village from what it was pre Obama days.

Residents and business owners have maintained that high standard of presentation.

Footpaths extending beyond the GGA Club and out to the Motorway Plaza road surface condition of the impact positively on the infrastructure of the village.

Street lighting is good and fortunately the limited overhead wiring does not affect the streetscape unduly.

Some of the parking zone yellow lines in the village need to be repainted.

Information notice boards in the village were well presented and it was good to observe that cycle stands were

available for visitor and local alike

Public buildings such as the RC Church, National School, Garda Station, Health Centre and St Flannan's GAA grounds were well presented and credit is due to the personnel that give of their time for their upkeep.

Good to note that the Church of Ireland Hall has become a focal point now for community based activities.

The Community Hall opposite the Church was in fine condition and that whole area is tidy due in no small way to road and parking areas having been resurfaced in the last year or so.

Regretfully it was sad to note that a number of commercial properties have been closed.

One in particular has had a long association with Moneygall and another thrived during immediate tourism boom that followed the visit of President Obama to Moneygall.

Overall the standard was very good and for the few additions that were made since last year an additional mark is awarded.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The standard in this category was very good and as per your application you as a committee have put lots of hard work in maintaining existing shrub and flower beds and ensuring that facilities such as the amenity park are kept to the highest standard,

You are wished well with the new community garden project and hopefully the planning process won't create any great difficulty for the committee.

If you have not already done so you should make contact with the PPN Secretariat or through one of your local public representatives to see if grant funding is available.

This Garden will be of great practical benefit to the community.

Rose beds at St Josephs Terrace and up towards the Church and lavender beds near the amenity park area were much admired for vibrancy of colour.

Similarly with the picnic area on the Toomevara of the Village where the shrub beds are appealing and would entice people to stop off for break,

Some individual premises had colourful window boxes and hanging baskets and this created a good overall effect.

Sometimes a proliferation of window boxes and hanging baskets can be overdone but it is at the right proportion in Moneygall.

Tree maintenance was mentioned in last year's report and it is good to note that the committee has taken cognisance of what was written and have ensured that young saplings have been well staked and given space to mature.

There are a few shrub beds that need thinning out and existing plants given oxygen to thrive so just be aware of these into the future.

The green area near Elderberry Park could be enhanced a little with additional planting.

As there is no 3 year plan in place as of yet maybe the committee might consider examining the planting needs of the village for the future as a start.

The adjudicator feels that there is more potential in this category but can quite put the finger on what is actually required

Make contact with the local municipal district engineer who will direct you according.

Also it's possible that within your ranks there's is some person with a strong gardening/horticultural background.

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

The key to this category is the need to raise awareness of all the natural amenities in your immediate area.

You have highlighted the bio diversity area in the park and the looped walk both of which were visited by the adjudicator on the day.

There are also a few other areas that could be exploited as well.

For instance the area near the old wishing well is a haven for all forms of wildlife from ant and insects to the noisiest of the bird species Rooks!

It is a bit overgrown with foliage but maybe it could be made more accessible especially for school children to go on mini projects.

There is a little open culvert at the main road junction with Cloughjordan Road that could be planted with wildflowers or indeed it could be the site for the now ubiquitous insect hotel.

Overall the standard was good and as a committee you promote awareness of wildlife in the area very effectively.

Restoration of mark lost last year is the recommended outcome after examination of this category.

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

The essence of this category is to promote the concept of the reduction of the production of waste at source.

Projects submitted should be geared in general to attaining this objective and methods of promoting awareness of the concept should be highlighted.

The projects that you have listed are all relevant and worthwhile but they are ones that are replicated by most centres around the country.

There are many other innovative and creative ideas that could be converted into projects and it would be more than worthwhile to visit www.localprevention.ie to get some further inspiration.

Another source would be the circular economy which can be accessed through web sites such as www.sustainableprocessing.ie and others.

As you received a rather generous increase last year this year's mark remains the same simply because most of what you submitted was included last year.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Some excellent ongoing control and awareness work being undertaken under this category and the village is looking all the better for it.

Great to see that you have built up a very good relationship with the local school and this type of cooperation pays dividends in the long term as kids will take the positives with them into adolescences and adulthood.

Also top marks to you as a committee for discouraging the practice of placing advertising signs willy nilly.

Moneygall has an advantage in that it's a small enough village with a low number of commercial enterprises so it's relatively easy to manage this practice.

At this juncture I would like to compliment the Barack Obama Plaza Management for the manner in which that facility is presented and traffic flow managed so effectively.

A very good standard was attained in this category and it deserves an increase in marks from last year.

There are a few negatives as can be expected but as a committee you are aware of these and no doubt will make efforts to have them improved upon pre next year's competition.

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

This category has taken on greater significance over the last few years since the inclusion of town houses as an integral part of the category.

Moneygall has a large number of village street private houses and all observed by the adjudicator were maintained to a very good standard.

Some of these had shared side entries or archways and with the exception of two these entries were well maintained and free from weeds or clutter.

There are a number of properties immediately on turning at the bridge on the Cloughjordan Road that need to be painted and tidied up.

I would concur with last year's adjudicator's suggestion in relation to the large green area at Rathcarn Estate which incidentally still does not have a name sign!

Residents at the longer established St Joseph's Terrace had their premises well presented with one or two dissenters which is par for the course in towns and villages around the country.

Some very fine and colourful private gardens were noted during the adjudication walkabout so well done to the owners.

Maybe this positive comment might have been best suited to the Landscape and Open Spaces category but it's no harm to state the fact here.

Overall the standard was very good and deserving of an increase in marks.

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

The two main entrances in to the village are in excellent condition and made more so by the fact that the weather was splendid on the day.

The "old" Dublin Road entrance of course is enhanced very much by the Plaza premises which has some excellent landscaping in place.

On the way in the grass verges were cut in accordance with good practice, road surface is good and traffic calming measures are effective.

Name, directional and speed signs were clean visible and unobtrusive.

St Flannan's GAA Club has its grounds in good condition and the entrance brightly painted in club colours black and red.

The Toomevara entrance is as equally impressive with an inviting picnic area to stop at.

Various signs were also in very good condition.

The Cloughjordan entrance was acceptable but some of the grass verges were overgrown.

The standard was on par with last year.

Concluding Remarks:

It was good to visit Moneygall after a few years absence and see how it has maintained its standards.

The Obama influence has naturally waned a little but it has left a good legacy.

You are wished well for the years ahead.