

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Callan** Ref: **987**
County: **Kilkenny** Mark: **259**
Category: **C** Date(s):

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	34	33
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	40	40
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	31	32
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	16	16
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	11	11
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	54	54
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	30	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	41	42
TOTAL MARK	450	257	259

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Callan is welcome back to the Supervalu Tidy Towns competition 2017. Your ten active members meet as required on a project-by-project basis. We would kindly ask you to date your enclosed information – some of the information did not relate to the current year, i.e. since your last entry. The Action Plan related to 'Aug 2014 – Oct 2015' so is no longer relevant. The photos were compiled in 2014 so does not give us any idea of your recent achievements? Do you have a current Plan that sets out your Actions under the category headings. You have the valuable support of local clubs, schools and businesses as well as Kilkenny County Council. You use a variety of channels to communicate your message including parish newsletter, texting and local press/radio. We found your sketch map very useful, however we were a bit confused by the 'planned for 2016' text at the site of your new welcome signs. Please be clear as to what new work has been completed since your last entry so that we can award you marks. Keep up the good work.

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

Callan has an attractive sloping streetscape and some lovely traditional shopfront signs. One example was the 'Callan Motor Garage', which we note is for sale. It would be wonderful if such signs could be preserved. The railing at the Parish Hall will require painting soon. The post office looked inviting. All was in good order at the World War 1 Monument and the Edmund Rice Statue. The seating area to commemorate James Hoban was clean and fresh as was nearby Madigan's Pharmacy. The 'Ceart' building is one example of the fine built heritage in Callan. AIB is another but would look so much better if the disused brackets were removed (if not going to be used). 'O'Brien's' shopfront was especially admired. Other buildings that caught the eye included The Big Wheel, McDowell's Pharmacy, Molloy & Sons Funeral Home, Bank of Ireland and the patriotic black & amber coloured pub. The gates to St. Mary's Church grounds require painting soon. Could you ask the grass cutters to refrain from leaving the pile of grass cuttings just inside the entrance gate here? It leaves a poor impression. We were amused by the 'Fancy Bread' sign at the lovely Fennelly's – unfortunately we just missed getting in for a visit. Keogh's Model Bakery was also admired. Hennessy's Garage has made positive attempts to maintain a neat standard. Schools grounds are impressive. Bunscoil McAuley Rice is neat and colourful. Callan Veterinary Hospital looks great.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

You have nicely landscaped the entrances to the town, around the new limestone signs – this is giving a good first impression to visitors. Window boxes and hanging baskets bring splashes of colour throughout. Residential areas are well maintained with good tree planting. Some verges were in need of cutting. The trees at the Fire Station look well as does landscaping around Aldi. The small shopping centre near Friary Walk is nicely landscaped and has an attractive beech boundary hedge. The entrance to Flagg Lane is lovely, with its black water pump feature. There

is scope for tree planting along the front boundary of the Racquetball Centre. A fine stone wall and line of trees on the way into West court Demesne provides good visual impact as do the street trees along the Main St. A fine stone wall was also observed along here.

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

We welcome the fact that you are creating meadow areas. Is the Meadow Field not managed as a meadow anyway? It didn't appear over-manicured. You appear to refer to plans rather than what is underway or completed. Do tell us so that we can be clear. The old St. Mary's graveyard is probably a haven for wildlife as it is quite overgrown.

If any school is working on its biodiversity green flags, then it is recommended that you try and work together for mutual benefit. Have they carried out any surveys on river or wildflowers? We would be interested in hearing the findings of the fishing club in relation to river habitats. We wish you luck with the proposed walking trail project and look forward to an update next year.

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

Recycling is well established among Callan residents. Any idea what percentage of students now use reusable drinks bottles? It is usually much higher among primary school students.

Do give us a brief update on the schools in relation to Green Flag(s) they have been awarded and/or are working on currently. If you have any community garden of allotments, it would be relevant to include here. These wonderful initiatives provide locally-grown produce with no air-miles, chemicals, energy or chemicals involved. Similarly, charity shops can be included as an example of 'Reuse' in the community. Do you try to conserve water in any way when watering your summer bedding? Is your green waste composted? Do tell us how you raise awareness of the importance to reduce waste, water usage and energy usage. Have the children carried out any related surveys recently in relation to these areas listed? We look forward to hearing of further progress next year.

For further guidance, read the guidelines for this category on www.tidytowns.ie or visit www.localprevention.ie/tidytowns to see what other initiatives are happening around the country.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Litter is something that Callan should focus on. Many areas were good and residential areas were very clean. However there was minor littering observed throughout our visit, mostly food and drinks packaging. We came across several drinks cans! We are a bit confused by your reference to 'Callan Town Council' as we understood Town Councils were disbanded a few years ago. Do you still have this CE worker you refer to in your entry? Is there any voluntary involvement in litter pics on your main streets and roads? Behind the car park wall near the foot bridge was another black spot. Cigarette butts around the base of the trees along the Main St are another issue. We would recommend you keep up a strong litter awareness campaign and try to get local to 'adopt' specific areas. The cleaner it is, the less likely people are to litter. It.

As mentioned earlier, we would ask you to be specific about what you have in the past year only, your 'before' and 'after' photos refer to a wider timeframe.

The old petrol pump opposite the Parish Hall is in a very poor state of repair. Can it be removed? The Callan Montessori Sign is in need of repair. The front corner of the church car park looks somewhat untidy and excessive weed killer has been applied. The Creche car park and over the wall into the meadow is rather neglected looking. A picnic table is in urgent need of attention.

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

Callan has some lovely rows of neat street cottages that enhance the overall visitor experience. We passed many housing developments, mostly neatly presented with well-maintained open grass areas (Laurel Court being an example of the latter). Some good tree planting was also observed. Edmund Rice Park was in neat order; however the name signs here and at a few other residential developments were faded and difficult to make out. Some boundary walls along the main roads would benefit from painting, e.g. along Mill St. Yew Tree Lodge was admired. The Red Robin hedge works well at Friary Walk. This estate has impressive green spaces to the rear. It was nice to see the soccer pitch and good quality seating here. Abhain Ri has some nice planting – just keep an eye on weed control here.

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

The new limestone 'welcome' signs at your approach roads are impressive, enhanced by some attractive planting. These signs help to redefine your boundaries once more, following the construction of the by-pass. The 'Stop' sign at the rear entrance to Super Valu was askew. – this back area could be tidied up a little. Callan has very good street name signage. Bike parking was noted. Any new traffic management plan that would make the bottom end of the town more pedestrian friendly, would be welcome. The stone bridge is lovely (enhanced by hanging baskets) but the street lanterns here required cleaning.

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you Callan for a fine presentation. Keep up the good work.

