

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Hollyfort** Ref: **217**
County: **Wexford** Mark: **251**
Category: **B** Date(s): **17/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	39	39
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	31	32
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	31	32
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	23	24
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	8	10
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	50	51
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	30	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	32	32
TOTAL MARK	450	244	251

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Hollyfort Development Group is very welcome to the SuperValu TidyTowns Competition 2017. We thank you for your entry form, map, and community development plan. Your committee of nine are dedicating time and energy and contributing positively to the local community, helping to instil community spirit by hosting community clean ups, pub quiz, flower festivals and the Spooky Woods walk to name but a few. These events allow people to come together and enjoy camaraderie all to the benefit of the village, community, and local environs. You are fortunate to receive support from other local volunteers and a variety of agencies, bodies, and businesses. That said, we realise that the on-going work load for a committee such as yours is onerous therefore it is important that you try to enlist further helpers and volunteers to join the TidyTowns cause. You communicate well with your stakeholders on social media and your blog. We also noted your community notice board beside the post box.

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

St. John's Church of Ireland is a very pleasing visual statement within your rural village street scene. The neighbouring Hollyfort National School, now the community centre looks well also. The upgrade works to the entrance of the community park was noted and we saw that you have also planted trees in this vicinity. The car park surface was deemed to be quite poor. You are keeping an eye on the derelict petrol station and tend the bed at the forecourt. It is hoped that this prominent site will be used productively in the future. John Cooney's looks well with its traditional exterior. Your adjudicator thought it was lovely to see the the old forge door is still in place. The open drain grill addresses a comment in relation to health and safety mentioned by the adjudicator last year. Your adjudicator was curious about the building with the signage Hollyfort Premier Confectionary (and window treatment); it is not mentioned by you in your application but is also a prominent feature of the built environment in the village.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

There has been a good effort with planning this year and we admired the old bicycle hung on the gate decorated with flowers. There are a large number of landscaped beds within the village so the focus now over the next few years should be on the continued maintenance and presentation of these. We liked the area around Ted's Rest and the planting is certainly pollinator friendly. It is heartening to learn that you are thinking towards the future in terms of trees and are planting trees in and around the village and on approach roads. It is not that often we see good hedge maintenance. Traditional hedge laying is a country craft which has been practiced for hundreds of years but it is just as relevant today as it always has been. We hope that you continue with this good practice. Contact the Hedge Laying Association of Ireland to see if they hold any events you could get involved with or a member of your committee could get trained up to certificate standard (NPTC AO20 Cert) which indicates the ability to lay hedges to a basic standard. The 1916 Cumman na Ban is a nicely landscaped area and a fitting acknowledgement to these

local women. The pieces of farm machinery are nearly concealed with planting this year which somewhat takes away from making this a feature of the landscaped area.

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fíadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádurtha:

Access to the natural amenities is good particularly with the Bann River Nature Trail. The information signs tell us of the Slaney River Valley Special Area of Conservation. We wish you well on your Special Award entry related to the management of Japanese knotweed along a stretch of the river bank. You are using social media well with this category, here's hoping a local ornithologist will be lucky enough to get a good photo of your Lesser-spotted woodpecker or is that a Great spotted woodpecker? Perhaps a woodland walk in association with Birdwatch Ireland would help raise further interest and awareness. You have a number of apt and novel projects under this category. We particularly liked the project you completed with Gorey Writers. We did not see your bee hive during our adjudication but we have ample photographs of bees buzzing around your bright and bold ornamental onions (Allium 'Globemaster') at the junction. Your forthcoming event on local herbs, wild food, and medicine found along the River Bann is another wonderful idea to engage the local community and those further afield. While we note that has been planned and in the pipeline since May please tell us about it next year as it is occurring outside this adjudication period. You are doing well with this category and are organising many interesting, relevant, and eye-catching events. We hope you can keep up the good work.

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

Thank you for taking on board the adjudicator's comments from last year and embarking on a few initiatives under this competition category over the past year. The notice board beside the post box had useful information regarding composting and we note you have developed a composting area using pallets. Perhaps the Stop Food Waste initiative will be better developed for next year. You are creating awareness in other ways too such as promotion of the Wexford Repair Directory and with your ongoing blog which is positive. You have started to reduce your water usage in your planting schemes – well done. Consider adding to these actions for next year and broadening out the scope – for example, perhaps you could make your Spooky Woods Walk or the Christmas Party waste free events? How about a free library in the village, check out www.freeweelibrary.com or make your own from recycled materials? Please try and complete a few new projects next year to help increase your scores in this category.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You have five roads that you enter in the 2K Wexford Clean, well done. Thanks also for providing details of the litter survey carried out by a member of your committee. You should include the findings into a litter control strategy document. Perhaps such a document together with the cleaning and maintenance schedule such as weed control, general maintenance, clearing leaves from drains and pipes, painting etc would help justify an additional community worker if this is something you are in need of. The Bring Banks were clean with no littering. Planting here was admired. Weeds were noted growing out of the ESB building which should be removed. Drinks bottles were noted left at the picnic tables at the river.

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

There is an unfinished estate but it is well concealed apart from the wooden gates, hoarding and bollards. It is positive to learn that the estate will be back on the market again and hopefully will be completed over the next few years. Your adjudicator likes your reference to 'Operation Hollyfort' - and yes, in the spirit of Operation Hollyfort, the majority of residential houses and gardens do you proud!

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

A squirrel greeted us at your welcome sign near the bridge! Someone admired your village so much they stole your welcome sign for their own use! Thanks to the Council for the erection of the replacement sign. The stonework at Donnelly's Corner was admired. The tree lined approach roads and the bridges make the approach to your village memorable.

Concluding Remarks:

We thoroughly enjoyed our adjudication visit. Hopefully the few vacant properties will come into productive use in the future. Your committee is doing sterling work and we concur with last year's adjudicator that your village has great potential in this competition. Onwards and upwards for Hollyfort in 2018!