

Tidy Towns Competition 2013

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dunlavin** Ref: **517**
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **228**
Category: **B** Date(s): **09/06/2013**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2012	Mark Awarded 2013
Overall Development Approach	50	25	26
The Built Environment	50	30	31
Landscaping	50	33	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	17	17
Litter Control	50	26	27
Sustainable Waste And Resource Management	20	8	9
Tidiness	30	18	18
Residential Areas	40	28	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	29	30
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	400	221	228

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2013. We have noted that your committee of nine supported by other volunteers hold regular meetings throughout the year. You also receive support from the local authority, FAS, Tus and other bodies including churches and the GAA. You have made use of local newspapers, website, parish and school newsletters and even text messages to promote your activity. Congratulations for undertaking initiatives with the local school. Many thanks for attaching the map of the area and photographs which we found very useful.

The Built Environment:

It was the first time for this adjudicator to visit Dunlavin and I was pleasantly surprised. The focal point of the town is surely the Market House Library which looks well maintained and is enhanced by the surrounding paving and plant containers. The surrounding buildings are well maintained. The good standard 3D notice board caught our attention. Imaal Hall looked very well. The small park is home to a beautiful large sycamore but the entrance needs modification for universal access. Dunlavin Glass and Hardware looks very well but is somewhat spoiled by the house on the left that needs attention. The church and mature beech tree look splendid.

Scoil Nioclais Naofa has a Green Flag and looks very well. The cemetery is very well kept and is enclosed with a fine stone wall. The Yew tree avenue is distinctive. Unfortunately dumping of old flowers is happening at the rear of the cemetery wall. The soccer club is basic and neat. Jonathan Swift National School has three Green Flags two of which are torn. Can these be replaced? The Credit Union was well decorated and had good window boxes. St. Nicholas Anglican Church is a fine feature of the built environment. A green gate opposite needs to be painted. On Kilcullen Street, the stone wall and house look well. There are nice street signs in the area. There is a derelict building in Kilcullen Street in contrast to the well painted house opposite with its window boxes and hanging baskets. The Fire Station needs to be painted. Despite adjudicator's comments in two previous reports, the entrance to the GAA still needs improvement.

Landscaping:

The wide street at the Market House lends itself to street tree planting that would in fact also serve to frame the building. A small plant container at the arch should be removed or replanted. Lime trees in Stephen Street look well. The planting is a good standard on Fair Green and Cow Green and the stone walls form a good boundary

here. At St. Kevin's Community College we suggest changing the evergreen hedge to beech or hawthorn to harmonise better with the local environment. We note your mention of planting a new hedge of Snowy Mespilus instead of laurel. We were disappointed with the standard of tree pruning on Church Hill and Terrace. In general we advise against planting anything under trees as they compete for water and light.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Appreciating your local wildlife resources is vital in order to achieve under this category. In this regard researching and raising awareness is more important than 'doing' at the early stages. Biodiversity is under threat globally and sadly Ireland is a part of this trend. Learn why this is important and discover if there are areas designated for conservation close to you at www.npws.ie or www.noticenature.ie. Habitats of value include specimen trees, hedgerows, treelines, streams, woodlands and wetlands. You not only have historical riches you also have a rich natural environment and many of these habitats are present in your community. Involve the local school in listing the plants and animals to be found in your area and recognise their significance (native, protected, or alien invasive?). We noted the bat box project for Fair Green.

Litter Control:

We were very pleased to see a high standard of litter control in Dunlavin. Your hard work of daily litter collection is paying dividends. There was some litter in the estate. Thank you for attaching the Litter and Waste Action Plan 2012-2013.

Sustainable Waste And Resource Management:

The activities under this heading that you are actively pursuing are recycling of used phones, batteries, electrical items and clothes. We hope you succeed in getting a bottle bank soon. We wish you well in future endeavours following the consultants' advice. This category is about tackling the growing waste mountain that is creating problems of pollution, unwanted land use, and the use of dwindling resources. It is a global and a local problem. Your town can play its part by first looking at the volume of waste that is generated. Contact your waste contractors who can help with this. Try to find out what is being thrown away and armed with this information you can start to think about how waste can be reduced. Examine the waste pyramid and note the recycling is only the fourth most preferred option after avoidance, reducing and re-using. The use of a mulch mower is commended to help reduce organic waste. Thank you for attaching the Energy Action Plan 2012-2013. We note your reduced use of roundup and your preference to manually remove weeds.

Tidiness:

We note your vigilance against fly posting and that you have decided to remove weeds manually instead of using Roundup. There were some weeds on the Market House that if not attended to can harm the structure. Overhead wires are a problem of visual clutter in this town and some signs needed cleaning.

Residential Areas:

Sparrow Road and Friar Hill estates are well planted and maintained. When trees are established it is important to remove the stakes as the stems can get damaged from the ties or stake and that is required here. Also, we advise against planting anything other than ground cover plants beneath trees because they compete for light, water and nutrients. The use of permanent planting is encouraged rather than relying on annuals which are more time consuming. Red staining mars the appearance of the wall at the entrance. Some private garden boundaries on Church Road need attention. In Chapel View estate some houses need care. Either remove or plant the empty plant containers here. The grass was well maintained, the oak trees looked well as did the Pyracantha which now needs some training. The old water pump is prominently displayed.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

In general the roads and pavement surfaces in Dunlavin are very good. The approaches marked by stone walls and in some cases features such as seats add to the welcome. On Tobar Road the speed limit signs need cleaning and the pole needs painting. The pump is clean and tidy. Kilcullen Street would benefit from a footpath on the Fire Station side. We note that you are seeking permission to paint gates in Church Road.

General Impression:

Well done on your success this year. We hope that this report will provide guidance for future improvement plans and we look forward to receiving your application in 2014.