

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dunlavin** Ref: **517**
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **241**
Category: **C** Date(s): **18/07/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	28	28
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	33	33
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	35	37
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	18	19
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	11	12
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	48	49
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	31	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	31	31
TOTAL MARK	450	235	241

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Dunlavin is very welcome to the 2015 National Tidy Towns Competition. Your committee of 9 together with support from volunteers seems to have a handle on how to address works in many categories of the competition. In order to progress in the competition we would encourage you to develop a village plan based on a 3-5 year framework. A plan can give you a clear picture of what your committee is trying to achieve year by year, how you are going to approach each project and who the supporting agencies will be. This need not be professionally prepared but can be a simple list of your aims and objectives and a clear timeline for projects over the period of the plan. Consider working on this over the next year as this will help focus your activities and also gain you additional marks in this category.

It is encouraging to see how closely you are working and keeping in touch with all the schools, both primary and secondary, in the town. The linkages between you and the younger generations are precious to make and maintain. Have you considered sponsorship of a student of the year award perhaps with an emphasis on community involvement or works towards environmental improvements? This is a very practical way to reinforce the Tidy Towns message.

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

It was the adjudicator's first visit to your town and I very much enjoyed my stroll around your pleasant town centre. The Courthouse is such a key site with its central setting and the planters set off the view from the roadside perfectly. As you note in the submission you have a number of vacant buildings and sites in the town and it is so important to keep them neat and tidy especially where they are in a key location such as those opposite the courthouse. All school buildings and grounds were also well presented and it was great to see the green flag flying at the Jonathan Swift school with its exciting looking recycled tyre feature to the school grounds. The façade of Roche's Chemist is a real addition to the streetscape. Other premises that stood out included freshly painted Tyne House B and B although the bed by the front door here needed attention. A lovely lunch was enjoyed by the adjudicator in the café with no name by the men's shed. A great pop up initiative to bring people into the town on Saturdays. The Dunlavin Credit Union with its lovely window boxes also deserves a mention. The Imal Hall is a key building for you but the Centra adjoining here could use some restraint in its use of temporary banners. The prayer gardens by the Pastoral Centre were a hidden gem and a very nice spot to come across during the adjudicators visit.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The new play area at Green Hollow by the school and Fair green is a great project for the town and was very busy on adjudication day. Well done to all involved in achieving the realisation of this project for the community. Ensure

tree ties on tree recently planted by the Green Hollow entrance, Fair Green, Fire station and the entrance to the Pastoral centre are removed before they damage the trees by constructing trunk growth. Identify locations where specimen and feature trees can be planted to continue with this proactive approach to ensuring the long term tree cover for the town's future generations. The purple planters to the space in front of the Courthouse at market square was admired and adds to the setting here. It is a pity that your Lime trees are only planted to one side of Stephen Street. Could the parking to the other side be reorganised to allow parking bays be installed with tree planting islands breaking them up to allow you establish a line of trees to both sides of the street. The rose planting at the wheel feature here and to the side of the Fair green contribute great colour to the town.

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

As you recognise in your submission you have a wealth of habits surrounding you which have so much potential. The purpose of this category is to help towns promote and understand why their habitats are important and helping local residents value them. We wish you luck with the bee projects planned with the local schools and we hope to see much progress in this category as you aim to create a mosaic of nesting areas and flower rich habitat across your landscape to support both wild pollinators and managed honeybees at St Kevins. Good luck in your efforts to encourage better habitats for our pollinators. Encourage school children to get their parents to incorporate pollinator friendly plants into gardens and allow lawn weeds to flower. All types of land uses can become more pollinator friendly. Whether you own a farm in Dunlavin outskirts or a window box along Stephens Street, everyone can play a role in making your town a place where pollinators can survive and thrive.

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

Congratulations to your school on their participation in the green schools programme with the sign at the Jonathon Swift school displaying their pride in being a green flag school. Have you had any thoughts about joining the Green Homes programme also run by An Taisce. This could be promoted through your residents committees and this would be a great way to progress the success of green ideals in the town. Maybe look into this for next year's submission? The roses in many of your beds are a sustainable way to bring summer colour to the town. Have you looked into how sustainable the production of the annuals for the seasonal displays area? Are they locally grown and sourced? Could you attach water butts to some of your community buildings to water planting beds? Perhaps one could be established to the lovely front garden at the Garda station to lead by example? Consider taking part in national or indeed European initiatives to advance this message. Try promoting European Waste Reduction Week. Community groups throughout Europe such as TidyTowns can register to participate with their specific waste reduction initiative via the website www.ewwr.eu and there is guidance, information leaflets and promotional materials available to participating groups. Local authorities throughout Ireland participate each year in this.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Well done in your proactive approach to this category and given the size of the town there was very little litter seen on adjudication day. There was some litter noted in the vicinity of Chapel View and near St Nicholas Church. You should contact the Litter wardens at Wicklow County Council who can visit the schools to give talks to the younger generation on these issues. Signage is an issue for many towns and the duplication or removal of out of date signs can help reduce the clutter on our streets. Talk to your area engineer about reviewing the finger posts at the corner of Stephen Street and Market Square with the aim of removing one of the sign poles here and rationalising signage.

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

Once again the standard of presentation of residential areas was high so well done to all the residents for the hard work carried out here. The residents of Church Hill are no doubt suffering with extra traffic in this settled estate as a result of the detour. The open spaces here were well looked after with new tree planting to create an avenue approach. The pump feature at the entrance to Chapel View at Church Lane is a nice distinctive gateway feature. Perhaps any sycamore seedlings in the cotoneaster lining the base of the wall to the church here could be removed. The communal open spaces at Friar Hill were in an excellent state and the beds immaculate. Well done to all your residents for the effort required to maintain this level of open space presentation.

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

We have held marks in this category this year as road and vehicle circulation in the town during this year's visit was limited by the detours affected as part of the pipe laying and sewage works by the name sign on the approach from the school. Generally road surfaces were poor due to the road works underway at the time of the visit. Ensure all the road markings at pedestrian crossings, especially in the town centre, are kept painted and legible as some are looking worn and may not indicate pedestrian priority as they become less visible to drivers.

Concluding Remarks:

As a town facing the challenges of the current economic realities we wish you all the best of luck. All involved with this year's entry are warmly thanked and we wish you well for your plans for 2016.