

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Greystones** Ref: **261**
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **283**
Category: **F** Date(s): **04/07/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	44	44
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	44	44
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	37	38
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	25	25
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	11	12
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53	53
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	34	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	33	33
TOTAL MARK	450	281	283

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

The adjudicator welcomes Greystones to the 2015 Tidy Towns competition and recognises the long history you have with us, we believe this year marks your 30th entry. Thank you once again for submitting a well-considered entry form and your enclosed town plan was most helpful particularly as it drew attention to specific projects and locations you would like the adjudicator to visit on adjudication day. This was very helpful. You may consider editing your entry for next year as items such as the governance code information while interesting, tend to make for a bulky application which is difficult for the adjudicator to refer to during their walk through the town. A note on issues such as this, as listed on your application form, suffices without the added appendix. A more streamlined application tends to highlight key issues and means important information pertaining to this year's works is not missed. You seem to enjoy a fruitful partnership with the Local Authority through the Public Participation Network and various agencies and bodies including the Heritage Council and local businesses. The GRAPE project seems to have been a successful fundraising event for you. In particular you seem to be successful in liaising with a number of residents groups in the town. This is great to see and gives you and the competition a real link to the town's residents both for support and to advertise your projects. The most successful tidy towns groups tend to be those that are able to harness the skills and support for their work from as wide a range of disciplines and agencies as possible, both at county and National level. We hope to see progress on your updated website and facebook page for next year as participation in social media can open up access to the wider community to bounce ideas, collaborate, and seek sponsorship and more.

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

The adjudicator enjoyed a very pleasant stroll around your town on a sunny summers weekend and I have to say full credit goes to cafes and commercial premises on the main street for the care that is given to ensure outside and pavement seating areas are well presented and they add so much to the character of the resurfaced main street. It is nice to see bike parking incorporated into the plans for the street as the excellent coastal bike path must have boosted cyclist numbers in the town. The covered bike park at the Dart station is a nice discreet addition and does not detract from this busy hub in the town. The ball of colour provided by the hanging baskets here and at the historic façade of the town library created a great welcome for your visitors. Given your seaside setting careful planning is needed to ensure future works for any re-imagined plans for the marina area are sensitively designed and detailed. While the lower street level facades of many of your buildings are well maintained make sure the upper floors and gable walls are not neglected. On adjudication day the restrained window of Fenton's Fire, the floral display at the Burnaby and the busy frontage of the Happy Pear were admired. The nicely detailed and planted outside seating area to the Beach House was another highlight. We hope the La Touche Hotel redevelopment plans can be agreed to begin works to address this key site in the town. The works you have done to improve the forecourt of the Ormonde is much appreciated and you seem to be keeping the pressure on to ensure standards

here are upheld. During our walk we noted how the railings along Marine Road are in need of attention but with such a length to cover we wish you well in gaining support from the Council to help maintain this important element of your coastal infrastructure. The beach bear sculpture and individualised stone benches along the coast walk really personalise the walking route and help to offset the fairly banal surfacing that has been applied to the walk and cycle path here. I suppose in contrast to the quality of materials used on the main street, the use of such large areas of blacktop along this focal walkway for your town seems a bit of a wasted opportunity. However your rectangular planters did much to alleviate the monotony of the hard surfacing here.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The sponsorship of trees is a great idea as sponsors can see the tangible proof of their donation such as the colonnade of trees sponsored by Johnson and Staunton by the Council offices which will add so much to this town approach and car park margins as they mature. Similarly the benches and hedge along the wall at the harbour are a credit to the adjacent business who supported this scheme. We note your ongoing maintenance and replanting proposal for here as in such an exposed and busy coastal location aftercare needs to be a priority to follow through and honour the initial investment in planting. The cooperative approach you have to planting seems to be really working for you. The simple white roses and hydrangea planting at La touche road done with the support of residents is another example of your community co-operation. As noted by last year's adjudicator the raised planters opposite the Burnaby Park were full of colour and also act as traffic calming measure on entering the core village. We wish you well with your planned works to this Historic Park. The mix of shrub's grasses and hanging baskets at the library ensure year round interest. It is a pity that a few of the new pines have failed near the dart station as they had been set within the modern steel tree pits. Can these be replaced without too much disruption to the new paving here? The lower anchor really needs a more significant overhaul as the mix of bollards, ugly palm planters and mid green paint to the anchor do not do this space or the surroundings, justice. As you say in the submission by removing all clutter and installing a bold and simple planting scheme this space can be rejuvenated. We hope to see progress on this for next year. The hanging baskets on the main street provided a colorful addition to the busy streetscape here and your use of planters along the marine walk and at the dart station was very appropriate. The boat planter at the northern end of the town was also visited and admired (again your map was such a great help in navigating the town to ensure all highlights were seen).

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

Your submission shows you have an understanding of the importance of comprehensive planning to ensure your future projects are fully resourced and properly designed. While little was seen on the ground in terms of projects in this category for this year we do fully comprehend the effort that has been put in by your committee in pre planning. The encouragement you are giving to children to be aware of their surroundings through your nature awareness project is admired. Getting the younger generation involved and invested in their surroundings is the key to success in this category. So we look forward to seeing progress on your works at St Crispin's Field and the Three Trout's nature walk for next year. Keep up your focus on longer term projects as habitat protection and development is not a short term aspiration.

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

Although we visited the park and ride we couldn't see your leaf composter but are glad to hear it is up and running. The Green School programme has been a great success for you with 6 of your local primary schools having green committees. Have you had any thoughts about joining the Green Homes programme also run by An Taisce. This could be promoted through your excellent network of residents committees and this would be a great way to progress the success of green ideals in Greystones. Maybe look into this for next year's submission? Your works to progress more sustainable watering techniques is applauded even with the difficulties you have encountered. If the Mill Road depot is not an option keep an eye out for other downpipes in the towns which could be utilised. As a high profile premises could the bright blue downpipe at your independent TD's HQ be commandeered to help water your nearby planters on the Main Street? A nicely detailed water barrel with your name attached would do much to publicise this water saving strategy and advance the political representatives green credentials. The bring centres visited opposite the La Touché Hotel was well looked after.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

For such a busy town we felt the standard of cleanliness and tidiness was good. Along the marine walkway some bins were looking dirty and a general clean would improve their appearance. There was evidence of graffiti to bins at the Dart car park at the walk. As you know best practice is to ensure that graffiti is removed as soon as practicable. When graffiti is allowed to remain, it invites yet more graffiti and may lead to an increase in vandalism and other criminal activity. Unauthorised signs did not seem to be an issue for you. While the bins at the playground by the council office was full to overflowing when I parked my car here, on my return it had been emptied, so you obviously have an active policy during peak summer times.

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

Well done to all the resident associations on the hard work they carry out over the year and we wish them every success in your new tidy estates competition. Perhaps next year you could include the location of a best kept garden on your town map, this type of competition is a great way to keep the momentum going, healthy competition is always a good way to get residents motivated! The Burnaby estate was visited and was immaculate to the credit of its residents. Along Church Road the classical residential architecture with beautifully maintained gardens were admired and we hope the old felled trees will be replaced to ensure the long term health of the avenue here. Near

the marina the historic use of rows of cobble stones as a coping on townhouses here was a lovely vernacular detail not seen before by the adjudicator. We wonder were residential homes covered in the book recently published by your committee member. And will some of this information be included as part of your new website and heritage walk.

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

Your adopt an area approach to your roads seems to be successful for you and we wish to acknowledge the work done by individual residents, students and groups such as the Fire Brigade in implementing this strategy. We hope the temporary car parking at the marina will be addressed with any advancing in the works here. It is a pity the colourful town map is placed on a wall in front of parked cars at Sweeny's. In addition to making it difficult to read when the car space is full it is not now accessible for wheelchair users. The box hedging at the entrance to the town from Killcole is beautifully detailed. Ensure all the road markings at pedestrian crossing 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:

Your overall approach to the competition is excellent and it is obvious that your core committee of 16 supported by your subcommittee structure, work hard to achieve results on the ground; you are to be congratulated for the works and high standards you have achieved particularly over the last few years. Well done to involved with this year's entry, you are warmly thanked and congratulated for your efforts and we wish you the very best for 2016.