

Tidy Towns Competition 2016

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Tallanstown** Ref: **852**
County: **Louth** Mark: **323**
Category: **B** Date(s): **23/06/2016**
07/08/2016

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2015	Mark Awarded 2016
Community Involvement & Planning	60	56	56
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	40	41
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	43	44
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	32	33
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	17	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	60	61
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	31	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	38	38
TOTAL MARK	450	317	323

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Welcome Tallanstown Tidy Towns to the 2016 Supervalu Tidy Towns Competition. Your entry is very much appreciated. Thank you for your concise entry form and the map clearly numbered with the projects to be adjudicated this year. Thank you, also, for the 3 year plan which is set out in pictorial format. As a previous national winner of the competition Tallanstown Tidy Towns knows that winning is achieved by great attention to detail and by tight margins. Given your population of just 940, a committee of 19 active members is a testament to the status of your Tidy Towns group within the community. This is endorsed by the extent of your volunteer support, 35 volunteers on your litter control roster, 30 looking after flowers, weed control, etc. and work session volunteers. Having junior litter wardens is commended as is involving the local scout group in your activities. Engaging with school children and youth is very much a part of Tidy Towns philosophy. The list of agencies and businesses that support you is impressive. Your channels of communication range from modern social media to traditional print media. You engage well with your local school. Next year will be the 60th year of the Tidy Towns competition and your 33rd year to enter it. Quite a record. Your awards speak for themselves. The benefits of Tidy Towns to your community are succinctly set out in your entry form. The Tidy Towns information board in the village is both unique and informative.

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

The 1916 Memorial Walk was moved to the next category. At the outset the adjudicator should say that the order in which projects are commented on does not indicate any order of priority. Starting with your flag project because it is the first to be seen on approaching the village, they look very well. There are lots of majestic mature trees on the approaches to the village and tall flag poles fit in perfectly. The plaque on the gate pillar at the church tells readers that the railings are 155 years old, having first been the railings of the Governor's garden in Dundalk prison. There they were to keep people out, here they welcome them in. Your entry form tells us that residents have been loud in their praise of the design and creation of the new gate at St. Peter and St Paul church and the old school. The adjudicator concurs with the residents. Both the church and the old school look very well. Each is a focal point in the centre of the village. The new sign on the gate opposite the church on the blacksmith/forging theme was noted. Heavy rain could not dilute the impact made by other buildings in the centre of the village. The residential properties are freshly painted and add more colour to the centre with hanging baskets and window boxes. The Tidy Towns premises display its award trophies in its windows. Elsewhere in the centre is the National Tidy Towns Winner plaque 2010 which was unveiled by President Mary McAleese in May 2011. The commercial premises make their own contribution to the village centre. Your entry form tells us that their contribution has been acknowledged in the Louth Looking Good shop front competition, Joe's Take Away awarded a certificate and the Louth Arms and PJ Lennon's public house for presentation of their properties. The Heritage Trail information board and the Sli na Slainte board are clean. Although not quite in the village centre the National School has to be singled out. It makes

a significant contribution to the village, not alone to the Tidy Towns but through achieving so many Green Flags. It has not got enough flag poles to fly them all. Well done to all involved in the National School. Another stand out building in the village is Glyde Rangers GFC. Very well painted, it and its environs are clean, neat and tidy. The painting of the lawnmower premises is also commended. Although not a building, the old cemetery on the Ardee Road is part of the build heritage of Tallanstown. The impressive stone arch and gate pillars have interesting carvings. There are 2 information plaques on the pillars and 2 containers of flowers flank the entrance. It adds to the overall approach to the village on the Ardee Road. From its elevated position a tall, carved stone monument can be seen in a field opposite. No information plaques seen.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Once again Tallanstown Tidy Towns was very busy in this category with outstanding results. The 1916 Memorial Tree Walk is the standout project because of its national dimension. The bi-lingual plaque is informative and the 7 Sesile Oaks with their individual plaques, one for each of the signatories to the Proclamation, grace the Memorial Walk and Maguire Park. The Medieval Garden, created with Tallanstown National School as part of the Louth Eco Tribes project, will lead to further partnership projects. The wildflower area in Maguire Park and the new area at the Sheep Dip were admired. The landscaping in the centre of the village is splendid. Once again the bridge stands out. Nearby is an unusual feature – a display of agricultural implements on a well-kept grassed area. An information board tells us that the collection includes a plough, harrow, tiller, etc. It enhances this area. Mentioning displays of old agricultural implements prompts this adjudicator to draw attention again to the wonderful display at the residential area on Glyde Road. In addition to its display of impeccably painted farm items, its landscaping is also eye-catching. Enhancing the landscaping at 3 residential areas illustrates how Tallanstown Tidy Towns and the residents associations seek continuing improvements instead of resting on their laurels. It is this dynamic approach that keeps Tallanstown in the hunt for the highest honours again. The new sapling trees at Maguire Park were noted.

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

Paul's Patch is an excellent amenity. The additional work for this year has enhanced it. There is so much going on in a relatively small area. It was timely for you to have attendees at the Butterfly and Bumblebee work shop. Last year Co. Limerick had a major survey to establish the state of its bees. There is now a 2015 All Ireland Pollination Plan and Tidy Towns is listed as one of the agencies committed to implementing it. It would be prudent, as you propose, to enhance existing, and develop additional, habitats for bees and butterflies. About naming of fields on approach roads, this adjudicator did notice some e.g. The Chapel Field, and wondered what the naming meant? Perhaps in next year's entry form you would give additional details. The additional bat and bird boxes were noticed, not alone in Maguire Park, but also at the Fishing Pond stream on the Ardee Road. Unusual and colourful shapes. The eco-corridor on Mount Road was seen. Having it taken over by 2 volunteers was a good initiative. The Seomra Glas (referred to by other Tidy Towns groups as the outdoor classroom) was admired. Tallanstown is very fortunate to have such varied habitats and species in and around the village. The Fishing Pond stream is a very unusual and unexpected amenity. Unadorned, the mature trees would be majestic but to festoon them with multi-coloured, strange shaped nesting boxes and plaques illustrating the variety of wildlife in the area, is to push boundaries. Nowhere else would do it. In Tallanstown the unexpected is normal. Like the old telephone box at the old school. A sign was spotted – Ecology Trail – Oak Tree. A sample of a young staked oak was beside the sign. Elsewhere on the Ecology Trail there was a 5 star insect hotel and a dead hedge hotel. Noticing Nature information board noted. Very informative.

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

Marks in this category have been increased from 20 to 50 in recognition to the time and effort given to it by Tidy Towns groups. This category is about waste prevention and the role of the Tidy Towns group is promoting to their community the principles of waste prevention. Standing beside your Bring Bank is an elegant, clean, colourful information board "Tallanstown Waste Prevention". It sets out 5 ways to reduce waste to make Tallanstown a cleaner, greener town. The Bring Bank itself is another iconic feature of Tallanstown Tidy Towns. There is not another like it that this adjudicator has yet seen. Nearby is the Community Composter. It, too, is large and clean. Well done to the father and son team for their initiative in creating paper fire logs from recycled newspapers. Innovation is alive and well in Tallanstown. The Scout Group constructed a greenhouse from plastic bottles. It is a summer for water harvesting and you are taking full advantage of it. Well done to the National School and your plant watering volunteers. Some Tidy Towns groups have difficulty with this category, but not Tallanstown. Your entry form is accompanied by colour photos of a range of initiatives undertaken, ranging from the construction of colourful bird boxes, the recycling centre in the National School to Trashion Fashion and the creativity shown leading to the National Junk Kouture event. It is not possible to include all of your initiative individually given the size constraints of this report. However, the reuse of the old telephone box in the Old School for recycling is very innovative and is commended.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Thank you for enclosing your weekly litter patrol roster. It has the desired outcome. It is not surprising that you achieved 1st place in Louth County Council's Litter League last year. Well done to all involved. Phasing out the litter bins is another good outcome. The anti-litter signs are also contributing. Your weed control programme is also working effectively. An Taisce's National Spring Clean was a major event in Tallanstown and Louth Village. Tidy Teams, National School and Louth Village Tidy Towns all turned out. Great to see inter-village cooperation. Your entry form tells us that your TUS worker also plays a significant role in keeping Tallanstown tidy. There was no dog fouling evident on adjudication day. The heavy rain and the thunder and lightning probably kept the dog walkers at

home. All of the street furniture was clean and well painted. The gate of the waste water treatment works has been nicely camouflaged. A good outcome.

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

Your entry form tells us that you have 8 residents associations in your village. That is impressive. During the adjudication the following were visited. Tallansfield Manor has a good entrance with landscaping and brick pillars. Plenty of green public areas. Young trees. Houses look well. Cherrywood Park has its name on a brick base at the entrance. Poles with hanging baskets add to making it an attractive entrance. Houses well presented. Castle View has its name on a stone which is part of a tiered flower bed. Neat, tidy verges and grassed areas. Plenty of trees. Houses look well. Chestnut Grove also has its name stone in a tiered flower bed. Houses well presented. A mature neighbourhood. The village pump is nicely painted. Metal trough full of flowers. Two well filled tall planters. Rath Brist cottages were a delight to visit. A cul de sac, it has 2 name signs – one a stone with flowers and the other wooden in a flower bed. There is an old village tap nearby and a pole with hanging baskets. Good verges. A corner is named Bullshit Corner. More poles with hanging baskets. Residences well presented with floral displays in each garden. Very colourful. Great 'pride of place' exhibited. Residences 1-6 on Glyde Road have a colourful display of old agricultural implements, large raised flower beds, trees on well-kept grass and a name stone. Very attractive. Near the bridge is a terrace of single storey residences, all well presented. Well done to all of the resident associations and to Tallanstown Tidy Towns, for combining to achieve such attractive results.

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

Tallanstown Tidy Towns knows the importance of using approach roads to create the first good impression of the village. The approach roads are being constantly enhanced. You have 5 approach roads which is a lot for a small village. While each approach is different there are common features – well-kept verges, well painted gates, lots of mature trees lining the roads and good signage. The stone flower beds with the bi-lingual village name plaque are iconic and always look immaculate. Added to the 'branding' of the approach are the new flag poles with the new red Tallanstown flag, not seen at the best on such a rainy day. The 2 new Tidy Towns signs on the Dundalk and Ardee approaches have been updated with additional years of your awards. The anti-litter signs also make an impact. Nicely painted post and rail fencing also used to good effect on approaches. There is an excellent footpath along the Ardee approach with an informative plaque and coat of arms of Louth Hall Castle Estate. Your reference in your entry form to an upgrade of the footpath at Louth Hall cottages is noted. Some items in your entry form in this category have been moved to other categories e.g. Paul's Patch to Wildlife.

Concluding Remarks:

Tallanstown Tidy Towns has progressed again in the 2016 Supervalu Tidy Towns competition. We look forward to receiving your entry in the 2017 competition in due course.

Second Round Adjudication:

It was a pleasure to return to Tallanstown for second round adjudicating. You are still continuing to progress and perform strongly in the competition. Maguire Park continues to be a credit to the area. The inclusion of the 1916 Memorial Walk has enhanced this area further as has the inclusion of the herb garden. The Church and surrounds were gleaming. The school railing could do with freshening. The railing at the pedestrian crossing at the school could do with painting. PJ Lennon's and Smyth's were very well presented. Perhaps the plinth around the shop needs attention. In an area that has an air of order, small details distract. It is good to see that you are using a colour scheme for any new painting projects.

Landscaping is again to a high standard. The baskets on the bridge certainly enhance the natural stone. The adjudicator was alarmed to see that a number of trees appear to have been cut intentionally surrounding the farm machinery. One would hope this was not an act of vandalism. The approach roads to the village were to an excellent standard. The neatly trimmed verges, stone walls and tree lined roads certainly give an excellent entrance. One would wonder have you any plans to develop the small lane that gives access to the river. The community composter is certainly getting plenty of use as is the discreet recycling centre.

No litter was noted, some bins maybe need cleaning, a very small problem in very tidy surrounds. Again the residents are to be complimented on the presentation of their homes. The Glyde Road certainly stood out for its presentation as did Cherrywood Park and Castle View. The cemetery was visited and also complimented on its presentation. Well done on this year's excellent entry.