

Tidy Towns Competition 2016

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ferbane** Ref: **621**
County: **Offaly** Mark: **287**
Category: **C** Date(s): **17/07/2016**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2015	Mark Awarded 2016
Community Involvement & Planning	60	45	46
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	38	40
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	36	37
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	30	32
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	16	16
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	47	46
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	35	36
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	33	34
TOTAL MARK	450	280	287

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Ferbane is most welcome to the 2016 Tidy Towns competition. Many thanks for your application form which was very clearly presented. There is a definite sense of purpose and commitment coming from the pages which is admirable. You have 12 on your committee but your workload suggests this number is greater, evidently there is broader support from the community. The long list of support agencies seems to verify this. Your plan only spans two years and this is short – normally multi-year plans are spread out over three years at a minimum. This is to encourage more longer term thinking. Your graphic map was admired. Try to highlight project areas, as against a general landmarks by using a colour-coded scheme or similar. It is these areas that the adjudicator of most wants to visit. Photos of your annual Christmas market were admired and this is clearly an important event. It is vital that there is a focus on fun and social interaction in your community, well done.

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

Your clear use of photos demonstrates the dramatic effect of works at the O'Huigin corner. Evidently this development enjoys strong popular support. It's great that you kept the heritage features as mementos – are you not tempted to fix these to the new gable wall? It would be nice to see this painted to blend in with the surrounding buildings. You are wished success with your proposal for a biodiversity panel at the old church of Ireland. The new plaque to commemorate the life of Mary Ward is a nice addition. Gleeson's Bar is looking fresh after its facelift and it's good to read this is having a positive influence on other premises owners. The renovated Spar looks well. The national school is clean if a little formal. The church is indeed a central building of community life and a fine building it is too. The planting here is a little haphazard, the rose bushes work very well so imagine more of these in preference to the mix of evergreen shrubs/heathers/birch and beech. The newly cleaned bridge over the Brosna looks well and it's great that pedestrians enjoy a safe path across this. The community school is a superb modern building that has been finished to a high standard. The faded and frayed tricolour creates a bad impression in this important location and should be replaced urgently. The county council offices really don't look well with the forked palisade fencing and signage especially harsh. Worn traffic cones and abandoned sacks of sand add to the poorer presentation of what is an important heritage area (once the train station). Hennessy's bar deserves special mention for its superb presentation of traditional facade – excellent!

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Beautiful displays of hanging baskets were admired along Main Street and create a very good effect. The Ulster bank is not looking too neglected but some litter had gathered in the alley by the ATM. The heritage centre car park had some nice flowers but this was a mishmash of plants and styles and it is not clear what effect you are aiming for here. Rather than choosing a random and wide variety of shrubs pick a consistent style with maybe one or two

species and stick with this for greater effect. The nearby playground is an excellent facility which was well used and well presented on adjudication day. The library is a very important public building but planting is very tired looking while surrounds needs to be swept and weeded.

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

Your active involvement with the all-Ireland pollinator plan is excellent and it is impressive that you have recorded these rare bee species in your area. There is huge scope here to raise awareness of the importance of pollinators in our countryside and the tragic consequences of their decline. You are now part of a national effort to combat this problem. Are there events or initiatives to get adults involved (as well as the children)? The national biodiversity data centre recently published guidelines for gardeners as part of their pollinator plan so there may be more ideas here.

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

Well done to Galen community school and St. Cynoc's schools on their tremendous achievement in the green flag program. We loved the wormery and composting at playschool. You could tie in your community garden with some initiatives on promoting food waste avoidance and the advantages of sourcing locally grown produce. As you highlight yourselves this is an area that requires dedicated thought and planning – something that can be achieved with a subcommittee or assigning a special person to the task. Google the 'circular economy' to grasp what we are trying to achieve as a community. For more helpful tips and case studies from other Tidy Towns entrants please take a look at <http://localprevention.ie/tidy-towns/>

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You have completed a number of small but valuable projects in collaboration with local business owners and your volunteers e.g. refurbishing the sewer vent and replacing the railings at Sentra. Your approach to litter control is comprehensive and energetic and it is important to utilise all the communication tools at your disposal. You can describe your participation in the national spring clean under this heading. The photo of the young 'warriors' is inspiring. Well done for the great show of community support in this area. The bring bank was quite tidy but bags and boxes had been stuffed between the receptacles. A sewer vent near Knockaulin Drive needs your usual treatment. The bin at heritage centre with stuffed and overflowing. A lot of litter had gathered to the rear of this building and around the basketball hoop. Litter was not a problem in general but many footpaths need to be swept of moss which has fallen from roofs. Bus Éireann bus stops look very worn and rusty. An empty pole near Evolve health clinic should be removed.

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

Your awards ceremony is a great way of instilling some friendly local competition. Do include for next year some photos of the winning events. Ferbane enjoys a number of attractive estates of houses and many of these were visited on adjudication day. Delvin Park impressed with its clean tricolour, inviting seating and well maintained greens. At Knockaulin Drive low stone boundary walls create a good impression but their bases needs to be swept. One home at its entrance had a phenomenal display of colour. A fine estate was admired across the playground but there was no name on its stone. Some trees would be welcome to complement the attractive stone wall. St. Cynoc's Tce looks great with its broad green space and mature trees.

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

On approach from Belmont a welcome sign is nicely decorated with flowers but is very far out of the road and surely not the town boundary. A subsequent sign is leaning into the hedge and has been sprayed with herbicides – creating a bad impression. Along the relief road the proliferation of wooden fences could be screened by some native hedge planting. New planting at Gallen View on the Cloghan road look well but try to conceal the black plastic liner. Quite a bit of litter had gathered along this green margin, perhaps as a result of passing traffic. Try to include this area in your regular patrol routes.

Concluding Remarks:

Ferbane has benefited from a number of enhancements in recent years and many of these are thanks to your involvement. Best of luck and keep up the good work!