

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Rathmore**

Ref: **940**

County: **Kerry**

Mark: **235**

Category: **B**

Date(s): **20/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	32
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	32
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	33
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	20
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	8
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	50
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	30
TOTAL MARK	450	235

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Welcome back to the SuperValu National Tidy Towns Competition for the 2017 adjudication; it is great to have the Rathmore community back with us again. There have been significant changes since your last entry in 2009 some of which will be highlighted in this report however the committee would do well to study the Tidy Towns Handbook and check out the website particularly in relation to submissions and maps. The map provided was not suitable for adjudication purposes, guidelines can be found on the website together with examples. A multi-annual Tidy Towns Plan must also be provided, we note from your entry form that the committee is working on this and we anticipate having one with next year's entry. The entry form was very concise and easy to work with, thank you. A good start has been made with fruitful links established with other stakeholders in the development of Rathmore and a good working relationship is in place; communication methods are a mix of traditional and new, at a later stage the committee might consider a Tidy Towns website which can be an excellent PR tool if properly maintained. Can you check the last census for your population size as you may be entered in the wrong population category in the competition (B) ; Once again, it's great to have you back!

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

Rathmore is a handsome town of two and three storey buildings; the town features a significant stock of public buildings most of which enjoy good maintenance and have potential to perform quite well in this section of the competition. The Community Centre, Holy Family National School, the Grotto and the HSE buildings are all well located and nicely presented. The Garda station looks well too but its roadside boundary needs refurbishment. Commercial premises at the Mallow end of the town look really well and are an excellent introduction to Rathmore. Congratulations on the redevelopment of An Offig, this is a fine achievement. The Credit Union premises was also admired. Too many overhead service cables spoil the streetscape together with old service poles; representations to the relevant bodies should be made now as having cables ducted can take many years of preparation and paperwork. Check out the website universaldesign.ie for guidelines on universal accessibility.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Container flower displays at strategic points around the town enhance their streetscapes. Trees along the main thoroughfare are beginning to mature and have yet to make a very big visual impact but do look well of course. Both the Grotto and The Garden of Remembrance are fine amenity spaces which enhance the town and offer opportunities to stop and reflect a while. Participation in the 'One Million Trees in One Day' is laudable and we are delighted in the interest shown in your own 'Adopt a Spot' initiative. guidelines under this heading include choosing native species where possible to support bio-diversity, planting for year-round colour and interest and to favour permanent planting over bedding plants. There are more particularly on the management of trees however you will

find out more as you progress in the competition and of course check out the website. Again, you are reminded of the importance of building in universal accessibility in all of Rathmore's developments.

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

Congratulations on Rathmore's success to date in the battle against Japanese Knotweed, hopefully it will be completely eradicated within a few short years. There is a lot of potential for 'Bee' corridors along grass verges; we note the Pollinator Patch project currently under way, the children must love it! The information signs are a clever idea as they explain, educate and protect all at the same time. Congratulations once more this time for the acquisition of funding for the Ecology Survey, don't forget to submit a copy with a future entry. Although the GAA sports grounds are signposted your adjudicator did not manage to find them regretfully; the map was not helpful in this respect. The Outdoor Gym and children's playground are noted favourably.

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

The recycling point located beside Londis is being managed in a tidy way however its surrounds were very overgrown and weedy at the time of adjudication. Are two clothes bins sufficient for a town of Rathmore's size? A good start for performance under this heading would be to check out the following websites; Tidy Towns, the EPA, An Taisce and zerowaste.ie. the first three are full of ideas on how to get started and the last one gives a perspective on the issues involved especially on a global level. One of your goals might be to harvest enough rainwater to water all the town's plants. Street lighting could be changed to LED lights and much more. The bottom line is to prevent waste at source rather than to have to deal with it once generated.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Rathmore was dumping and litter free during adjudication and no graffiti was spotted, weed control was quite good too; your litter control activities are obviously fruitful. The ideal of course is that it shouldn't be necessary to engage in these activities at all or at least not as often! It is a good idea to analyse litter collected to establish its source, type, location and frequency, with this information a litter management strategy can be formulated that can help to prevent litter occurring in the first instance; for example, if its food Take Away litter the proprietor of the business may be willing to remind customers to bin the carton or take it home with them. Work in progress noted to the site across from Londis which will no doubt be finished well when complete.

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

The sensitive redevelopment of the old Presentation Convent as residential is a fine achievement for all concerned. Ard Mhuire looks superb and the 1916 interpretive panels are noted however the roadside boundary wall at the entrance needs refurbishment. The display of red roses in the garden at the Mallow end of the town is eye-catching. One or two dwellings look as if they might be vacant, hopefully they'll be reoccupied soon. Impress on residents the need to look after their roadside boundary walls in addition to their dwellings and where feasible to take responsibility for the area immediately outside of the boundary wall.

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

Road and footpath surfaces are generally good throughout Rathmore and signage is well placed and maintained. Approach roads look well also and the entrance from the Killarney road was admired especially in relation to its picnic facility, however an unfinished layby was noted. The use of wide footpaths for car-parking is not a good idea and should be discouraged; the car-park with the recycling bins looks quite bad (Kerry Farm Shop?) however it is nicely landscaped at its roadside boundary. The name plates look well and it is good to note that signage is bi-lingual in many instances.

Concluding Remarks:

Rathmore is a lovely town but appears to be competing in the wrong population category of the competition which could be to its disadvantage. We look forward to receiving copies of your proposed Ecology Report and Tidy Towns plan.