

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Collooney** Ref: **807**
County: **Sligo** Mark: **259**
Category: **C** Date(s): **15/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	37	39
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	35	37
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	34	35
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	26	27
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	14	16
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	43	48
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	29	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	24	25
TOTAL MARK	450	242	259

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Thank you for your documentation and especially for the well considered Report on your almost completed Development Plan. From studying the entry form prior to the visit this adjudicator had already supposed there would be a considerable increase in marking, and having visited the town it became clear that an even greater increase than previously imagined would be in order. You are being awarded the County Endeavour Award, which really should be renamed the Achievement Award. You are very well supported in your work by the voluntary and sporting organisations and the business community. It is very encouraging to read that you have appointed two Youth Officers who work closely with the school children. It is also good to read that you "bring people together... and help new residents to feel more a part of the community". Thank you for your map which was easy to follow and is a work of art in itself and for your pictures of people, places and events. The huge amount of organisational work involved is appreciated.

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

The attractive Main Street and Old Street retain a feeling of the core streetscape as it used to be, enhanced now by greater use of colour and the elegant lamp standards. Business premises are well presented, some of them decently upgraded. Among the vernacular buildings that contribute substantially to the charm of the town centre are McGovern's and the black-and-white building opposite: a key site, its bright presentation crucial to the first impression from the Old Sligo Road. Among the individual buildings admired were the cathedral-like Roman Catholic church, its interior Gothic vaulting so impressive; the Methodist church which creates a charming visual focal point by the Square; St Paul's church with its unique crenulation; Perry's premises (an old lodge?); and the well presented schools. Your work on the Crystal factory site is warmly acknowledged and also your work on improving the entrance to the Parochial Hall. Industrial archaeology proved to be fascinating, especially the stone-built remains of the Sligo & Leitrim Railway and the vast mill which seems to have been partially preserved with all its adjuncts such as the mill race. (Perhaps you have long-term plans for this.) These contribute to provide a monumental reminder of a prosperous past. In complete contrast the business parks disclose some very smart premises with famous names; a few fine units are less attractive on account of excessive signage. Among those of particularly striking design that are also well turned out daily are Braun, Mercedes Benz, Arrotek, Gulf, and others identified by initials – ATS, PMM and CMD.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Containers of all kinds were admired at the town entrances and in other locations. The baskets on, for example, the bridge and a lengthy wooden fence, were of a kind not often seen; clearly they require much maintenance. Beds at the Square enhance that fine location considerably. The grotto is beautifully attended to. The small park on the

corner of Boyle road gives a nice sense peace near the busy junction; the mosaic seat with its detailed illustrated motifs adds remarkable visual as well as historical interest to the public space at the Fair Green houses. Well done to those who cleared and improved the Millenium Garden. The sports ground at Ownmore Park impressed with its well maintained pitch and precincts generally; thank you for the information that you plant daffodils and blue iris here. The cemetery on the Ballygawley road is well kept. It is very interesting to learn that you are in consultation with the National Graves Association about the regeneration of the Teeling monument; initial work at the roadside was seen to have been done; the steep rocky landscaping presents a challenge as does the conservation of the statue; this is so much a part of the image one has of Colooney that it is well worth the considerable effort. The high quality of planting at the Railway Station came as something of a surprise: nowhere else that this adjudicator can recall is trackside embankment landscaping so imaginative, and also flourishing so profusely!

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

The wild life garden was noted beyond the intentionally unmowed meadow. It is hoped that the bug hotels will attract residents – thank you for your pictures; are the bee boxes colonised? It is good to learn that you are taking part in the national pollinator programme. Well done in having the bat roosts made from recycled timber. Your photographs show great enthusiasm from the children. Do let us know in due course how these projects are working out for the bats and the bees. Splendid to see that in painting the entrance pillars at the Parochial Hall ivy has been left undisturbed. Walks from which nature can be observed and enjoyed are a feature, such as from the Crystal factory to the falls; it is understood that the committee in Ballasare is considering reopening a right-of-way along the river towards Colooney; if you are taking part in this you will be creating a splendid amenity walk. (A lot of work! but presumably the County Council would assist.)

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

This is where the information you give is most valuable because the projects referred to would otherwise be unknown to the judges, such as talks given to students over the year, encouraging householders to harvest rainwater in butts, and recycling of all kinds. You do not mention the Green Flag programme which we have found has given a huge incentive nationwide under this comparatively new and increasingly important heading. Two green flags were seen flying at St Paul's school: well done to the pupils, teachers and parents for the awards which the flags represent. In future years can you include a list of GF activities – not merely as a means of considerably increasing your marks but more particularly to spread the message of sustainable waste and resource management. (Green flags were not seen at other schools but that does not mean they have not been awarded to them.) The bring bank was seen to be very tidy and accessible and nicely adorned with pot plants.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You list only four derelict properties; certainly they do not intrude significantly on the townscape. Weed growth was not an issue either as it is being dealt with by the local authority at your request at the necessary locations. There seems to be a well organised litter collection scheme that includes the three TUS people you mention and this, along with your regular clean-ups, really shows results Thank you for your pictures of mainly young people taking part in the national clean-up. It is noted that suitable waste is segregated and recycled. It is good to learn that your leaf blower is earning its keep in the autumn and that leaf-mould is the ultimate product. It is clear that the entire community is involved in one way or another with keeping the town litter-free. The only unresolved universal wish is that litter should not be dropped in the first place.

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

Traditional street houses, many well presented and many painted in bold colours, provide the essential core to the town: without them there would be nothing other than 20-21st century estates and suburban bungalows: however well presented, these can never provide a firm sense of locality. That statement is not intended to disparage: there are several excellent estates, and, mercifully, no unfinished developments of the kind that mar several other towns. The well-kept high gabled homes of Steeple View, some with decorative barge-boards, were much admired. There is a real sense of space in Highwood Park; it is interesting to see how variation in colour adds to the charm. The same may be said of Radharc na gCaisleán, to even greater effect. The newish, smart, Ivy Grove takes advantage of the splendid view which is probably why trees have not been planted. At pretty and secluded Owenmore View, notable for its stonework, boundary walls would add greatly to the scene if painted to match the houses. Boundary walls need painting or repainting at the mature estate called Castle Cove. Residents of the attractive Owenmore Court should see that their frontages and paving are weed-free. Ashbook is entirely well presented: congratulations to the residents. If the adjudicator were asked to name his favourite residential area he would probably say Mill Falls for a number of reasons: its convenience to the main street, church, and railway station and its sense of careful planning, but most of all its extraordinary view of the falls on the Owenmore River.

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

Road surfaces and markings on the main thoroughfares are of a high standard; roundabouts are meticulously planted and well maintained. Carparks, such as at the business parks and the railway station, and well marked out and also free of litter. It was not ascertained if the improvements to the steps from the Crystal factory to the riverside is a project that will be continued of if it complete. Several attractive lighting standards were seen but there are still too many outdated lamps on poles with their attendant clusters of cables!

Concluding Remarks:

