

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Easkey** Ref: **788**
County: **Sligo** Mark: **275**
Category: **A** Date(s): **19/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	41	42
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	36	37
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	35	36
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	24	25
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	16	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	48	49
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	35	35
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	32	32
TOTAL MARK	450	267	275

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

It is several years since this adjudicator was in Easkey and it was immediately seen that there have been improvements in all quarters – clearly everyone “livin’ in Easkey” must be hardworking as well as proud. Judging by the contents of your entry form the LEAP committee is central to many activities in the village and neighbouring parishes. You are well served by your TUS and RSS workers as well as FAS and the transition year pupils, and also an unusually high number of volunteers. Do you still maintain contact with the school in Rathlee, which now has its own Tidy Towns programme? Thank you for your comprehensive entry form and your map which is most attractive – even artistic – though somewhat hard to follow! Is it really possible that your population remains at under 200? If so, quite a number of homes must be inhabited by only one person! The plaques setting out historical, cultural and environmental information are intensely interesting and clearly very thoroughly researched. This adjudicator had not previously seen the inventory of headstones at the Abbey, the information on Roslee Castle, or the Mill Street past residents, all fascinating. Congratulations to those who participate in so many worthwhile projects; congratulations too on your National Heritage Council award for “Hidden Heritage”.

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

The businesses and houses that form the street which is the backbone of the village are well kept; the tidy impression of this street is also partly due to the removal of overhead wires. The former barracks is a significant example of official vernacular design and it is hoped that the new owner will be sympathetic to its visual importance. The Church of St James is very well cared for and indeed work was continuing on the façade on the date of the visit; the superb stained glass windows looked as good as new. The nearby school is a fine building though its yard was surprisingly weedy. The elegant steeple of St Anne’s church may be seen from quite a distance, marking the presence of the village for travellers at a time when road signage was unknown; its churchyard is well kept. The regeneration of Roslee castle and ongoing work at the Abbey are impressive – well done, and best wishes for continuance. It is very good that you have the advice of the Heritage Officer. Best wishes too for your Teach Síle project.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Floral tubs and containers attached to lamp standards catch the eye immediately – the time and effort given to planning and maintaining these and other displays is greatly admired. The planted boat feature truly makes its mark. It is good to read that you use your own seeds and cuttings. The 1916 garden (not shown on the map), commemorating the personality of Constance Markiewicz in particular, makes a lovely and poignant statement. In contrast, the Time of Day sculpture gives considerable amusement. The Secret Garden was seen and admired (but the bug hotel was not found!). Well done in involving children in the Living Willow project. Thank you for

mentioning the planting of bulbs for spring flowering which we would have been unaware of.

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

The presence of the river and riverine foliage is a distinct asset to the village; the river bank walk is an enjoyable way of appreciating this amenity and it is good to learn that enhancement of the entire stretch is imminent. Do you keep an inventory of the bat and bird species that make use of the boxes provided? You are to be complimented on not going forward with projects that touch on the natural environment without taking professional advice. Apples and crabs are an innovative idea, the pleasure of seeing the blossom and the practicality of fruiting does not need to be pointed out to you. Seed harvesting has been mentioned above; it was also favourably noted that you have sown wild flower seeds; there is a school of thought that suggests this is an artificial activity and the wild flowers should be let decide for themselves where they should grow – however, one begs to differ. The flora and fauna illustrated boards were appreciated.

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

It is encouraging to read that businesses in the village recycle packaging and use cardboard boxes for customers to carry purchases. The composting system now seems to be well understood and established and also clothes collection – in fact, the people of Easkey seem to have had no difficulty in assimilating this comparatively new and immensely important topic. Marking started in all centres at a low level and you have now passed the average mark for the county which is 17. A huge contribution has been the input of the schools, which have taken up SWRM projects with alacrity, almost everywhere. Thank you for the Green Schools information. One green flag was seen flying at Coláiste Iascaigh, but your report enumerates five, under Litter & Waste, Energy, Water harvesting, Biodiversity and Travel: heartiest congratulations to the pupils, the staff and the parents. Thank you too for enclosing the Green Schools report from Killeenduff NS where their first green flag has been awarded – similar congratulations to them.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Unfortunately there are some derelict structures, principally on the approaches to the village, which give a poor impression of the neighbourhood. Public seating was seen to have been repaired and painted. The pictures of the Roslee castle clean-up demonstrate the hard work involved and beg the question as to how did all this rubbish accumulate and is there any way of stopping it happening again? The same may be said for your successful regular litter patrols. Prosecutions have been quite successful in some other centres, but it would be virtually impossible to keep policing any particular site. Well done to your helpful volunteers who one would prefer to see involved in a more creative activity than cleaning up after less civically minded citizens. It is good to learn of your splendid coastal clean-up. The National Schools anti-litter poster competition is an admirable initiative – it would be nice to see copies of some of the work. Good luck with your request for additional litter bins.

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

The main street is really what gives Easkey its charming character, so: Well done to residents and businesses. A mansion opposite the Easkey sign (coming from Dromore West) caught the attention: is it occupied? It is interesting to read that a landscaper is employed by the Residents Association at Riverbank, and this shows; unfortunately the backs of some of the houses are stained and all too visible from the church grounds. At Castle Heights some truly wonderful gardens were seen; by comparison the smart Fair Green estate opposite seems rather less picturesque. Woodlawn Crescent is notable for its tree planting and it is easy to agree with you that this estate demonstrates 'a lovely example of community togetherness'. Great work has been done in the garden at Corrán Crescent. The articulation of the homes at Radharc na Mara is imaginative and attractive and the homes are well presented. Residents Associations should be on the watch for any deterioration in details such as fencing and kerbing and take action before they become noticeable.

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

Stone walls were admired on the approach to Easkey beach and the castle. Drystone walls built in the traditional manner are a feature of the village and particularly noticeable within and adjacent to the GAA grounds; it is assumed that the cement boundary wall of part of the same grounds will be faced with stone or at least plastered and painted. Improved footpath and parking at Easkey House favourably noted. The church carpark was spic and span and well marked. The pump and trough on the Dromore West approach provides pleasing anticipation of a well managed village. Surfacing of the approach roads from Dromore West and Enniscrone were of an acceptable standard.

Concluding Remarks: