

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Greystones** Ref: **261**
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **289**
Category: **G** Date(s): **27/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	45
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	45
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	39
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	25
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	13
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	54
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	34
TOTAL MARK	450	289

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

You are very welcome back to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2017. Well done to your Committee for all the hard work undertaken by Greystones Tidy Towns (GTT) over the last year, as set out in your Submission and Application form. Thank you for your very clear and comprehensive Entry submission – The Application Form including the many photographs showing works carried out etc. is presented to a very high standard. The map attached to the Entry with an extensive numbered key legend drawing attention to areas of interest was however, sometimes difficult to follow because of its small size. Perhaps a larger A3 size map might be included next year with projects completed during the Competition period clearly marked. The cross referencing of the map to the main document also proved very helpful in the Adjudication process. It is noted that you have amended the GTT Constitution and Governance Code providing greater flexibility in the composition and running of your Committee into the future. You have 20 signed up members with a further 7 regular volunteers and meetings are held monthly. The availability of the 5 Tús and CE workers will be a great benefit to your Committee in implementing your work programmes and it is great to see you have established a good working relationship with the local Municipal Council and the various Residents Associations in the Town. Your fundraising events are very impressive and the GRAPE event and Christmas Market at the Harbour Area and Family Fun Day appear to have been a great success generating much needed funds for Tidy Towns – thanks to all who were involved in organising these. Your communication methods using local Newspapers, Twitter, e-mail, texting, Newsletter and phone etc are particularly appropriate for the types of activities you promote and are engaged in. We wish you well in finalising the upgrade to your web-site. It is important to encourage youth involvement in Tidy Towns and you seem to be making great strides in this regard in involving young people particularly Transition Year Students and Scouts who help with your work on the ground, and in liaising with local schools providing talks etc. through your schools' liaison Officer and Green Co-Ordinators. Do you have a youth member on your Main Committee ? – this would be a welcome development. The range of environmental education activities undertaken by local schools as outlined in your submission is very impressive with the Heritage in Schools Programme, Stream of Conscience and After School Garden Project being particularly noteworthy. Congratulations are also due to Greystones Lawn Tennis Club for all the assistance and support given GTT and in providing meeting facilities, equipment and volunteers as required. Planning for the future should be an integral part of any Tidy Towns development strategy and it is noted that GTT has initiated the establishment of the 2020 Greystones Forum which engages with all stakeholders for the betterment of Greystones and work is also ongoing with your 2017 planned Work Plan – we wish you well with all your endeavours here.

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

The site at Saint Crispin' Cell s was visited and the adjudicator was very interested in the history and antiquity of this site. It is noted that new footpaths have been installed on the open space providing improved access and you have

commissioned a Geo Survey which indicates that the Church may be older than first thought. Perhaps in relation to the management of the site, consideration could be given to providing more extensive areas of long grass in the interests of wildlife and biodiversity and this would also reduce grass cutting and maintenance costs. The Old Farmyard was noted with interest and unfortunately the structure here is currently overgrown with ivy. To protect the building for the future, the careful removal of the ivy from the building under archaeological supervision should be considered. This could be tackled on a phased basis, as resources allow. Because of the fabulous sea views available on the site, it would be good to install a number of seats here facing the coast. A Heritage or Interpretive Sign installed near the Church ruins would be desirable to inform visitors of the ecclesiastical importance and history of the property. Some discarded green waste was noted near the pedestrian entrance to the Church site at Redford Park. The concrete post and rail boundary fence around the open space does not enhance the frontage here and its replacement should be considered. It is noted that you have carried out an extensive programme of improvement works at the Dart Station including new planting, painting the Station Buildings and installing portraits by a local artist Tom Byrne. It was good to see some work commencing on the derelict La Touche Hotel site overlooking the sea. The presentation of the Garda station, which is a building of significant architectural quality in the town, was greatly admired. The traditional style single-storey cottages with attractive front gardens at Trafalgar Road added to the character of this part of the Town. The tasteful floral displays at Organic Hair Colours was a great spectacle here. The Holy Rosary Church and environs were neat and tidy and the grounds were maintained to a high standard- this is a very striking building in the Town fronting on to La Touche Road. The Main Street was a central meeting point and most welcoming, as people were out drinking coffee and relaxing in the sunshine. The Plaza fronting the Dart Station was a busy thoroughfare during the visit and the station building itself was well presented. It was great to note very extensive covered parking facilities at the Station available for bicycles which were so numerous it reminded one of similar bike parks seen on the Continent! Very colourful floral displays brightened the Main Street with premises such as Daly's Super Valu, Mooch, The Happy Pear, O'Briens Wines, McCauley's Pharmacy, Bocelli's, The Hungry Monk, to name but a few and all providing a great display – many thanks to all those concerned. The planters installed on the Main Street by Greystones Tidy Towns looked well and complemented the floral displays provided on the business premises. The finish of the road surface along the Main Street was very good. A number of shopfronts might be reviewed in terms of their presentation including Lams Asian Cuisine and The Apaches Pizza premises. The Helena Cottage dwelling looked a little forlorn and would benefit from a tidy up. Overhead cables are prominent along the Main Street and the possibility of undergrounding these as part of a future Village Enhancement Scheme should be explored.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The extensive Plaza and areas of high quality paving at the Harbour, together with the maritime plantings of lavender, ornamental grasses and large pine trees were most attractive. We look forward to the time when a direct pedestrian walkway from the Harbour area to the Bray Head walk is fully completed - this will be a great public amenity to be enjoyed by the residents of Greystones and visitors alike. The planting bed at the entrance to the Arches was noted and the work of Greystones Tidy Towns has made a great difference here – some attention however, needs to be given to weed control here especially during the plant establishment phase. The landscaping scheme along the wall at the car park adjacent to Brereton Carpets could do with a revamp. The ivy plants in the wooden containers in the car park here are struggling to establish. This concrete block wall is unsightly and would benefit from more intensive screening. Therefore, self-clinging climbing plants planted directly into the soil and preferably using a deciduous species with good autumn colour, could be used here. Burnaby park was visited and was presented to a good standard. The new planting scheme at the northern boundary of the park has established well. This was a very attractive and well - designed feature in the park with a colourful palette of blue, purple, grey, and pink dominating the pollinator friendly planting mix - all of which was greatly admired. The 1916 Commemorative tree planting and paved area situated in the south-eastern corner of the Park was positively noted as was the nearby Bowling Green. The carved boulders at the entrance to the Park and the raised timber seating area looked well. The timber seats may be due some maintenance work, as weathering has had some effect on these. It is noted that you continue to plant the bank opposite Council Offices, as plant material becomes available and you have planted 10 Lime trees along the boundary of Shoreline. You have also carried out the planting of Erigeron under railings at Shoreline to suppress weeds and to provide a floral display in Summer -thanks are due to the local business man who sponsored this work.

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

The wildlife signs situated along the seafront opposite Saint David's Holy Faith Secondary School were admired as were the colourful planters nearby. You have concentrated this year on planting insect and bird friendly species to encourage biodiversity. A total of 2000 bulbs have been planted around the Town with the assistance of the scouts. Your idea to create a Pollinator Path through the Town is interesting and it would be good to involve local schools to the creation of appropriate signage. Wildflower Meadows have been established at the St. Crispin's site and there is a possibility to extend these in the interest of encouraging biodiversity. Despite quite a search, the adjudicator was unfortunately unable to find the Cotoneaster wall at Lidl Business Centre but from the photograph this appears to be establishing very well. You have cleared an unsightly planting area on the Rathdown Road and replaced the planting with a range of pollinator friendly species. The plant material used in the planters around the Town continues to include insect and pollinator -friendly plants. The ongoing and important work including the re-introduction of wild plantings at the area known locally as the Picnic Field and the Mill Lane is commended.

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

Engaging with local schoolchildren to create an awareness of the concept of waste minimisation through the holding Waste Treasure Trail project in conjunction with local businesses and the 'Love Our World' Christmas Competition

were worthy initiatives under this category. A water usage survey has also been undertaken by St David's TY Students with a view to providing recommendations on ways to reduce the wastage of water. The 'Charlesland Goes Green' initiative is welcomed and seems to have been a success in reducing food waste in the 50 households participating in Charlesland. You have been engaging with local children with regard to aluminium can re-cycling initiatives and have organised a talk with local schools and scouts on the importance of this issue -we wish you well with the proposed sculpture project. Your plans for more organised rainwater harvesting to facilitate the watering of plantings during the Summer are commended. It is clearly not sustainable to be paying €100 euros per week for a tanker when this can be collected and stored locally for free. We wish you great success with the project for the re-use and repair of furniture collected from apartment blocks to be undertaken by the Men's Shed, for re-sale in local charity shops.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

On the day of judging we noticed that a CE/Tús worker was busily picking up litter in the Harbour area, and the extensive paved areas and plantings here, were generally very neat and tidy. There was some littering along the main Church Street thoroughfare and at Burnaby Park although this consisted mainly of cigarette butts. The granite seats and cleanliness along the open space at the Seafront to the south of the town were particularly admired. It is great that you have your own team of 'Graffiti busters' who operate on a 2- day turnaround, upon notification. This is crucial as a slow response can give rise to further incidents of graffiti. Where graffiti is a problem on walls facing open space areas, the use of hedge planting has proved to be successful in deterring graffiti. You seem to have a good handle on litter control in the Town with access to 5 staff from the Tús/CE Scheme who carry out litter patrols twice weekly, the use of a street cleaner and the installation of 10 Big Belly bins at various locations. Great thanks are due to the 3 local residents who clean 'as they go' while out running or walking. Your anti dog fouling initiative has been successful with 70 friendly wardens now signed up. You liaise with the Council and the Tús/CE on a weekly basis in relation to litter picking, grass cutting and planting maintenance operations.

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

Redford Park was visited and was well presented. Consider removing the rocks at the entrance to the estate as these can create unnecessary maintenance difficulties. There is a lone ESB Kiosk on the frontage of the main open space at Redford Park which is unsightly. This could be screened with perimeter hedge planting, as appropriate. The Rathdown Park estate was visited and the estate and open spaces were well presented. It is good to note that a wildlife area is being reserved at Burnaby Heights. Trafalgar Road was noteworthy for its charming traditional style cottages and cottage gardens and thanks to the local residents who assist in the maintenance of public spaces in this area. It is good that residents in the Old Burnaby Estate have recently formed a resident's association to be affiliated to Greystones Tidy Towns, which will enable both parties to co-operate on future works. The input of local residents in relation to the maintenance of Burnaby Lawn and Court estates is fully recognized. Congratulations to the Massey Family for their success in winning the 'Jimmy Barker Award' and for all their hard work in maintaining the area around Windgates, on the northern approach to the Town.

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

The wonderful sea views and the natural vegetation on both sides of the road on the Northern approach to the town were admired and it is good to see that the grass along roadside boundaries is allowed to grow long on this stretch, in the interests of biodiversity. The planting bed at the large 'Welcome to Greystones' road sign would benefit from some further attention in terms of cutting back and weed control. The South Beach car park was visited and the planting on the narrow bank on the opposite side of the road and the Birch planting along the car park frontage were both admired. It was great to note a total absence of litter in the car park and the 'big belly' litter bin is obviously working out well. The public toilets were very presentable and the nearby well - maintained playground was getting great use during the visit. The bottle bank and recycling facility in this area was also very clean and well presented. The green area on the old Mill Road before the Shoreline roundabout, which has a fine collection of young trees was admired, as were the planting schemes in the vicinity of Shoreline Roundabout. It is understood that Greystones Tidy Towns are now working closely with Wicklow County Council with regard to the development of plans for improving the appearance of the roundabouts on the southern approach to the Town with the themes of Beach, Coastal, Mountains and Woodlands and we wish you well in your discussions and securing funding for this important improvement work.

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you for the great efforts made by your Committee, volunteers, supporters and work placement staff in their involvement with this year's entry and in ensuring Greystones was maintained and presented to a high standard this year. Greystones as a Town has important assets such as its Harbour development, rail link, coastal walks and amenities, business and tourism infrastructure, character and quality of the built environment, natural habitats and strong Community engagement, all of which can be used to great advantage as you progress in the Competition. It was a pleasure to visit and adjudicate your Town this year and we wish you well with your future endeavours.