

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Galway City Centre** Ref: **1340**
County: **Galway** Mark: **302**
Category: **H** Date(s): **21/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	45	46
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	41	41
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	41	41
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	33	35
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	20	22
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	48	50
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	32	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	35	35
TOTAL MARK	450	295	302

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Many thanks for your entry in this year's Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for participating in Ireland's biggest community project. What a lovely entry you submitted this year! This was colourful, interesting, well-illustrated with some super photographs but concise and to the point. Well done. The adjudicator didn't receive a Tidy Towns Plan with your entry. Was this an oversight or is it in production? You will need it to progress much further. The adjudicator was impressed with the make-up of your committee. You really have wide representation and this will stand to you. Your list of supporting organisations is equally impressive. You have excellent links with schools and colleges. You are well-supported and obviously well-respected by the local authority as well as businesses and community groups. The adjudicator was struck by how much the designation of a future European Capital of Culture obviously means to Galway. The Adopt a Spot campaign and its hash tag are very clever. Your input into the traffic management plans and way-finding schemes are examples of what a good Tidy Towns group is for - playing your part in the bigger picture of the city.

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

The city centre businesses are key to the vitality of Galway and it's good to read that you work hand in hand with local businesses and their representative groups and the local authority in initiatives such as the Business Hub and the Halla Bia. Several times you refer to submissions you have made and this is excellent. You are also instrumental in keeping áir chuid teanga front and foremost on shopfronts and signage. Shopfronts are indeed a key resource for Galway and many fine examples were viewed. The Quay's Pub and its gorgeous windows is just one. Tigh Neachtán another. Tempo Antiques and Yes Flowers could hardly be more different in style but both so well-presented and attractive. Is this the most beautiful AIB branch in Ireland? Possibly. Tigh Nora, McCambridges and the Piemaker are gems. Could CEX do more to fit in? It wouldn't be difficult.

A brief stop was had at the Hall of the Red Earl. Fascinating and so nicely displayed. The stone plaque on Black's Castle is in need of repainting. There are junction boxes in prominent areas that appear to make no sense. Some others (e.g. by the shopping centre) have been daubed with graffiti.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Thank you for the level of detail supplied by you here. The most impressive statistic is the number of planters that are sponsored and maintained. Well done. As for the claim to Ireland's longest hose, well that may need independent verification! The wooden on-street planters added colour and interest to the bustling streetscape. Eyre Square was just delightful. So much work has gone into this area, well done to the local authority and all other involved. Lavender and barley are unusual companions here. The adjudicator sat for a sandwich and three species

of bird joined him on the bench in the hopes of leftovers. The Port of Galway planters make a very positive contribution to a modern streetscape here.

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

Thank you for an excellent submission in this category. You demonstrate here that you know the importance of biodiversity to your city, you are aware of the role that you can play in this and finally that you realise the importance of awareness-raising. Your submission is a model of clarity and an example of how this should be done.

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

Again, an excellent entry here shows how well you appreciate the issues involved in this category. The adjudicator won't waste your time on recounting all of the measures back to you but suffice it to say that are hitting all the right notes. The cash for cans scheme came as a surprise bit of information. One wonders why this isn't better known and indeed replicated. Again, this submission is ideal in its content and presentation.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Some excellent illustrations light up the submission in this category. Well done. You have indeed been busy. You have clearly worked hard with businesses on several blackspots and on disused premises. Very good. Thanks for the lists of the clean-ups. The adjudicator was amused by how casually you list kayakers and scuba divers among the many volunteers. This must surely have given you some good pictures!

Unfortunately, the adjudicator was a little disappointed at the litter in your main streets and lanes. Some - though not much - was aged. Cigarette butts were far too numerous. The adjudicator knows well that cobble-lock paving and butts make for hard work. Maybe some work identifying worse-hit areas and locations of cigarette bins might help.

There are many tidiness issues for you to address. It is acknowledged that you have a vast amount of streets, lanes and roads to cover and the adjudicator could see that work is ongoing by the Council in some areas. An audit might assist you in planning and targeting your actions. Watch out for damaged and dirty signage, dirty litterbins and redundant poles are among your items to be addressed. Some graffiti lingers and weed control is patchy. The dog litter bag dispenser was noted. Is the slogan here supposed to be read to the air of 'Jump Around'? Graffiti at the Spanish Arch and the poor condition of a litterbin sign were disappointing.

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

You have a good approach to the challenges of this category. You are working cooperatively with the resident groups and have consulted with them in the making of your 3-Year Plan. Very good. The Galway City Tidy Towns and Garden Competition is an excellent initiative and 300 entrants is very impressive. Perhaps most impressive was the efforts being made by householders with keeping walls and doors clean and in several areas window-boxes added great colour.

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

Another good submission here. Your signage scheme is very important and you are wished every success with it. The bike scheme is working well and indeed the city suits the bike. There should be more, though it is felt. You could perhaps make biking a theme of a future campaign. The adjudicator was delighted to see you featured atop the 'road train' as it set off. A brisk dander along the Long Walk was enjoyed - despite the wind. The remnants of the city walls were an unexpected delight.

Concluding Remarks:

The adjudicator will admit to not knowing much of Galway City Centre hitherto. This was a lovely way of finding out more about this charming and vibrant city. A brief aside: literally within the adjudicator's first five minutes of starting the assessment (just getting bearings with your very useful map), a businessman passing paused to ask me if I was alright, did I know where I was. Obviously, I was in the world's friendliest city.