

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Daingean** Ref: **620**
County: **Offaly** Mark: **295**
Category: **C** Date(s): **13/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	43	44
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	39	39
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	43	43
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	29	30
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	18	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	45	46
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	37	38
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	37	37
TOTAL MARK	450	291	295

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Many thanks for your application to the 2017 Tidy Towns Competition. Please list all the current year's projects under each category in your application rather than referring to the three year plan. The plan is quite descriptive rather than setting out particular actions or projects that will be undertaken over a three year timeframe and many projects are aspirational i.e. 'we are hopeful that...'. Consult the Tidy Towns Handbook for guidance to improve to structure and approach of your plan. It might also be worthwhile to list project partners for each action or project. You have a large committee and many volunteers to help with your work which is a wonderful resource for your community. Congratulations on winning the Gold Village award with Tullamore Credit Union, well deserved. You communicate with your community through a variety of methods, which is a great idea. The strong sense of pride in the community in Daingean is very evident.

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

It isn't clear from your application what projects were completed in the current year. The canal is the main focal point for the village and there are some attractive residences nearby. The playground is a wonderful amenity, as is the canal which is beautifully maintained. There are many very well-presented buildings in the village including Seerys Pub, the Gaelic Bar, the Library, the old school, the current school and the Catholic Church. The town hall sadly detracts from the town square and adjacent green area although it does have considerable potential. While restoration works may be a long term project, simply painting the front doors and the two lamp poles at the front of the building would go a small way to improving the appearance of this important heritage feature and focal point. A couple of large planters with perennial flowers that complement the colour of the doors and the building would look better than the current tired looking planters. The old litter bin adjacent to the building is very unsightly. A planting scheme for this whole area (town square and adjacent green) that provides a consistent theme could greatly enhance this important space. At the moment there is some attractive and colourful planting but it doesn't work as well as it could. Keep working to improve derelict sites, this is a difficult issue but one you are well aware of.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

As stated above the canal is beautifully maintained. It's important to leave the vegetation close to the river uncut and in a natural state to protect water quality and to provide habitat for wildlife. There are many attractive planters around the town, near the canal bridge, the town square and on approach roads. The stone flower beds near the playground looked spectacular on adjudication day with dazzling colour. The wooden planter is probably surplus to requirements here and could be moved elsewhere. The village green also looked very well with some nice trees and flowers. The old Church of Ireland and graveyard is another important heritage feature. It is well presented with nice signage out front. You are to be commended for seeking expert advice when working a historic graveyard. The

Heritage Officer should be consulted prior to doing any works, as you have done. You have plans for a wormery, butterfly garden and insect hotel here. I wonder if these would be more appropriate in the school grounds or some other space that children frequent. Your survey of householders found they prefer summer bedding to flowering perennials or shrubs. As it is much more environmentally-friendly to plant perennials and cost effect, you might consider planting some demo areas with pollinator-friendly perennials to show that they can also look spectacular as well as being beneficial for wildlife. There are many practical suggestions on <http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/projects/irish-pollinator-initiative/all-ireland-pollinator-plan/local-communities/>. The GAA club is well presented and a great amenity for the community. There is an opportunity for landscaping the area between the club and the graveyard, perhaps by planting native hedging or trees.

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

It's great to hear that you have taken a new approach in this category with two additional projects in relation to swifts and bats- walks and talks for the public. Raising awareness and appreciation of our local wildlife and biodiversity is just as important as doing projects. Do include photos of any events you run in your application. You have been busy adding bug hotels and houses around the town. Just make sure they are installed in suitable locations that allow people to learn more about the wonder of insects and the diversity of bugs in our environment. It's good to hear you have included some pollinator-friendly plants in your flower beds on the Tullamore road. This could be extended to other planters as suggested above. The cost-savings in the long-term can be significant and many plants that attract pollinators are very beautiful.

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

It's great to hear you have a group of students making a significant contribution to this important category. They know how to connect with their peer group and make a change. The use of manure from the Alpaca farm sounds very exotic and is a good use of this valuable resource. It's good to see that the school are progressing well in the green schools programme. This represents a huge amount of work. You might consider trying to expand some of the school projects to the wider community e.g. reducing water usage in the town (by promoting rainwater collection).

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Very little litter was spotted on adjudication day apart from a small bit in the village green. The village was overall very tidy and presented to a high standard. It's great to have a dedicated person to keep an eye on the bring bank.

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

You are right to promote the value of having a residents association and it's good to see several estates have one. Congratulations to the Meadow Court for the numerous prizes they have been awarded, well-deserved. There are many well-maintained residences and housing areas in the town. Do encourage residents associations to get name plates for their estate if they don't have one.

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

The approach to the town on the Edenderry Road is very attractive with the canal on one side and well-presented residences and gardens on the other. You could consider leaving some of the grassy verge on the canal side unmown during the summer months for the benefit of pollinators. Appropriate signage is available from the National Biodiversity Data Centre (see link above). Just north of the graveyard is a length of wire fencing that could be screened by planting a native hedgerow. There are well-maintained hedgerows on this road and nice grassy verges. There was some recent hedge-cutting on the Tullamore Road on adjudication day, which should be discouraged where possible. Trees along the main street look well.

Concluding Remarks:

This was my first visit to Daingean and I really enjoyed a walk along the beautiful canal.