

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Edenderry** Ref: **550**
County: **Offaly** Mark: **282**
Category: **E** Date(s): **13/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	45	46
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	42	43
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	39	39
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	29	29
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	17	17
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	44	45
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	34	35
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	28	28
TOTAL MARK	450	278	282

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Thank you for your application to the 2017 Tidy Towns Competition. Your three-year plan is well structured and comprehensive. The photos supplied are very helpful, especially the before and after ones. You have a large committee and many other volunteers that help out. This is a great resource for you community. It's good to hear you also work closely with the Heritage Officer, Area Engineer, Arts Officer etc. and consult with the relevant bodies and agencies. It's important to get sound advice and expertise where required. You seem to have a great system for getting the word out and huge enthusiasm for your work.

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

The canal harbour is a lovely heritage feature and focal point of the town. Unfortunately on adjudication day there was a lot of litter and a lifebuoy ring in the water. I would have liked to find out more about the history of this area. There is a small information panel nearby but it is hard to find and looks dated. It is adjacent to an old weighing scales (?), again I would have loved some more information. The 'Guide to Go' App might be the solution and hopefully it will be launched soon. As it was my first visit to Edenderry I wasn't sure where to park near the harbour. The tiered planters add a strong splash of colour on the main street. Avoid planting flowers under trees or shrubs. They compete for water and detract from the trees. The murals on the ESB sub-stations and some premises look great. I particularly liked the barge painting near the canal and the sub-station with the butterfly. Derelict sites are an issue in many centres and you are taking action with the murals and by engaging the local authority on this problem. There are many attractive shop fronts and businesses in the town including McGreal's Bar, Tedder's Chemist, Byrne's Bar, Eden School of Music and Eden Décor Centre. The Town Hall, Credit Union, Church of Ireland and St. Mary's Church are also presented very well. The Derry Rovers Club is a super amenity for the community but it would benefit from screen planting along the road frontage to enhance its appearance.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The trees that line the main street look well. The tiered planters add a vibrant splash of colour but take care not to overdo it. The 'yarn bombing' is an innovative and eye-catching project, well done to all involved. It's great to hear that you are controlling Japanese Knotweed with advice from the council. The Downshire Shopping Area is well landscaped with trees and shrubs as is the Aldi store. There are also some nice trees on the road that leads down to the shopping centre from the main street. There does seem to be excessive herbicide use in places e.g. under trees along the canal. Herbicide use should be kept to an absolute minimum as it is bad for human health and the environment. It should never be used near watercourses. The playground is a fantastic facility and nicely framed by mature trees. There are a couple of dead or leaning trees on the Tullamore Road. They could be replaced. Avoid pollarding trees unless absolutely necessary as the results can be unsightly and impact on tree health (e.g. Kiline

Drive).

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

It's great to see your focus on wildlife in the canal. The CE participants are to be commended for their efforts and interest in this area. I would be reluctant to add any more ducks, they will colonise the area naturally. Efforts should be focussed on maintaining water quality and leaving the riparian areas (strip of vegetation adjacent to the water) to grow naturally i.e. uncut, in order to provide cover and habitat for birds and insects. It's really good to read that you have been monitoring the use of bird nesting boxes in the town. The ones in Killane Drive are very colourful and fun shapes. I'm not sure they will be occupied by birds, however, as they are in an open and exposed location. Most birds prefer a bit of cover and privacy. You could plant a native hedge with trees along the railing between the estate and the new secondary school, which might help. Your native tree planting projects also contribute to this category. You might consider running more events to promote the natural heritage of your area and raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity e.g. nature walk along the canal during Heritage Week.

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

It's good to read that you are continuing to provide advice in relation to composting and demonstrations. You could conduct a survey to determine the level of home composting and uptake of compost from the town composters. This would help you determine the impact of the composting workshops on changing attitudes and practice. An expansion of the use of rainwater to water your many planters in the town would really make a difference. Are there some locations you could install more water butts? The schools appear to be actively working on their Green Flags and it would be great to extend the green schools ethos to the wider community. How is the food cloud initiative going?

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Despite the hard work of your dedicated committee and volunteers unfortunately there was some litter around the town e.g. the car park adjacent to the playground and in the canal harbour. Overall, however the town was well presented and tidy. The introduction of Mutt Mitts is a great initiative and it's good to monitor their uptake, well done. Your Tidy Town Garden competition is also a good way to involve and encourage residents.

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

Bilingual signage for estates and other areas is great to see. There are several well-presented housing estates and residential areas including Woodfield, Sr. Senan's Court, Kiline Drive and Killane Estate. Keep working with residents associations to get name plates for all the estates.

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

There is a bit of flyposting on the approach road from Tullamore. Some of the road signs are looking a bit worn and could be cleaned or updated. An audit of road signage could prove useful to ensure all signs can be clearly read and are pointing the right direction. Redundant signs should be removed. The canal walkway is a fantastic amenity. The proposed cycle paths will be a good way to alleviate congestion and promote an active lifestyle. Hedgerows and trees on the approach roads appear to be well-maintained in general. Have you considered leaving some roadside verges uncut as habitat for pollinators?

Concluding Remarks:

This was my first visit to Edenderry and it was most pleasant; keep up the great work.