

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Tubber** Ref: **285**
County: **Offaly** Mark: **318**
Category: **B** Date(s): **14/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	45	47
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	38	39
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	46	47
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	32	33
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	18	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	64	65
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	28	28
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	40	41
TOTAL MARK	450	311	318

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Many thanks for your application to the 2017 Tidy Towns Competition. You followed the advice of last year's adjudicator and provided a concise application with map and informative photos. For next year, the numbers on the map should correspond with this year's project numbers. Your three year plan is very detailed and ambitious. For future reference it might be better to develop a plan with clear actions for each year and list any project partners. Many of the actions are listed under the general timeframe of 2017-2019. You have a dedicated committee that have put a lot of effort into improving your submission as well as working hard for your community. It's a great idea to consult and share ideas with other Tidy Towns Groups. You collaborate with other groups in the area including the Men's Shed, GAA and TÚS workers, and other bodies and agencies. This approach has great benefits for your work and the results are clear to see.

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

Many buildings in Tubber are presented to a very high standard. It's a shame that Cat and Bagpipes has closed but despite this it looks great as does the adjacent parking area, the Church, Community Hall and school. Kilcurley and Kilmonaghan Cemeteries are both managed very well. Your adjudicator was delighted to visit the historic Kilmonaghan Cemetery, which is being sensitively managed to protect this important part of your local heritage. Kilcurley Cemetery also looks very neat and tidy. It was great to see that the corners of the site were left un-mowed. This could be expanded in future years and managed as flower meadows. Just a word of caution when power-washing headstones in the church yard and replenishing writing, always consult with the Heritage Officer for advice on best practice to avoid any inadvertent damage. The GAA club also looks very well with very nice hedging screening the road frontage wall and clean signage out front.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

There are many attractively landscaped areas in Tubber. It is particularly nice to see the abundant use of perennials and attractive flowering shrubs rather than relying solely on summer annuals for colour. The perennial bed across the road from the school looked fantastic on adjudication day. The 'Shady Patch' is very shady indeed and your adjudicator wondered if it was worth the effort of landscaping this small patch. The newly planted flowers are suitable for the area and hopefully will thrive. It's good to replace or loosen tree ties and remove them once they are no longer required i.e. once the tree is established, usually a couple of years after planting. The planters at the 'Tubber' signs looked very well. The pollinator-friendly bed is a good idea and perhaps this could be expanded to other landscaped areas in the village over time. Many pollinator-friendly plants are very attractive. The hedge-laying project is a great idea. A native hedgerow in this area will look better than fencing. It's great to see that you are continuing with the grass management plan. This can be reviewed over time to determine how well it is working and

whether you can expand to any new areas.

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

It is good to hear that the Tidy Towns Group has reviewed their herbicide use and aim to keep it to a minimum. There was unfortunately a stretch of hedgerow that had been sprayed on the Ballycumber Road. You are leading by example though and hopefully others will follow suit. The Old Road Walkway and park area is a lovely natural amenity. Signage is great for raising awareness but try not to overdo it. The native hedgerow, shrubberies and copses of trees look very well, especially where fringed by Ladies Mantle. They are enhanced by the old stone walls. Your pollinator-friendly landscaping and grass management plan also contribute to biodiversity enhancement and this section. Could you leave some more areas unmown in the green area adjacent to the Old Road Walkway? Could you team up with the school on biodiversity projects? How about running some events to raise awareness of local nature and wildlife e.g. a tree planting event for Tree Week, a Dawn or Dusk Chorus walk in May (BirdWatch Ireland may be able to help) or nature walk/ talk in Heritage Week? Consult with the Heritage Officer for suggestions. Is there a local beekeeping group that might give a beekeeping talk or demonstration?

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

Food waste prevention and composting information sessions are a great idea for raising awareness locally. The WEE library is cute but I wonder how much it is used. Would it be better located in the community hall? It's great to read you are monitoring the quantities of recycled clothes. The Bring Bank area was very tidy on inspection. Do you have facilities for disposing of batteries safely or recycling electrical items? Do you use the compost and leaf mould you are producing in the bins on the walkway in your planting schemes?

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

No litter was spotted on adjudication day and the village was very tidy. The regular litter picks are obviously working very well. It's good you have identified litter black spots and keep these areas monitored. Co-operation with the litter warden is excellent. As stated above the Bring Bank area looked well. It's great your Spring Clean was a success, especially from a community-building point of view. It's always good to have a social element. It's also good to see youth participation. The Old Walkway was cleaned up sensitively and the fencing painted. The contrast between the managed area adjacent to the road and the 'wilder' backdrop looks well. All the signage looked in good condition. Overall tidiness and litter control was at a very high standard, well done.

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

Residences in Tubber are presented very well. There are many nice gardens and well-maintained homes.

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

The approach roads to Tubber are generally very attractive with the mix of well-maintained hedgerows and trees. The uncut grassy verges also looked lovely on adjudication day with some wild orchids spotted in one section. The cycle lane appeared in reasonable condition. The planting in 'The Wells' at the welcome signs looked cheerful.

Concluding Remarks:

I really enjoyed my first visit to Tubber, it was a real pleasure. Keep up the good work.