

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballyduff**

Ref: **122**

County: **Wexford**

Mark: **301**

Category: **A**

Date(s): **19/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	46	47
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	35	36
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	42	42
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	26	28
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	13	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	65	65
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	30	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	34	34
TOTAL MARK	450	291	301

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Ballyduff is very welcome to the SuperValu TidyTowns Competition 2017. Thank you to Ballyduff Development Group for your entry and accompanying map. We thank you for your support to the TidyTowns movement, although by competition standards you are relative new comers! This has not hindered you, your village is beautiful, and we are delighted to read that there is universal agreement locally that the competition has helped to improve your village and a sense of community spirit. You proudly document some of your achievements since you first entered the competition - your twelve years of hard work and dedication is paying off. It is great that you realise that more can be achieved and are visiting other centres to get inspiration and motivation for your future plans. You have a dedicated committee and are extremely fortunate to have in excess of 50 people volunteering to help with the various activities each year. Many larger towns across Ireland are not as fortunate to receive such support. You are using many methods of communication to engage with the local community and your stakeholders. We viewed your Facebook page and website, both full of interesting posts! It is heartening that the Junior TidyTowns Group, formed last year, is working well and that the local school are very engaged with the TidyTowns agenda. We thank the two transition year students from Carnew Community School for all their hard work this year and hope they found the volunteering beneficial. It is good that one of the students was able to hone their communication skills by presenting to the local national school on bees and bee-keeping. It would appear the future of Ballyduff TidyTowns is in safe hands. Finally, we thank the various agencies, bodies, local businesses and local community who support your work and activities.

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

St. Josephs Church is well maintained and makes a pleasing visual statement within your rural street scene. The bright hanging baskets add colour here. Your adjudicator greatly admired the quaint local shop. We meant to take a photo of the lovely hand painted sign but were too busy talking with the owner that we forgot! We gather that the development group and the school have a wonderful working relationship and that you have helped develop the school garden. The school is very well maintained and we note that the building has recently been painted and the development group assisted with painting the walls to the front of the school. A number of your projects such as the 'rainy day play area' were located within the school grounds which we did not visit, but we did venture across the playing pitch to see the composter and subsequently visited the school garden.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

St. Columba's Park is a lovely haven within close proximity to the school. Significant effort has gone into the presentation and enhancement of the school grounds with the wildflower area to the rear, beehive, bug hotels, raised vegetable beds, reused tyre planters, etc. We hope that the children are getting an appreciation for nature

and an understanding of growing their own fruit and vegetables through their involvement. Landscaping in the village itself is good and there are a few key areas that stand out; including: the biodiversity area, planting at the house near the t-junction, the milk churn stand, and at the grotto.

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

You are working to promote and extend walking trails in the area with other stakeholders – we wish you well as you work with neighbouring villages to develop the walking trails. You are excellent at raising awareness among school children in relation to the local wildlife and natural amenities and your efforts have paid off with a number of awards at the Wexford County Council Environment Awards. You have been getting relevant training this year on managing wildflower meadows, bee's and maintaining hedgerows. Perhaps you could organise a similar event in the village and encourage members of the local community to attend. Thank you for entering the Let's Get Buzzing Pollinator Special Award this year. It is great to read that you are promoting greener gardening and a policy of not using pesticides and herbicides – all too often we see large strips of burnt grass on our adjudication travels. Thank you also for supporting the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. You support National Tree Week by planting trees and holding a plant sale incorporating social morning and decorating the May Tree after Sunday Mass. This was a great event to get people together and swapping planting species of various kinds. We wonder is there an area of land suitable for a small orchard or allotments; would the local community and development group be interested in pursuing such a project?

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

The composting facility looks excellent and the collaboration with Wexford County Council and Stop Food Waste has worked well – we hope you find it beneficial and in time will be using your own compost throughout the village. We note that two members of your group participated in training sessions. We wondered are these Master Composter training courses? Stop Food Waste run Master Composter training courses. Many Master Composters are involved with Tidy Towns or other community groups or associations. Two members of the group also attended the Stop Food Waste Challenge in October, it is good that you are sharing the hints and tips on your social media page and website, perhaps give us an insight into the number of people looking at these posts. Perhaps one of these attendees would cascade the training onwards to other members of the development group? Alternatively, you could perhaps consider a Stop Food Waste awareness event in association with a local chef or ICA member with an interest in the topic. Are you familiar with the 'free libraries' Tidy Towns committees are making themselves? (There is one in the park in Askamore.) We think this could really work in your village, perhaps in the park. The children have been reusing various items for use in the school garden, participating in a Repak competition, researched waste and its effect on the environment etc – it is great that they are so enthusiastic and are playing their part in Tidy Towns. The tyre Minions are a fun addition to the school garden! The bottle bank area is excellent, amongst the best we have seen on our Tidy Towns travels. We wondered how easy are these to service and collect from. It is positive that the facility accepts a wide variety of materials. We followed your yellow brick road and were impressed with your delightfully jolly scarecrow and useful tin man! Creative up-cycling projects, 'bring your own cup' initiative, stop junk mail awareness are amongst other worthy projects you mention having worked on this year. You have certainly been busy! Some other ideas that other centres are working that you might be interested in include promotion of 'Grow Your Own' or reducing travel miles by car-pooling. We are confident that you have the enthusiasm and expertise to organise interesting community projects relevant to this category for next year.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Thank you for participation in the Wexford 2K Clean-Up, Keep Wexford Beautiful and the National Spring Clean – your participation is greatly appreciated. Congratulations on your two Gold Star awards this year awarded on the 15th June. The bottle banks were spotless and have been mentioned elsewhere. You have also completed a litter survey. We wondered if you have a litter patrol schedule or a litter management plan for the area. Litter control in and around the village was excellent. Tidiness issues were few and far between.

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

Residential properties are by in large well presented and maintained. We admired the ivy clad house that faces the road. Encourage householders to take care of the property boundaries, some need weeding. Furthermore, you could create awareness amongst the community about the importance of planting native hedging as opposed to Griselinia and Leylandii etc. You mention raising awareness amongst the local community about the importance of supporting wildlife and biodiversity – this can extend to residential gardens by planting pollinator friendly species and creating shelters and habitats for wildlife.

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

Your wooden welcome signs were admired, they work well given your rural setting and give a great first impression. We noted that these had recently been sanded and repainted. The traditional herring bone stone walls are very appealing and add great interest to your roads. Watch out for foliage that covers speed signs. One of your main projects this year is the new footpath linking the school to the church car park. Good progress was noted during our adjudication visit but there is still work to do to finish the scheme to a high standard. We like that you have thought sustainably when designing the footpath and incorporated the stream, that was once present but had since been piped underground, in order to add aesthetics and create habitat for local flora and fauna. Appropriate planting is required to ensure the scheme blends in with surroundings. As this project is still on-going please make sure to include it next year so that the adjudicator can take it into consideration. We nearly missed your red water pump,

perhaps some ivy could be cut back to reveal a little more of the pump.

Concluding Remarks:

We found your village a delight to visit and spend some time in. You have a lovely village with great scope to do well in the competition. A quote from Glinda – the Good Witch from the Wizard of Oz aptly comes to mind – ‘You are capable of more than you know’. Your adjudicator hopes that you will continue with the great work and momentum gained this year and build upon this success for the year ahead.