Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre:	**Duncormick**	Ref:	**2062**
County:	**Wexford**	Mark:	**302**
Category:	**A**	Date(s):	**20/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	44	44
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	42	41
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	43	43
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	26	27
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	10	14
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	65	65
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	31	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	36	36
TOTAL MARK	**450**	**297**	**302**

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Duncormick Village is very welcome to the SuperValu TidyTowns competition 2017. Thank you for your entry form and accompanying documents including your three-year TidyTowns plan. Your committee is working hard in conjunction with various agencies and bodies to improve the village and your environs. We are surprised to learn that you have only been participating in the competition since 2011. The work you are doing has helped to raise awareness of your heritage and it is positive that more people have an appreciation of the local surroundings. You are fortunate to receive a good deal of local support from volunteers and local businesses including: Brogans Tractors, Wexford Naturalists Field Club, McVeigh's Indoor Market, Sinnott's Pub, F&M Whelan and Mobile Chef. You communicate well with the local community and your stakeholders via a wide range of mediums and it is wonderful that from your posts on social media there is a lot of interest in your activities and work programmes. A good connection and engagement with the local schools will serve you well in other categories. It is good that the younger members of Duncormick are involved in some competition aspects and we thank them for playing their part in keeping the village clean and tidy. We wondered if it is now time you embarked upon establishing a Junior TidyTowns committee.

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

You are fortunate to have a number of built heritage assets in your village. The three-arch road bridge spanning the Duncormick River is an integral component of local eighteenth-century civil engineering heritage. The old bakehouse was noted as was a number of other heritage buildings you are maintaining such as the Old Courthouse. Sinnott's thatch roof greatly adds to the character of the streetscape. Scaville's Lodge is getting rather jaded, we note it is no longer open. The sign poles outside Saville's Lodge that are no longer being used could be removed. The climber helps soften the frontage of Brogan's Tractors. We thought that perhaps the wall here is now due a fresh coat of paint. The Day-to-day store could be verging on cluttered at the forecourt. There is a site for sale - currently an unfinished site – hopefully this will be developed to fill in the space and get occupiers. The green netting you mention in your application has started to come down.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

There is a nicely landscaped bed at the Duncormick name stone (at Cullenstown junction) and raised planters on both sides of the road, which catch attention when approaching the village. The 'iron men' at the Milk Stand at the top of the hill were impressive. Congratulations on winning 2nd Prize in the Heritage Preservation and Conservation Category of the Keep Wexford Beautiful Competition 2016. The recently painted fence and trees planted behind the stone wall look well. It is good that you are thinking towards the future in terms of planting new trees. The area beside the memorial stone, graveyard and picnic table is kept to a good standard and had been recently mowed.

The black planters were noted at various locations. The Peace Garden is a tranquil peaceful spot and the grotto here is lovingly maintained and presented. Liaise with the neighbouring car garage to ensure accessibility for all as a number of cars were concealing the entrance on adjudication day. Along the street near the courthouse we wondered if the metal tree protectors are still required?

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

You have started work in relation to supporting the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and held a junior workshop on bumblebee nesting and the life of solitary bees. We gather from your plan that you wish to continue with work that supports the pollinator plan for the year ahead. Bear in mind that you can encourage householders to plant pollinator friendly species and get residents to get involved in the action. Have you compiled a habitat survey of the village? Your adjudicator does not see any reference to it and it is something that adjudicators like to see under this category. It gives you an appreciation of the various habitats on your doorstep and how you can protect, conserve and enhance them. The Riverwalk is a fabulous amenity and it is great that you hold nature walks to create awareness amongst the youth. Would there be take-up of such an event for adults? The two locals that record bat sightings for Bat Conservation Ireland might be interested in giving a bat walk at night? The notice board at the start of the Riverwalk was noted and you have a designated nature corner to provide people with information on birds they might spot on their walk. At the bridge, one side of the riverbank is left wild, while we have no issues with this, we felt that this could be actively managed, not prettified in any way but managed.

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

We note that several of your committee members attended a Master Composter course and developed a composting area over four years ago. You tell us you now have top quality compost at your disposal. Please encourage those who cut the grass and roadside verges to use the composting facility as we noted a man discarding the contents of his lawnmower bag into a nearby field. The local children have been making upcycled Christmas decorations, it is nice that these were able to be put on display in the Church. This project also earned you 2nd Place in the Best Community Waste Prevention / Re-Use Project – well done. We had come across the Wexford Repair Directory on our adjudication travels this year but had not appreciated that a number of TidyTowns groups had contributed to its collation. Has this booklet been circulated to the householders locally? Using social media to provide helpful hints and tips is an easy but effective way of creating more awareness in this category. Perhaps for next year provide us with a few more details such as how many followers you have, how many post views you received etc. Sustainable transport is being promoted in Rathangan National School and we love the catchy slogan ‘Don’t use your wheels – use your heels’ and a community bus runs twice weekly to Wexford town from the village. Do you promote this service? Encouraging car sharing, public transport, community bus etc is all relevant. The Harvest Festival would seem to be a big event in your calendar! Thanks for providing the festival flyer. You mentioned the locally homemade produce and local artisan foods on offer. We read about it in the press and it seems to be a large event set in various locations around the village that celebrates all things good about Duncormick: screening of short films celebrated the rich heritage of the locality and visitors also had a chance to get an insider's look into traditional crafts and skills at hot shoeing, shoe-making and weaving demonstrations on site – well done! We hope it was a great success!

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You participate annually in the National Spring Clean - Rathangan School joined forces with you this year for the Spring Clean – we hope everyone found the day rewarding. Danescastle National School are also playing their part by raising awareness of litter management and recycling. Litter control was considered to be good on adjudication day. However, keep an eye on the issue of dog fouling and people walking dogs along the riverwalk, as we noted two or three instances of dog fouling on the path. Dog owners should be encouraged to clean up after their dogs. The sign for the church is covered by foliage, perhaps this should be trimmed back a little.

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

St. Anne’s Villas are well presented with clean boundary walls. Houses within the Old Rectory Manor also look well. Some of the hedging here needs to be infilled. Perhaps this could be completed with native hedging as opposed to the laurel hedge. Consider hawthorn, blackthorn, holly or dog rose for example. The thorns on these species allow small birds to hide safely from predators. In Rectory Grove, there is evidence of weed killer which we do not advocate the use of. Encourage more stainable forms of weed control. The housing here is presented to a good standard. Please check stays and tree ties in the housing estates as we noted ones that were no longer needed and may be causing tree damage in Rectory Grove. As mentioned in last year’s adjudication report a best kept garden or estate competition does generate interest. Getting the householders out and assisting on your busy work nights is really what you are after. Consider having a representative from each housing area/estate on your TidyTowns related committee.

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

The Duncormick name stones let the visitors know they have arrived in your village. The grass verges were being cut on the day we visited. They are generally well presented. You clean road signs and wall plaques throughout the village on an annual basis – thank you. You also paint field gates within the village limits. As you are no doubt aware, many centres maintain these all the one colour which helps give a co-ordinated feel to the village. The water pump and wall are a nice feature as you progress down the Main Street. The repair work to the drystone wall on the Wellingtonbridge approach was noted.

Concluding Remarks:

There are many fine aspects to Duncormick including the heritage buildings, St. Clomaun's Walk, the dedication and enthusiasm of the Duncormick Area Action Committee who are the driving force behind improvements in this competition year on year. We wish you well as you progress further in the competition.