

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Tinahely** Ref: **245**
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **274**
Category: **C** Date(s): **30/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	42	44
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	35	36
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	36	37
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	32	33
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	13	14
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	49	49
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	31	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	30	30
TOTAL MARK	450	268	274

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

You are very welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2017. Well done to your Committee for all the work undertaken by Tinahely Tidy Towns over the last year, as set out in your Application Form. It is noted that Tinahely Tidy Towns is operating as a sub-committee of Tinahely Community Projects with 8 Members meeting on a monthly basis. You are supported by 6 Volunteers and have strong links with a total of 9 other groups and bodies working in the Tinahely area, such as Wicklow County Council, Tinahely Men's Shed, County Wicklow Partnership etc. To further develop your contacts with the wider Community, during May you completed a leaflet drop to households in the area on the importance presenting their premises to a high standard and in April you erected a dedicated Tidy Towns Noticeboard at the Recycling Centre. It is great that the involvement of Tinahely in Tidy Towns for the last 10 years has helped to keep your village clean and tidy and provided an opportunity to progress specific projects such as the Children's Playground, Recycling Centre and completion of various walks and trails. New members are always a welcome addition to a Committee and it is pleasing that you have some new people on board this year and your engagement with Tinahely Men's Shed is also yielding dividends. The map attached with your Application was very informative and quite artistic and was very helpful in directing your Adjudicator to the various projects completed this year. The Draft 3 Year Tidy Towns Plan for Tinahely submitted with your application is very impressive and includes a very detailed set of proposals under the various Category headings each of which is given a specific timescale for completion. We wish you well with the implementation of this plan and will no doubt allow Tinahely to make great strides in progressing further in the Competition.

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

The architectural character of Tinahely as an Irish country Market Town is of great quality, is largely intact and the buildings in the town are generally well presented although some would benefit from some re-painting and refurbishment. The views of the surrounding landscape which are very prominent in the town from many vantage points were greatly admired. It is noted that you have made contact with property owners in centre of Town regarding the presentation of their buildings and this initiative is ongoing. You have also arranged for the refurbishment of orange house on Barton Street- thank you for the before and after photos showing an amazing improvement here. The power washing of Main Square and two houses in the centre of the town has been carried out. A refurbished property has provided a base for the Men's Shed at Kelly's Hill. A sign has also been fabricated and painted by the Men's Shed to provide a cosmetic repair of a property adjacent to Symes Newsagents. Benches outside Maggie's Pub have been painted. The Courthouse Arts Centre was well presented the standard of maintenance of the frontage here was very good. The stone bridge over the River Derry at the entrance to the town was particularly admired. Black Tom's bar and O'Connor's Bar and the remaining properties on Bridge Street were well presented. The library is a very impressive and imposing building located in the centre of Dwyer Square, the centrepiece of the Town. The arched granite doorways on many of the properties in the town added to the character

and charm of these buildings. The property beside Murphy's hotel is a little forlorn looking and could do with re-painting. The re-painting work carried out on the building located beside the Green Cuisine shop on Kevin Street was admired - this artistic presentation with floral displays here help to show the building off to its best. The shopfront canopy at the Green Cuisine shop has seen better days and could be renewed or cleaned. The shopfront and window display at Whelan's Centra was excellent and added great interest as one passed by. The window sticker at TMT 's takeaway could be replaced with a normal window display.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Under this category you carry out ongoing maintenance work at the Children's Playground and have re-painted the benches in the picnic area. The two stone flower beds and barrels in the square have also been painted and you undertake the maintenance of the Railway Walk car park. It is good to see you are using more herbaceous planting in the Centre of the Town for year-round effect. The sleeper wall surrounding the flower bed on the Hackettstown Road has been re-painted and the planting here is maintained on an ongoing basis. The Railway Walk car park was visited and the presentation and standard of maintenance of this area was excellent. However, be careful not to over-use herbicides as some of the areas had a scorched look indicating possible over-use of herbicides. The young native tree planting on both sides of the walk starting point was particularly admired. Some of the fencing along the walk itself (which may be in private ownership) is in need of repair as it is falling down places. The information on the Tinahely Loop Walk and other signage located in the car park was excellently presented. The open spaces at the Railway Walk road junction were maintained to an excellent standard. The garage at Lugduff Topfuels Service Station was also very tidy and well presented.

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

It is noted under this category you have entered the Pollinator Special Award (Let's get Buzzing). Additionally, you have changed the grass cutting regime at the picnic area for development of long grass and wildflowers - this will encourage wildlife and pollinators and will also reduce your ongoing maintenance costs. Your actions in this regard have been logged on the Biodiversity Ireland webpage 'Actions for Pollinators'. You carry out ongoing maintenance of Railway Walks, as necessary and you have organised a nature walk in Tomnafinnogue Wood for Biodiversity Week.

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

You are involved in the operation of the Recycling Centre at Lugduff in conjunction with Tinahely Community Projects. It is noted that you closely monitor statistics on collections at this Recycling Centre- which thankfully show significant increases in recycling rates. You update the notice board at the Recycling Centre as and when required. It is good that this year you have made your application to the Tidy Towns Competition online -this prevents unnecessary use of paper, thank you for that. A Tinahely Tidy Towns Committee member attended the Master Composter and Stop Food Waste Challenge and a Grant funded training programme run by Kildare County Council and it is great that the information gained here can be imparted to the local community later in the year. To gain extra marks under this category you may need to consider further initiatives such as encouraging local people to engage in further sustainable waste, water, energy and transport actions e.g. car- pooling and walk- to-school initiatives, encouraging the use of low carbon e-vehicles, providing cycle parking facilities in the Town, the development of greenways and cycle routes in the area, encouraging the development of small solar farms on appropriate sites, the use of solar panels on roofs, heat exchange units to reduce energy consumption by households/businesses, use of water butts for watering gardens and town plantings incl. window boxes and tubs, organising stop food waste seminars etc. The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland website has good information in relation to the development of Better Energy Communities. You could also speak to the Environmental Officer at the Council on possibly participating in the European Week for Waste Reduction which takes place in November each year. Visit www.ewwr.eu for more information. www.stopfoodwaste.ie is a website that you may also find helpful. The Green Home Programme may also be of interest to your Group (www.greenhome.ie). Grant funding may also be available to provide energy efficiency upgrades for community and commercial facilities. A 'Free Wee Library' project could also be considered at an appropriate site in the Town.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You have undertaken a number of actions this year under this category including the removal of all redundant poles and posters, the washing of all traffic signs and the spraying of weeds along kerbs. Thanks are due to Tinahely National School who carried out a major Litter Pick on roads adjacent to their school and 19 bags of rubbish were removed. Weekly litter patrols and litter picks are undertaken by Tinahely Community Projects CE Staff and litter teams have been established in local schools to keep their premises tidy. You have circulated a flyer to local residents and businesses to encourage them to contribute to the presentation of the Town by keeping the premises and forecourts neat and tidy- this is a very worthwhile exercise. You are running a 'Bin your Butt' campaign in conjunction with local businesses to tackle that ongoing problem and you arranged a major clean- up of the Town on April 29th focusing on hidden litter blackspots. Some littering in the town was noted whilst walking around the Town Centre on the day of adjudication and the quality of litter bins could be improved as some have now deteriorated in condition. The road markings in the centre of the Town were quite faint in places and would benefit from some upgrading.

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

The Tyndles Housing Estate was visited and the area would benefit from more intensive maintenance work and grass cutting. Perhaps the development of some areas for wildflower meadows could be considered for communal

open space areas here, if more intensive grass maintenance proves difficult to achieve. The Hollows Estate was well presented. Consider screen planting along the wall facing the open space in this estate. Bramble Hill estate was well presented and the open space was being cut on the day of adjudication. Carrigmor estate was visited and was presented to a very good standard. However, the internal open space would benefit from some additional tree planting. There was some evidence of previous spraying of herbicides on the left-hand side boundary as you enter this housing estate. It would be preferable to leave the boundary here grow long grass, provided the strip of grass between the footpath and boundary fence is cut on a regular basis. You are planning to have greater communication between the Tinahely Tidy Towns and the various Estate Residents Associations in the Town. This is a good initiative which will help co-ordinate activities and improve maintenance standards generally.

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

It is noted that you have reduced the width of the regular cutting of margins along approach roads to a maximum of 1.5 m wide to encourage biodiversity – this is a great development and actually enhances the overall presentation of approach roads. Weekly weed patrols by Tidy Towns volunteers are planned for June. You have also a proposal to plant ground cover planting on verge above fence on Kelly's Hill to soften the boundary here. The planting bed on the approach to the town from Hackettstown/Carlow was admired. However, some pruning work is required here as the planting is obscuring road signage at this location.

Concluding Remarks:

It was a great pleasure to visit Tinahely and the Town really has an amazing streetscape and has great potential to do very well in the Tidy Towns Competition in the future. You have now produced a comprehensive Tidy Towns Plan which will guide your activities over the next few years for the benefit of the Town and all its residents. We wish you well in your future endeavours and hope you found the comments in the Report helpful in this regard.