

# Tidy Towns Competition 2019

## Adjudication Report

Centre: <b>Drumsna - Droim ar Snámh</b>	Ref: <b>428</b>
County: <b>Leitrim</b>	Mark: <b>313</b>
Category: <b>A</b>	Date(s): <b>13/06/2019</b>

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2018</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2019</b>
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	44	44
Streetscape & Public Places	60	42	42
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	46	47
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	33	33
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	20	20
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	58	59
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	31	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	36	37
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>313</b>

### Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Cuireann an moltoir seo faillte roimh Drumsna ( Droim ar Snamh) pairt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019.

Thank you for the excellent entry form complete with map which was well produced and allowed the adjudicator to identify the areas of the village under consideration with ease.

The addition of your tourist information leaflet gave the adjudicator a little resume of the history of Drumsna particularly its association with Anthony Trollope.

The revised or updated 3 year plan is well sufficient for the task the adjudicator has to undertake but maybe it would have been a little easier to decipher if the additional information was added at the end of each relevant category rather inserted in the manner it is.

Your inclusion of pictorial records give an indication of the diverse range of activities that take place in the parish. Sorry to note that you are having difficulty with retaining people on your volunteer core and indeed the decline has been dramatic since last year.

Hopefully you may in a position to recruit new members from some of the residents of the newer housing developments in the village prior to next year.

Social Media indeed has its uses and could serve to get messages to a wider range of residents in a short time and it also might be a useful tool to recruit new members from the younger generation.

Your Facebook page is very up to date and offers a good insight with what is going on within the Community and well as Tidy Towns Matters

Good to note that you have a strong link with your neighbours across the bridge in organising a joint Harvest Festival.

One notes that you have Heritage Walks at intervals during the year.

You have good links with a cross section of agencies and with local businesses and organisation and of course any Tidy Towns effort would not be complete without the involvement of local school children.

Thank you for your positive comments on the competition and what it means to the village and the wider community.

### Streetscape & Public Places / Sráid-Dreach & Áiteanna Poiblí:

The work that you have done in the last year in this category has been well recorded in the updated version of the existing 3 year plan which is now in its last year.

One presumes that a new plan will be put together towards the end of this year that will serve for the upcoming 3 years.

Your sense of community is certainly reflected in your comment “neighbours are helping each other” and this is the essence of any good community.

The adjudicator hopes that you eventually get the extension to harbour and the ancillary facilities that it requires. The signs that were replaced during the last year were noted by the adjudicator. The following are personal observations made by the adjudicator during the adjudication walkabout. These were made in line with the guidelines of the competition and for the benefit of feedback to the committee. The old school, now the Boxing Club which draws its members from surrounding areas, was very well presented and looks as if it has been recently painted. It is very encouraging to see such a building still being used in the community in such a positive manner. It was also noted that membership of the club was at its limits which suggests a great interest in the noble art of boxing. Waterways Ireland building was also well presented and is set in an ideal location for easy access off the motorway. The road surfaces were in very good condition, parts of the footpath in the core of the village were cracked in some places. The Village is not over encumbered by obstructive overhead wiring and street lighting had some new low energy bulbs. The adjudicator did note that you have lobbied for overhead wires to be put underground to prevent the destruction of mature trees. You are wished luck with that request. The Harbour Area is well managed but we note your lobbying for an extension and the provision of facilities. If these were in place would it mean additional boat stop overs? St Marys RC Church and grounds were very well presented and credit is due to those volunteers entrusted with its upkeep. The Basketball and Tennis courts were also in very good condition. The Children's Playground at the Fr Kevin Sullivan garden was one of the best of its kind that the adjudicator has seen in his travel. Has the Tidy Towns Committee a role in maintaining this public amenity? Commercial properties in the Village and there are only a few were well maintained and free from any unnecessary clutter. The Garden Centre had good array of diverse shrubs and plants and was orderly in appearance. There are a few derelict or unoccupied buildings that have fallen into a state of untidiness and one wonders have overtures been made to the owners to at least allow some form of camouflaging.

### **Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:**

The weather on the day was conducive to a good aesthetic experience and some very fine landscaping and planting arrangements were observed in the core of the village and on the outskirts. This category is one of your strong points and on the day in question there was some landscaping work being done in the Fairgreen. The Fairgreen is a lovely tranquil spot for relaxing and observing and has been enhanced by a well maintained grassy area with an excellent planting arrangement complemented by a stone table and seats. The "Peoples Orchard" on the way in from the old school entrance was a joy to behold and the trees were just showing signs of producing fruit. The new saplings planted at the Fairgreen and the Memorial Garden were noted and are progressing well. The tree planted at the Fairgreen by Mary McAleese to honour the official opening of the Anthony Trollope Trail has matured. Some additional fine stone flower beds were observed at a number of locations in the village. The standard of presentation of private gardens was extremely high with beautifully designed arrangements to be seen. Well done on your "waste not want not" approach to early planting and congratulations to you as a committee in seeing the public garden of remembrance come to full fruition in the last year. Overall this category is one where you consistently attained a high standard and this year is no different.

### **Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality / An Dúlra agus an Bhithéagsúlacht i do cheantar:**

This is a category that you have embraced with both enthusiasm and the need for practicality. There are a multitude of wild life habitats available to you in and around Drumsna. Being a water way village gives you an additional habitat at the Harbour and this is where some of your wildlife initiatives have been developed. The concept of making the bees happy by promoting the need for pollinator friendly planting has been taken on board by the Committee by gaining knowledge of what is required from a local bee keeper. Well done on this approach as it is important to gain the proper insight of what is required for pollination planting from someone with practical experience. It would be also worthwhile consulting the previously mentioned [www.pollinators.ie](http://www.pollinators.ie) as well as the main website [www.biodiversityireland.ie](http://www.biodiversityireland.ie) for further information on bio diversity idea generation. You have such a rich tapestry of wildlife habitats available to you the important thing is to create an awareness of these by providing additional wildlife information signs at places that you feel are appropriate and that will be seen by the public. You have done this to good effect. Well done on making local residents aware of the harmful effects that result from the overuse of chemical weed killer. As well recommendations to access the aforementioned websites it would be prudent to contact County Heritage Officer or Wildlife Ranger if one exists to seek professional advice on possible new projects. It is felt that given the richness of habitats that you have in your immediate region that more could be done in this

category.

### **Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:**

The objective in this category has moved on from one of reduce reuse and recycle to one of promoting the concept of reducing the production of potential waste at source such as excessive packaging.

“Doing more with less” is a very apt

The projects that you have listed in the entry form are very much in keeping with objectives of this category.

Many are replicated in other centres around the country but there are a few novel ones that are particular to Drumsna such as the Christmas Bazaar in the excellent Resource Centre.

The Bring Bank at the Harbour was well maintained and free from any bags of litter at the side of the facility which often can be seen in other centres

To get more out of this sector in terms of creating even a greater awareness of all things that contribute to a more sustainable environment consider looking at the following websites for idea generation.

[www.localprevention.ie](http://www.localprevention.ie) ,[www.greenhomes.ie](http://www.greenhomes.ie) and [www.sustainableprocessing.ie](http://www.sustainableprocessing.ie)

Also something that this adjudicator became aware of over the last while is the circular economy.

You can access following [www.dccae.gov.ie](http://www.dccae.gov.ie) and [www.greennews.ie](http://www.greennews.ie) you will get a pretty good idea of what it's all about.

The idea of what is called a linear economy of “take, make and waste” is now being seen as not sustainable and alternatives need to be found.

The standard in this category was good and what you have in place is manageable taking into account that your volunteer numbers have dwindled.

### **Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:**

On the day little or no litter was observed during an extensive walkabout and examination so one assumes that you have regular litter picks but this is not outlined in greater detail in your application.

Do you use your Facebook Page or maybe a Whats App Group message to mobilise residents to give you a hand with litter picks?

A positive comment was made on the condition of the bottle bank in the previous section.

General tidiness was a little mixed as there were one or two side areas that were a little messy.

A few broken down side gates that were in prominent enough parts of the village were noted.

Derelict buildings were briefly mentioned in a previous section.

These are the basic requirements of the guidelines of the competition but can sometimes get forgotten about.

The adjudicator would urge the committee to do an audit of these areas that may become problematic and maybe diplomatically put the message out there to ask owners of properties to keep frontages and side areas tidy and make good any broken down gates or boundary walls.

Will the committee be in a realistic position to get funding for new litter picking equipment is a question poses to the committee and if so maybe give an update in next year's entry.

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

The estates that you have highlighted in your input in this category were visited and the adjudicator would hope that the issue will be solved to allow for immediate improvements to be made.

Belmont Height estate was presented to a good standard but there was too much weed growth at the verges of the footpath.

Is this one of the areas that has been taken over by Leitrim Council if so some of the shrub beds need to be attended to as they are getting a little over grown.

Could one or two of the residents in this estate not get out with a hoe and clean the weeds at the footpaths

The adjudicator was very impressed with the standard of private residences, outside of estates, that were observed in the centre of the village and on the outskirts.

The standard in this category was good on a day when residences and gardens were seen to good effect.

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

The entrances into the village from both the Sligo and Dublin sections of the N4 were top class and you have done an immense amount of work to ensure that they are kept well and give good first impressions of Drumsna.

The roundabout as one enters at the junction in from the old school was presented in exemplary fashion.

The addition of the community orchard off the Dublin entrance has enhanced the area and there are some fine private residences to be seen as well.

The Sligo/Carrick entrance is equally as impressive.

These entrances have been enhanced as well by attractive name signs.

The entrance in from the Roscommon side was a little mixed as there are a few areas near the bridge that were untidy.

What a voluntary committee can do in circumstances such this is debatable as the areas in question are in private ownership.

Overall the standard was very good and the work that has been done at the main entrances off the N 4 warrants an increase in marks.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

This was the adjudicator's first visit to Drumsna and it was a most relaxing and pleasant one.

One was not aware how much the Shannon impacts on your local community as where I live we probably think we

own the rights to the river.

There were a few boats in the harbour and it was pleasant to relax down there after the adjudication was complete.

You are wished well for the future.