

# Tidy Towns Competition 2019

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Mohill - Maothail** Ref: **435**  
County: **Leitrim** Mark: **308**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **13/06/2019**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2018</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2019</b>
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	45	46
Streetscape & Public Places	60	43	45
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	41	42
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	27	28
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	23	23
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	57	57
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	31	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	34	35
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>308</b>

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

Cuireann an moltóir fáilte roimh Mohill (Maothail) pairt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019.

Thank you kindly for the very well put together entry form ,map and ancillary material in support of your entry.

A bit of colour coding on the map would have made eases for the adjudicator to find places.

Certainly quite a lot happens in Mohill judging by the paper articles and photographs attached and it was heartening to see such a large number of people at the planning day which hopefully is the start of the revival of Mohill in a meaningful manner.

The Tidy Towns Network Committee is one of the man drivers of this proposed development.

This process will require a number of breakout sessions before progression on to the next stage so you are wished well and hopefully the resulting document will form the basis of a realistic revival plan for the town of Mohill.

At this juncture the adjudicator would like to point out that as there is quite a lot content in your application it s not possible to address all the items that you have included but feel assured that the adjudication was done in a fair and objective manner.

The Committee structure is pretty solid and has sufficient numbers in place to carry out the tasks needed to progress the town in the competition.

Methods of communication are very good mixing the traditional such as newsletters with the modern platforms of various strands of social media.

Your Facebook page is up-to-date and populated with relevant snippets of information.

Has every tidy towns committee in Leitrim cottoned on to what Rotherham Council has done in planting swathes of road verge with wildflowers as this was the fourth sighting has come across in a week ?

Good to report that you have strong links with schools n the town and with a raft of other town organisations.

This shows that the community believes in your work.

It's heartening also to note that you have achieved good progress with Leitrim County Council on a number of projects critical to the progress and development of the town into the future.

Well done on your involvement in the Shared Space Project which falls under the heading of Social Inclusion for all.

There is no point in repeating back to you what and who you are involved with suffice to say that this type of interactive involvement is a means to making Mohill a better town and better community in the years ahead.

Being involved in Tidy Towns for 30 year has given you valuable insight into what the strengths and weaknesses of the town are.

You have experienced the highs and resultant lows of the economic boom and you are experienced enough to know cognisance of the past is the key to a better future.

You are wished well as a collective and the input under this category has earned you retention of the mark you lost last year.

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

Walking through the town and its outskirts there was a sense that a bit of an upturn in good fortune has returned to Mohill since the adjudicator was here some 6 years ago.

Mind you one could not find a coffee house in the town which is surprising as Mohill would have more of an association as tourist and festival town more than most.

Anyway I was directed to John James Pub for sustenance and I have to say I wasn't disappointed.

Yes you quite rightly point out that the core area of the town has been presented well in general terms.

There are still a few large establishments that are closed and that look somewhat tatty and need to be monitored under the unoccupied buildings heading which has been listed number 16 on your list.

Maybe for next year's entry you might give an update of how the deliberations went with the owners of these properties.

The other new projects that you listed were visited and noted.

The following are a number of observations that the adjudicator made in line with the guidelines of the competition.

Looking at the photographs taken by the adjudicator one has to agree with you that Main Street has been presented very well and most owners of commercial properties, with the exception of a few, have put their best foot forward and bought into what you are trying to achieve..

Pauls Newsagents, Reflections, Earlys Pub and the previously mentioned John James Pub Restaurant deserve a mention.

It's a great pity to see such a fine traditional premises as O Callaghan's in such a state of disrepair.

Is there any hope that these premises may ever see the light of commercial activity in the future?

Whatever happens the original facade should be retained in full?

The Credit Union Building is a fine public building and the historic Bank of Ireland premises looked well on the day.

The twelve new flag poles were admired and they are certainly effective in promoting the heritage of the town and indeed of the County of Leitrim.

Well done on being part of the team that put this project in place Smart Green Mohill is a smart logo.

St Patricks Church is a fine ecclesiastical building with well maintained grounds and nearby the grounds of St Patricks Graveyard was also well presented with boundary walls painted and new gate.

Reynolds Topline Hardware store on Glebe Street certainly deserve mention not alone for its colourful and well maintained frontage but for the collection of old photographs that depict a past era of Mohill.

Other commercial premises and public buildings were observed in transit but the above are a cross section appealed to adjudicator on a personal basis.

Quite a number of premises were freshly painted and this reflects well on the committee who have encouraged owners to project a good image of the town.

The road infrastructure was good as was the condition of the footpaths with a few exceptions

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

This is a category that Mohill has done well over the last number years and this due in no small measure to the efforts of the Tidy Towns Committees.

Many of the planting arrangements in the town and on the outskirts were viewed by the adjudicator and he was impressed by the newly planted fruit trees beside the pedestrian crossing at the Carrick Road Entrance.

One can understand the need for providing all year round sustainable plant effectiveness by introducing more perennials to the planting programme.

When there are so many planters and permanent plant and shrub beds to maintain it's understandable that this approach should be taken.

The adjudicator witnessed so many examples of good public planting arrangements during his travels around the town.

There were a number of individual planters with colourful annuals around the centre of the town.

Well done with the work that you have done at the area near the Canon Donohue Hall and the area adjacent to it.

Whilst it is labour intensive to maintain beds of annuals it's rather nice to have such colour on view in central areas of villages and towns as it gives an inviting look especially in the weather that we are having at present.

The adjudicator was impressed with many individual well maintained gardens that mixed colour with shrubs to great effect, one in particular across the road from Centra and the Leitrim Association of People with Disabilities and if one can recall correctly it was a B&B.

Trees are part of the fabric of rural Ireland but surprisingly many towns and villages have sparse numbers and it was noticeable that Mohill was well served in that sense.

The trees planted over years have matured and are being maintained to a very high standard.

Pollinator planting is being very much encouraged of late and you have reacted very positively and dare I say very practically to this important need

There are a few overpopulated shrub beds that need to be thinned out or just cut back.

Overall the standard was very good and merits an increase in marks.

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

Good work is being done in the area of wildlife preservation and promotion in an overall context and incremental improvements year on year is your objective which is very laudable.

But it is important to state that sustainability is the key and what you are doing under work in progress for this year and what you have planned for the years ahead will cement that sustainability.

The adjudicator was impressed with the manner in which you have gone about treating this category under section headings like River, Canon Donohue Hall embankments, Green Areas and so on.

One would assume that you have different volunteers looking after these areas as they invariably are areas that need

ongoing maintenance.

The sensory garden was visited and this was a very peaceful and relaxing place and a rest was needed as the adjudicator had traversed a fair distance on shanks mare to all ends of the town.

Many of the wildlife habitats that you have listed were visited during the adjudication and the first thing that registered was that these were projects that needed ongoing monitoring and maintenance in most cases.

Hopefully you have the manpower in terms of voluntary support or are these areas part of the CE scheme.

These are the practicalities that committees need to consider when initiating mini projects of this nature.

For instance what is required of you to look after the area near the Station House and what type of larger wild life reside there?

There seems to be a heavy involvement in what are considered as educational projects talks and classes.

What will result from these in practical terms?

Can you organise a wildlife survey pertaining to species that are in your area and can these be converted wildlife information boards for instance?

Can you involve the schools both primary and second level in these specific projects.

Your work merits an increase in marks.

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

The objective in this category is one of promoting the concept of reducing the productions of potential waste at source such as excessive packaging.

“Doing more with less” is a very apt slogan

Activities that describe how as a community you manage waste and promote efficient use of resources and promote awareness is the key to gaining marks in this category.

The projects that you have listed in the entry form are very much in keeping with the ethos of the sector and are very practical and doable.

One or two are new to this adjudicator but others have been replicated in many places around the country.

The recycling of newspapers, old towels and blankets for use as bedding for the Veterinary Clinic and Leitrim Animal Welfare

Also for instance there are novel ways of reusing old newspapers that have very practical benefits and as a follow up its worth checking 36 uses for old newspapers at [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk)

To get more out of this sector in terms of gaining marks and creating 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 is the circular economy.

It is a bit too long to explain the concept in detail in this report, but if you access the following [www.dccae.gov.ie](http://www.dccae.gov.ie) and [www.sustainableprocessing.ie](http://www.sustainableprocessing.ie) you will get a pretty good idea of what it's all about.

Let's not forget about the younger generation in this category visit the green schools organisation

[www.greenschools.org](http://www.greenschools.org)

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 one thing that you need to remind yourself of is to ensure that you have the resources to manage these mini projects on a continuous and sustainable basis.

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

The standard in this category of both litter control and general tidiness in the Town was good but there were pockets of litter in the centre area of the town

There are few litter black spots in the town and one of them if I can recall correctly was mentioned in last year's report.

In general the town centre and the immediate outskirts have good litter control measures in place.

The committee has harnessed the goodwill of the local community in rowing in behind your efforts in this category.

Good to see that the students of the Community College look after their immediate area in Convent Lane.

The Recycling Centre was well maintained and this year it was free from any litter and no doubt the threatened fine of €3k has served as a deterrent to those that might contemplate leaving household rubbish around the place.

As a matter of interest the sign has been restored to a place that it can be seen by users of the facility.

A measure that the adjudicator came across in another centre in the South were bins for the visually impaired.

Maybe you might consider that as a recommendation to Leitrim County Council in your requirement list for next year.

You have put some excellent but simple and effective measures in place so there is no point in repeating these back to you.

Credit is due to the group of CE workers who help to keep the town free from litter and clean edges footpaths removing farm related residue regularly

Well done on your continued lobbying to improve or replace directional signs in the town and at the outskirts.

The adjudicator had intended to address this problem in the Streetscapes section but forgot.

The condition of some of the signage was pretty poor

The bane of this adjudicators time doing adjudications around the country is the myriad of road side type placard advertising that spring up at roadsides advertising anything from country music festivals to 5km runs.

Thankfully there wasn't too many to be seen at the entrances to the town, roadside placards are unsightly and distracting.

An increase in marks is justified.

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

The town and its environs have quite a number of housing developments some established and some relatively new.

Much the work that you listed under this category is maintaining what s already in place in terms of ongoing contact with residents associations.

Sliabh View has as last year's adjudicator rightly states a row of unusual conifers that seem to be out of sync with the layout of this estate of fine detached houses.

Some of these conifers don't seem to be doing that well so it would be worthwhile to get the advice of a tree surgeon to see what can be done to salvage these.

Shannagh Grove is a fine estate of well maintained house most with open plan frontages.

Cnoc na Greine is an elevated scheme of well maintained houses that has a green area. which needs some form of landscaping enhancement?

Overall the standard of presentation was quite good and places like Hill Street are maturing nicely.

What is the position re the application for funding of bi lingual signs that you applied for last year.

The adjudicator is aware of the signs that are installed at the entrances but these were to identify the newer housing estates.

The new bench seats that were installed were admired by the adjudicator and he decided to rest his feet at the one located near the RC Church.

Overall the standard was good and deserves an increase in marks for the installation of disabled parking signs and the new bench seats installed at the locations noted in the entry form.

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

The internal streets and lanes were of good standard of presentation and may have been commented upon in some capacity in another section of the report.

Mohill has a number of entries into the town and some side roads connect to other parts of its outskirts

The following are a few observations:

Entry from the Drumlish road was good if a bit bendy but the road surface was in good condition and verges were acceptable.

The Cloone entrance was also in acceptable condition.

The Ballinamore entrance has some attractive signage and the Dromod Rd out by the GAA Grounds was presented to a good standard.

The main entrance in from Carrick on Shannon was very impressive passing in by the stone bridge and has a very welcoming look.

First impressions are very important as one enters any town or village and overall the standard was very good and merits retention of the mark that you lost last year.

Keep up the good work that is being undertaken in this category.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

It has been quite some years since the adjudicator visited Mohill and that was for a music event.

Quite a lot of good work is being done by the committee to promote the town to the visitor as a tourist and activity destination.

The adjudicator was impressed with the heritage and history of Mohill as depicted on the information board in the town centre.

A more leisurely visit is on the cards.