

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Chapelstown** Ref: **331**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **258**
Category: **A** Date(s): **16/07/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	34	36
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	30	30
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	33	34
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	26	25
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	11	14
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	58	58
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	26	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	30	31
TOTAL MARK	450	248	258

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Chapelstown TidyTowns are heartily welcome to the SuperValu TidyTowns competition for 2015. Well done for preparing your submission and presenting your village for this year's TidyTowns Competition. Thank you for the time spent in compiling your entry form, for the map, the 'before' and 'after' photos and for the very personal letter regarding your 3 Year Plan. The adjudicator is delighted that you did not spend that kind of money on a 3 Year Plan. Outrageous. I believe that if your committee got together and each of you wrote down two dreams you have for Chapelstown in each category of the TidyTowns competition on a 'wish list' ye would come up with your own 3 Year Plan in half an hour. No cost. It would be the Plan of the people of Chapelstown. Ye would have ownership of it. Try it. Next year there will be no excuse. One would love to read of the support you get from Kerry County Council and from Fás. You are obviously creating a worthwhile example for the youth in the work you do. You may also be an inspiration to newer residents to the area. You certainly adorn your village by the work you do.

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

For such a small area Chapelstown can boast of many fine buildings from the Church to the school, from the Community Centre to the GAA complex, from Family Resource centre to the Childcare facility. And the leisure centre has not been mentioned yet. All the buildings sparkle. Their appearance must be a matter of pride to all who dwell here or who come to visit. As in so many villages wall building is an art form here. Another visit to the parish priest or a paint sponsor might lead to a welcome outcome, your church is a lovely building but it could do with a little help. Those walls are a key part of your built heritage. Much of the work done during the year has to be of a maintenance and remedial nature. That work is evident all over and adds greatly to the appearance of the village. Without you decay could be the order of the day. It is great to see the fine appearance of Ballyhearny National School. Lovely to see that the building is still being put to worthwhile use.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The adjudicator arrived from the quarry side of the village. What a start. Road widening had created an opportunity for landscaping and that opportunity has been grasped with welcoming hands. That bend into the village sparks one's interest immediately and also sparks a respect for the imagination of the people who dwell here. Wonderful work made all the more meaningful as one of the benches was occupied. Very often GAA clubs have more on their minds than hanging baskets. Not so in Chapelstown. Two sharp corners are softened with raised beds at the GAA front and look beautiful. But let's get to this year's work. Your respect for the women of previous generations in the divine garden you have created is a delight. Well done. The established plants and trees, the sound of the river, the bridge arch and the old walls make this an ideal spot for such an amenity. Well done on the paintwork on the railings. Your slate slab announcing the birds of the area and the slate memory of one of your own, the poet, add to

the experience. The tubs of summer bedding enlivened their surroundings.

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

The adjudicator spotted the Japanese Knotweed also and you do need advice on how it can be dealt with. Contact the Environmental Area Officer in the Kerry County Council and attend seminars on this problem. One such seminar was held during the year in Tralee. But the adjudicator wants more from you than pointing out a problem. What about the wildlife and biodiversity possibilities of this island location and island community? Last year's report said that you had organised a talk on this subject. What became of that talk? Why has there not been a follow-up? One hopes that there will have been development on the wild flower garden for next year. The adjudicator is reducing your score by a mere mark as there seems to be no activity in this section by your committee.

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

It is great to read of the activities of residents and of your committee in this challenging section of the competition. Well done on your initiative in organising a talk from a chef on food waste. His advice is relevant and, if taken on board, should reduce food waste among you. What you could do as a follow-up to that talk is circulate the people who attended with a simple survey with questions on whether the talk changed their shopping. Good to read of the solar panels and the water butts, both admirable and the adjudicator came across one of those butts. There was a mention of the school and a Green Flag in last year's report. It was a joy to see that Green Flag waving in the breeze. What is your next step in this section? You obviously are not enthusiastic about the suggestion of last year's adjudicator about composting or you would have mentioned it. What about inviting the Environmental Area Officer out for a night. He might be glad of a trip to Valentia. And he would not cost the earth.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

One reads your submission with interest. There are many elements that create a tidy impression: your landscaping plots from one end of the village to the other, the fine appearance of the GAA wall and complex, the appearance of the Church, the area around the school, Community Centre and Resource Centre, the condition of the footpaths, the maintenance of the grass verge. There are challenges also, all apparent to you and mentioned in your submission. Keep working on those but do not lose heart. You must be patient because you have little control over property you do not own. Keep pressing owners who may feel they have no responsibility regarding the appearance of Chapeltown. And remember your paintwork is worthwhile. But you too must be vigilant. Despite your Trojan efforts there is some litter about, especially at the river side amenity.

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

Immediately one notices that this is a village of old and new, that as new houses are built others become vacant. So as well as renewal there is the sense of defeat that a vacant house creates. Therein lies a major challenge for your group. Well done on the remedial work you have taken with the fine house in such a prominent spot at the village junction. The flipside of the residential coin is that there are many fine houses to be seen along all of the roads into the village and in the village core also. Most of these private homes are alive with colour, on their walls and in their gardens. Many residents are not afraid of strong contrasting of walls, reveals, sills and plinth whether it be red and white or green and cream. A number of bungalows contribute to the settled appearance of their street. Encourage the residents of the three houses to the front of Ceol na hAbhann to tend to the timbers with a new coat of paint. Geokaun View is the other estate that will keep the school open and the football pitch busy. The slate and the gold lettering announce this estate and looks very attractive. Maybe some of the heathers in that bed need to be replaced. This is a lovely neat estate. One wonders if you should have planted the escallonia along the wall and then let the vegetation grow wild? Either it grows wild or it has to be tended to.

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

Well done to the TidyTowns committee that first installed the Fáilte signs to An Caol. They are a delight. Well done to your committee for upgrading the bed that adorns that sign. A delight. The least interference possible with the natural vegetation is the most appropriate way in which to tend to the approach roads of Chapeltown. Those hedges and ditches are wildlife corridors and provide habitats for many of God's creatures. They also represent the traditional appearance of the roadsides. That said that lawn mower width of mowing which you now engage in defines the boundaries. That work actually enhances the appearance of the ditches along the approach roads.

Concluding Remarks: