

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dingle**

Ref: **334**

County: **Kerry**

Mark: **279**

Category: **C**

Date(s): **22/07/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	42	42
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	40	40
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	37	37
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	27	27
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	11	15
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	50	50
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	34	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	34	34
TOTAL MARK	450	275	279

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Céad failte roimh Choiste na mBailte Slachtmhara, an Daingean, go comórtas SuperValu TidyTowns na bliana 2015. Guímid gach rath ar an saothar atá idir láhma ag bhur gcoiste. Thank you for your completed entry form, the map, your 3 Year Plan, the supplementary material covering so many aspects of your off season activities. The supplementary material was of great interest to the adjudicator and I wish to compliment the editor of the submission for restraining himself/herself to the material enclosed as there is often a temptation to include every reference to TidyTowns activities in the previous year, creating the possibility that important material may be overlooked. While the map of Dingle is beautiful it would be more adjudicator friendly if it pointed up the projects you have undertaken in the past year, as numerated in your Plan. Let the numbers in the Plan and the map numbers correspond as the adjudicator had great difficulty finding work done and failed to find the work on occasion. The map is more ideal for the wandering tourist. It appears that your committee is deeply rooted in the community and that you have the support of local business, local agencies and the general public. Hence the cooperation you receive from 'all sides'. You also seem to have created exposure to the younger generation. You are making a major positive impact on life in Dingle if your work is creating the awareness that you mention of 'minding and improving' your town. Well done. Pay attention to the map.

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

As an overall impression one would have to say that Dingle is a town of contrasting fortunes in terms of the built environment. At times it is clear that proprietors subscribe to your promptings to paint the building, in other cases those promptings are ignored and shabbiness is the consequence. The good news is that, despite the exceptions, the streetscape is attractive. But your continuing encouragement is vital. There are some fine public buildings in town but the one that stood out is the West Kerry Community Hospital with its attractive design, its care of open space, its ornamental grasses. The adjudicator enjoyed the continuous presence of sculpture. The promotion of the arts is also so appropriate to Dingle, the art work on the screening a delightful example. There are some delightfully presented smaller business buildings as near the roundabout after Cooleen. The loud strong red on benches in various places uplift their surroundings. The bus shelter is surely a welcome spot for many, a visual delight. As there are many challenges in this section it is a concern that so much of the content of your submission under built environment is more appropriate to the landscaping section.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Despite the challenges of creating spacefor landscaping in this popular congested town the creation of a landscaping design is very impressive. The timber tubs of summer colour are your way of presenting seasonal colour. Lovely. A boat here, concrete tubs elsewhere, that fine timber rail and the dwarf roses as one approaches

the bridge all cheer their surroundings. Well done on the raised beds at the Tourist Office, the walls and the seated facility which seem most appropriate at that location. The centrepiece of the raised beds as one comes from the roundabout are a special treat. A laudable aspect of the landscaping of Dingle is the many generations of tree planting that one notices, all over town as at Emlagh, or in Ard Mara from a few years ago. Great to see renewal work in An Diseart, a spiritual must visit on a visit to Dingle, the maintenance is very good but there are spots that need renewal. The Planting in the Family Tree Garden is most meaningful, the identity slates a joy. Another must visit is the Town Park, secluded from the majority of visitors. The directional sign suggested not to expect too much. The experience was well worth the initiative in strolling inside just to witness the planting along the perimeter. The hanging baskets on those fine lanterns are worth the trouble.

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

Your submission suggests that you grasp at every opportunity to learn as much as possible about wildlife issues by attending talks and seminars throughout the year. Such talks enlighten you on issues all over Kerry and surely you meet people from other groups from whom you can learn. You attended the night on Japanese Knotweed. One noticed where the Japanese Knotweed was being treated, well done. Now you must attack it on other fronts because there are a number of outbreaks visible. Well done also on your Slí na Sláinte. A concern is that in your 3 Year Plan there seems to be no progression from where you have been in this category for a number of years. One would like to read of more definite projects and plans for each specific year. The contents of last year's adjudicator report confirms to the adjudicator that there has been little activity in this category.

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

The adjudicator enthused over the extra material you enclosed. The pictures of the pupils in the garden suggest that care for the environment is being instilled from an early age. Your group was very active during the winter creating awareness of, for instance, food waste. Did you have any feedback from the participants in the October evening? The adjudicator loved what Múch na soilse, Cabhraigh linn a bheith glas, Rothar nó siúl, ná bac an carr. Delightful. Then there is the upcycling repair shop. Let us know if there has been a positive response from the public to this initiative. The list of activities in your submission also excites. This is not the section for references to litter. The adjudicator is especially taken by the monitoring and the point awarding for the child walk/cycle to school project. How is this monitoring undertaken? The adjudicator lauds the fact that such monitoring is taking place. A next step in many projects is to determine if the work being done is being surveyed or, as you describe, monitored. Feedback guides the next steps in the process. The adjudicator would like you to expand on what is meant by 'the importance of proper waste management having proper results all over town'. Well done on your enthusiasm.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhairreacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

As this is a popular tourist town and coastal harbour there are many challenges in this section. It is difficult for Dingle to maintain its delightful streetscape and road network. The traffic seems relentless and this is the traffic that must be enticed into town. Maintaining the appearance of the buildings on those roadways is a continuing challenge and a priority for a group like yours. The street sculptures not only create that distinctive Dingle uniqueness, they unify many different areas of activity. Bright strong colours are magnets that attract custom. The difficulty is in maintaining those colours. Business is transient so businesses come and go leaving premises deteriorate for a period. Road surfaces have been improved in many areas but there are still stretches that need attention. From the moment one arrives one is bombarded with invitations to do this or visit that. Such visual clutter is a pity as it distracts from the wonderful surroundings in all directions. Dingle is not just the gateway to Dingle, it is also the gateway to other most attractive destinations depending on the direction one takes so the traffic crawls. What is impressive is the amount of parking that is being provided. Most likely more would be welcomed by visitors. You are complimented on the measures you take with regard to litter awareness and litter control. But one understands that the litter is inevitable. Litter picks need to be a daily exercise but the worst black spots were in one estates and in one car park cum commercial area. Otherwise one felt that litter is not such an issue.

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

Dingle is blessed with some wonderful substantial houses on the Ventry Road, for instance. Many of these provide accommodation also but their design, their landscaping make the Dingle experience more enjoyable. One can never predict where there are beautiful older houses, beautifully painted and presented as at An Cúilín or on Greys Lane. There are fine houses in an Bóithrín Caol but the general neglect of bin collection, the neglect of weeding, the neglect of the landscaped beds is overwhelming. Contrast this situation with the appearance of other estates where there is attention to detail evident in every aspect of the presentation. The landscaping at an estate in the Emlagh area also needs attention. Fairfield Close would benefit if the designated areas for shrubberies were planted. Ashmount Terrace still looks delightful, front and back. Carn Ard is the standard of appearance and maintenance that all estates should aspire to. It was the beautiful railings that attracted me into Glór na hAbhann, the open space and the stream would tempt one to stay. In some estates one felt that the grass needed to be mowed more frequently.

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

If one wishes to delight in the public realm of Dingle make sure to arrive via Annascaul for many treats will await you at the roundabout. One discovers that standing stones, akin to the ancient ogham stones, will be a major element of the Dingle brand. Sometimes these have Celtic motifs as ornamentation, at all times they signal another worldliness that sums up the nature of the Dingle experience. The chatting couple sculpture creates a sense of muintearas, the boat an integral part of the Dingle existence. The planting here is also most attractive, are as the

footpaths, the grass and the walls. Every aspect of the experience has a freshness about it, the feel of a modern coastal town. One almost missed the fine Dingle welcome stone with the excitement. The stone walls along Bóthar na bPiarsach show that the art of the stone mason is still alive. There are a few locations where those skills are required in renewing those stone walls, without replacing them. The road from Feochanach is enlivened by the landscaping of the dwellings and the landscaping at the Páirc Ghnó. On the Conor Pass road and the Spa approach roads the appearance is totally dependent on the residents. The grass at the kerb and at the base of the fine stone wall are a pity on the Spa Road. There are some lovely back areas around the town. The courtyard at Dick Mac's is an example with pots of flowers, strong colours and busy outlets. The experience of travelling Grey's lane is one of the highlights of the visit. All of the houses show themselves off with pride, the remnants on the old stone wall a stone history of the town. The side street called An Garraí creates the buzz that makes Dingle the attraction it surely is. Another side street needs renewal.

Concluding Remarks:

Dingle retains its attraction for the tourist and must be an inspiring place in which to live. But change is accelerated by the needs and demands of being a 'must visit' location. Therefore much of the work of a TidyTowns group is based on 'keeping an eye on things', ensuring that the appearance of an area does not disimprove or that bins are emptied. It is the mundane events that you must invest much of your energy and show your pride.