

# Tidy Towns Competition 2015

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Knightsdown** Ref: **342**  
County: **Kerry** Mark: **310**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **16/07/2015**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2014</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2015</b>
Community Involvement & Planning	60	45	46
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	42	42
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	40	41
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	29	29
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	15	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	63	63
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	32	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	38	38
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>310</b>

### Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Knightsdown TidyTowns Committee are welcome to the 2015 SuperValu TidyTowns Competition. Thank you for your entry form, the wonderful map by the people from Tigh an Oileáin, your 4 Year Plan, the photos. The adjudicator is not overlooking the heartfelt appeal to the judges. Of course just because an item is not mentioned specifically in the report does not mean it has not been seen and does not make an impression on the adjudicator. The adjudicator loves your Plan and one comment early in the Plan stands out under your group aims: "To enjoy our time cooperating in a happy way". One feels that this comment inspires every action you take, regardless of rain or shine, regardless of age or ability. Your 4 Year Plan shows that you are a determined, focussed group of people with an appreciation of what Knightsdown looks like today and a vision for the future of your village. What one likes is that this plan is not a hard and fast rigid approach but a fluid plan depending on circumstances. The adjudicator is also impressed by your comment on social inclusion. In general your submission suggests that the whole community is welcome to become involved in improving the appearance of Knightsdown, in promoting sustainable living in the area. Each organisation in the village is welcome to make their contribution. And that the TidyTowns effort is imbued with life, with ideas, with pride.

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

The built environment of Knightsdown echoes of times past and of an affluent community in those days. Not only are the Churches in a fine state of repair but major buildings like the hotel and the premises on the main street have retained their dignified appearance right up to this day. That main street is enhanced by the Pier Bar, the blue street furniture, the cart and flowers of 1888, Boston's Wine and Spirits. The seafront is beautifully presented and not only acts as an access to the ferry and to the services along the front but is also a picturesque museum of artefacts that have influenced life in Knightsdown over many decades. Mention of artefacts reminds one that the Famine had an effect in this village also as is remembered on main street. Your village pump is celebrated and adorned. The Cable Station rings of a time when Valentia was centre of the communications universe, the terrace informing us of the numbers that were employed at the station on the island in those days. Upkeep of this area has to be a major challenge to a TidyTowns group. But there is also the modern village. The Lifeboat building, both in design and maintenance, adds to the built stock of the village. The Coffee Dock too contributes. The adjudicator delighted in the street names, in Irish as well as English. Sráid Pheadair and across the way Jane Street. As one left Jane Street the lovely post box was spotted, a delight. One wishes the proprietors of the new shop the very best. They have made a great start with the appearance of the shop and the stock inside. Your street furniture is a delight, the red and white creating a Knightsdown brand. The adjudicator was reluctant to do too much poking around the Daycare/hospital complex but what was seen is impressive.

### Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

At this stage in your development as a group you have learned which flowers, which plants, which perennials survive in what can be a hostile environment for landscaping. So one is pleased to find the hydrangea beds along Bóthar an Chladaigh. Lovely name also.. In fact this particular plant seems to be ideal in your circumstances as it thrives at the Church of Ireland also. One of many highlights of the visit is the mill wheel at the Batchelor Falls. While I found the 'before' and 'after' photos confusing there is no confusion when one visits the site. A delight and an achievement in restoration. Another delight is the visit to the grounds of the Church of Ireland, from a landscaping viewpoint, from a wildlife viewpoint and from a sculptural viewpoint. The attractive benches are dotted all over and invite one to sit and relax. The bollards are another feature of your street furniture that sparkle. Well done on the many boxes of summer colouring at the ferry point, the red boxes themselves as attractive as the contents. One wonders whether to mention Cracow Park in this section or under wildlife as there are many elements of both sections that are relevant to the Cracow experience. The Cracow experience is a multi-dimensional one whether one considers the walk or the open space, the planting or the playground. This amenity has something for everybody. This park also offers the opportunity for spring colour so one is pleased with the setting of daffodil bulbs. Would bluebells survive in this area?

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

Your mark in this wildlife category suggests that an amount of awareness research has taken place over the years and well done for that. That is a wonderful information panel at the top of the walk. The creation of the walk must have been a major task and is now a delightful walk in its own right and now surrounded by shelter and forage providing plants. The information panel under the bird box supports the belief that you have been informing yourselves. How did the Dolphin Watch go? Did many people turn up? The adjudicator was delighted to see that you have embarked on a butterfly survey. One expects that this survey is now ongoing and one wonders how the findings will impact of your care of the butterfly. All for next year. Possibly the greatest challenges that this group faces is the infestation of Japanese Knotweed and gunnera. One noticed your attempts at the knotweed along the prom. You are to be commended on this work but there are infestations all over the village and these will have to be tackled with determination. Your submission claims that all gunnera in public areas have been eliminated are wide of the mark. The adjudicator was pleased to see an area fenced off but gunnera continues to sprout all over so you must not become complacent.

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

Firstly let the adjudicator acknowledge your enthusiasm in studying the latest material from the Tidy Towns Unit on sustainability. Your list of examples of sustainable living show that you have an awareness of what is being attempted in this category and that you have a good understanding of what is demanded in this category. You have arrived at a position on the sustainability pyramid where the emphasis is on waste elimination. There is a community endeavour evident from the examples you give whether that be the community bus or the hospital laundry, the Christmas trees or the composting. The adjudicator makes special note of how grateful the charity shop are to you for your endeavours. Your examples also show that the general health of the community is seen as an element of sustainable living. Your 3 Year Plan shows that you are not standing still with regard to sustainable living in the coming year. Your liaison with the school shows that you continually keep instilling the values you have now adopted into the next generations.

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

There are a number of features that create the tidy image of Knightstown. One loves the footpath which extends so far from the village. Grassed areas that are mown are very well maintained all over the village. One expects that the parking area has been resurfaced as it looks most inviting. Signage throughout the village is well maintained and most helpful. It is wonderful to tell people in advance that an entrance is wheelchair accessible. Your work on derelict buildings and vacant premises is obvious and most effective. There are a plethora of advertising signs as one arrives by ferry and the adjudicator felt that these were both a distraction and created a cluttered immediate image. A most unfair immediate judgement but understandable. You are aware of other areas that might be tidiness stress points. Your submission shows how seriously you take litter awareness and litter control. Well done. But there is litter, even if amounts are small. In one estate especially there was a greater presence of it.

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

The road into Reenellen could be mentioned under many headings. Maybe it is the favourite of the adjudicator. This old street could be a mess. Not so. Grass is maintained. Old and modern coexist. The residential looks well. The gunnera is contained. That gable is a tribute to you. The camouflaging covering what could be an awful eyesore for visitor but above all a resident. Older residential houses in Peter St present beautifully. Jane Street led to a magical experience of a fabulously adorned house, of the celebration of your reference points, of wonderful use of the local slate to cap a wall, of maintenance and then into another entrance to your walk. Near the Church of Ireland one comes on another glorious display of colour at a house. The Reenellen estate could be missed as it is so secluded from the main activities of the street. Great planting, great parking, great maintenance, lovely design and the strong colours on doors add flair to the image. Residential housing in the heart of the village, whether on the main street or around the corner towards the Coffee Dock, is colourfully presented, all houses in a fine state of repair. The adjudicator loved the informality of the shrubberies in Knights Haven Estate. A concern is the gunnera in here as is the case at An tOileán estate. At the top of Cracow one meets the delightful old cottages and in general they too are beautifully painted. Reenard View would benefit from a planting design. Houses along Coombe Bank Way are a delight. One wondered what the situation is regarding Cable Station Terrace. Glór na Farraige is a beautiful estate of mainly holiday homes, one supposes.

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

What awaits the traveller who arrives on the ferry? It is difficult to keep one's eyes on the road as there is so much colour and attractive activity on the boundary across the road. Maybe one should be directed to a parking area over by the Church so as to assimilate all of the happenings that are so attractively presented. Despite the advertising this is a lovely approach to Knightstown. If one arrives from Chapeltown there are many delights, not least of which is the attractive appearance of the bell tower from the top of the street. Then there is the long length of footpath that is not only a pedestrian way but also lends to the tidy aspect of the street. Just as in the approach road from the quarry the wilderness is allowed express itself and adds to the interest of these approach roads. The area to the rear of the Lifeboat building could be a mess. The opposite is the case. The respect shown for the station of 1869 suggests the value that is placed on your maritime past. The windows are timbered and the red paint is fresh. Another building is shown similar respect. There is some litter but very little in this area. The adjudicator finds it difficult to justify the mark you receive in this section but out of respect for the judgement of former adjudicators leaves it stand.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

Your letter of welcome, which is not included by the adjudicator in his judging, does not seem appropriate. In this year's adjudicator 's view neither is it fair to previous adjudicators as each adjudicator makes every effort to arrive at a just assessment of the work in the current year and also a just assessment of the town or village based on experience of visiting many other centres. While one can understand how important it is to a group to have their work acknowledged it is highly unlikely that every project will be mentioned in a report. This year's adjudicator wishes to state that the letter did not interfere with his work in any way. The visit was a joy, the work carried out over the 32 years apparent in the appearance of Knightstown and in the buzz about the village.