

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Limerick City Centre** Ref: **2121**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **274**
Category: **H** Date(s): **27/06/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	40	40
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	35	36
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	35	36
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	33	34
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	21	21
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53	54
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	17	17
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	36	36
TOTAL MARK	450	270	274

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Welcome Limerick Tidy Towns Group to the 2015 Supervalu Tidy Towns Competition. Your entry is very much appreciated. Thank you for your entry form, map and appendices, 3 year plan and other material. You have a committee of 22 people which is appropriate for a population of your size. In addition you have 100 volunteers. You have a schedule of meetings to suit your needs. The list of support bodies, agencies, etc. that provide you with support is quite long, diverse and impressive. Channels of communication range from social media to texting. You have a dedicated schools representative and good engagement with the schools in your area. The value that your community puts on Tidy Towns is well set out in your entry form and the benefits that your community gets from the competition are also clearly set out. We look forward to your entry in the 2016 Tidy Towns competition.

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

Limerick does have a very good built heritage and a number of regeneration reports. However, the Supervalu Tidy Towns Competition focusses on "projects undertaken for this year 2015/2016" as stated in the entry form. Your list starts with King John's Castle and understandably so. It is a superb result after a period of painstaking work. Well done OPW. However, it has already been adjudicated so we must pass on. The painting of premises on Roche's Street noted. The Georgian Initiative is described as "ongoing". However, the EU has not yet approved a lax scheme for this project so it will not be completed within this adjudication period. The Georgian Pop Up Museum was adjudicated last year (see adjudicator's report). Cruises Street Kite project was seen. The Tourist Office was operating in situ on adjudication day so it is not a project. Page 8, project 3 of your entry form describes Howley Quay as complete. Page 17 says "once the Howley Quay development is complete". Junction box art was dealt with in the Tidiness category. It is routine for Tidy Towns groups to tackle derelict sites. The Tidy Towns handbook gives advice and tips on this topic. The date of completion of the new courthouse needs to be clarified. Christmas workshops are not relevant to this category. The painting of the Ellen Street derelict building is excellent. Text book treatment per the Tidy Towns handbook. Plans for Colbert Station have not yet been implemented. The band stand and fountain in the People's Park were admired. A business incentive scheme is not relevant in this category. The monthly Tidy Towns Awards is a good initiative. O'Neill's looks well squeezed between 2 taller buildings, one named O'Neill's Mace.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The People's Park stands out for its landscaping and beautifully restored band stand and fountain. It looked splendid. There is great variety in the flower beds. The Limerick City Gallery of Art which is part of the People's Park is celebrating its 30th anniversary. It, too, looks splendid. The City Council's Park Department gave it a generous allocation of flowers both inside and outside the park – flower bed in side and planters on the footpath outside.

There is a very long raised bed in the centre of the street on Pery Square. This bed is a mass of yellow colour. At the impressive park gates there were equally impressive 4 tier planters dripping with flowers. The adjudicator was present at the Civic Offices, Merchants Quay when lorries were being loaded with colourful planters for placing throughout the city centre. They were on O'Connell Street, Patrick Street, Roches Street, Catherine Street – in short, almost all of the principal city centre streets. The flower containers ranged from half barrels to the tallest – a 6 tier planter on O'Connell Street. All generously filled with flowers and plants. The riverside walkway was also given a generous allocation, as were the bridges. Extra large planters on a base at the junction of Roches Street/Catherine Street had signs "Fashion Quarter". The Tourist Office had 6 tier planters outside it. Medieval Garden looks well.

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

The outstanding wildlife feature is Westfields. It is an extensive wetland area on the opposite side of the Shannon to the retail area. It is best visited on foot or bicycle as parking can be a problem. Viewing platform painting noted. Also planting of wildflowers. Information and display boards would be appreciated. Bio-diversity Garden, Anne Street is a terrific find. It is dynamic and packs so much into such little space. It has a bug hotel, gaily coloured bird boxes, psychedelic murals, wildflowers and grasses, etc. The most imaginative use of a vacant lot that this adjudicator has seen. Tidy Towns groups in other parts of Limerick are envious and have been to see it with a view to copying it. One of its attractions is that none of it is permanent. The site could be cleared quickly. Even the murals could be painted over quickly. A bird box was seen on a pole on Pery Square.

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

The preamble to this category asks Tidy Towns groups to describe how they manage waste and promote efficient use of resources. A Tidy Towns group is expected to play a leadership role in relation to its community in promoting best practise in waste elimination and efficient use of resources. Each Tidy Towns group is asked to "provide evidence of practical steps taken to prevent or reduce waste produced across their community". It is asked to "provide examples of awareness campaigns hosted by the community". In short, it is not asking a Tidy Towns group to list what statutory bodies are doing but what the Tidy Towns group is doing to supplement the work of those agencies. In your document the preamble to this category differs from the Tidy Towns entry form. Your document has added a sentence at the start of your preamble and another one at the end of the preamble where you say "This document is for information purposes only, it is not an entry form". You list just 2 projects in this category – projects 8 and 20. On page 22 of your document it states "Hunt Museum Café has introduced a compost and food waste". This statement is incomplete. The adjudicator visited the community grocery on Mulgrave Street. It has potential. At present it is very basic. You do say that over the coming months you intend to open a full service retail outlet. The project is very much a work in progress and should be included in next year's entry form when it is finished. You mention activity by others which is, in itself, interesting but is not work done by your Tidy Towns group which meets the parameters set out in the preamble to this category. The local authority rainwater harvesting is for its own use. Your Tidy Towns group should promote water harvesting to your residents association and businesses that have flowers, vegetables, etc. that have to be watered. Tidy Towns groups also promote the use of bring banks/recycling centres. Are there any in your area? If so please give their location in next year's entry form so the adjudicator can visit them. Coke Zero bike scheme noted at several locations in your area.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Well done for participating in the first Team Limerick Clean Up and the An Taisce National Spring Clean. Both were a great success throughout the city and county. All of the Tidy Towns groups in Limerick City and County took part and expressed their intention to enter again next year. Many Tidy Towns groups told us of the amount of rubbish collected, always expressed in the number of plastic bags taken away by Mr Binman. By comparing the number of bags collected each year they and we have a measure of whether the problem is increasing/decreasing. We would urge Limerick City Tidy Towns group to do the same and include the number of bags of rubbish that your volunteers collect. The frequency of your litter patrols are noted and you are commended on the Limerick City Centre Tidy Towns Award. On adjudication day litter pickers were busy around Pery Square and also in the People's Park where they were also emptying the litter bins. A litter black spot is Arthur's Quay Park which is in a key location in the city centre and the Tourist Office adjoins it.

The park and its environs was very littered with all kinds – paper, plastic bags, plastic bottles, crisp bags, beer cans, etc. Seats dirty and graffitied. Elsewhere there was occasional light litter – cigarette butts outside pubs, environs of the train station. Noted that you remove cable ties and tattered bunting. Regarding graffiti, you mention street art initiatives at "various locations" but you did not specify them. The adjudicator saw the service boxes at traffic lights with hot air balloons, large murals at Roche's Street and Centra Car Park and art works at Post Office lane. All very colourful. The Going for Gold initiative is very good. Regarding weeds you mention that Limerick City Council organises weed spraying throughout the city centre. Tidy Towns does not approve the use of weed killers except in exceptional circumstances.

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

Your 3 year plan 2015-2018 has just 2 action points and no time lines. The first focusses on new residents associations. We would suggest that you should include all residents associations. In residential areas where there is no residents association you should urge and facilitate them to set one up. The second action point is to target the Georgian Quarter for Tidy Towns support. The outcome expected from this category is enhanced housing estates and other residential areas. In next year's entry form please tell us what progress has been made in each of the 2 action areas. You list work done by various groups but a lot of it relates to litter, not enhancing these areas. You say that all residents associations can apply for grants but you do not tell us what leadership role or facilitating role Limerick Tidy Towns group plays in the process. The adjudicator visited School House lane and admired the

painting of houses and lots of flower containers on the footpath. Lampposts had lots of hanging baskets and an ESB sub station had been painted and covered in flower containers. A sign there reads "Limerick Fab City. This lane was painted by volunteers from the South City Residents Association who meet here every Monday at 7pm. All welcome". Your volunteers would be welcome. Please give some priority to this category. There are marks to be won if you implement appropriate projects.

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

In your work programme lists 4 action points in this category. Two use the words "monitoring" and "liaison", neither of which will earn marks unless it results in a project. The third says that you will "plan an approach roads project" and that what is needed. It could be a project for next year's entry form as could the fourth one. In fact you already have a project underway on Post Office Lane. Last year's adjudicator's report said that you were developing a project to name lanes. As mentioned elsewhere in this report you already have an area designated as the Fashion Quarter. There are opportunities in this category for creativity. With regard to hedging the governing reference is Section 46 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 and the dates are 1 March to 31 August during which cutting hedges and ditches is prohibited.

Concluding Remarks:

Again, thank you for your entry in the 2015 Supervalu Tidy Towns Competition. Your entry is important to us. We look forward to receiving your entry in the 2016 Supervalu Tidy Towns Competition in due course. Thank you in anticipation of it.