

# Tidy Towns Competition 2015

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dromard** Ref: **2162**  
County: **Longford** Mark: **208**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **20/07/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	23	25
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	29	30
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	28	29
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	14	15
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	5	7
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	51	51
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	20	23
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	28	28
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>208</b>

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

Ta Fáilte Romhat Drom Árd! Welcome Dromard/Legga/Moyne/Latin to the Super Valu 2015 National Tidy Towns competition. You say that you have 50 members on your committee. We expect you mean 50 volunteers and a smaller committee. You hold many different kinds of meetings - both together as a community and with other groups and agencies. You also have a good range of people who support your activities. Your methods of communicating with the public involve both modern and traditional methods, and this is good because it means you reach a wide audience. You meet the local schools four times a year and you have youth representatives on your committee. This is excellent. You say that your community are more aware about litter control and other issues as a result of entering the competition, but also that your work has had a very positive social impact within the community. We liked the idea that you feel it is an opportunity for people to participate who might be at risk of isolation. This is commendable.

The support material with your entry form is extensive, and we would suggest that in future you would summarise this as far as possible and bind the supporting material, number the pages, and provide a table of contents - preferably under the category headings in the entry form. For instance it is not necessary to submit copies of your website. The adjudicator can look at these online. Should you wish to highlight the projects talked about within the website, you should summarise them on one page - likewise with the WEE visit details. It is sufficient to tell us that you had such a day, and it is not necessary to send all the correspondence in relation to this event. However a litter control plan is supportive material that can be submitted as useful support to the Tidiness and Litter category. However the plan should be a plan only and not include a list of past litter pick dates. Likewise just one page in relation to GAA Environmental Awareness plan can be submitted as backup material for your sustainable Waste and Resource Management category.

Your village action plan is conversely lacking in detail, and there is no timescale attached to your project proposals. We are a bit surprised by this, as last year you seemed to have submitted a 10 year plan with short, medium, and long term proposals. We strongly suggest that you draw up a new focused Tidy Towns plan for the village. We would suggest that you use the category headings in the entry form/adjudication report as the basis for this plan. A three or five-year plan will focus your mind on what you can hope to achieve - no matter how simple a plan it is. Only include what you feel you can achieve in the time scale chosen for this plan. A plan need not be prepared professionally, but you should consult locally in preparing such a plan. You should also consider any statutory and non-statutory plans applicable to your area in drawing up your work programme. Please refer to the Tidy Towns Handbook for advice in relation to the preparation of a plan! It is essential to progress in the competition and to gain extra marks under this particular category that you submit such a plan in 2016.

Thank you for your clear Ordnance Survey map copy with your projects numbered and added. Not all key landmarks are annotated on your map. For instance your local shop or church are not highlighted. You do not name the unfinished housing estate. You do not name all approach roads – you only the name one road approach - Arvagh. As your village is in fact three villages separated by a considerable distance it is important to have all map references clearly added.

Please remember to insert the various projects under their relevant category. If there are overlaps between project functions the adjudicator will credit this. That is where one project has a good effect under two categories headings. We ask you to list under the most important heading, and we will credit it under any other category where it is also relevant.

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

You list nine projects under this heading. Some of them are more relevant to other headings, and we deal with them under the appropriate headings. We saw your village pumps, and looked at the upgrading of the wall at the cemetery. The pump at the Moyne village sign needs the surrounding wall painted. The old house at the Moyne crossroads/junction has been brightened up through painting of the window surrounds. Well done on your auditing of signage with a view to providing bilingual signage. The improvement works to the school are considered under Sustainable Waste and Resource Management, as they are internal works, and do not affect the built environment externally - which is what we look at in this category heading. You mention the visual improvement to 'built features', but you do not indicate exactly where these features are located. It was left up to the adjudicator to find improvements. Any work carried out should be stated and clearly marked on the map. The school is well presented, although we felt it would benefit from landscaping between the school and the road. The community school is set in a lovely wooded area with very good landscaping - like the gravel lavender beds. There were no flags on the poles at either school although your photographs show Green Flags at the schools. We noted the new timber fencing at Scoil Phobail na Maoghne, but the area looked a little untidy immediately inside the new fencing. The weeds around the wishing well need to be removed, and the sign needs some upgrading.

The shop at Moyne village was well presented, although we thought that the side of the shop facing the church road could do with a repaint before next year, as could the white walls across the road on the farm boundary. A small broken part of the boundary wall to the car park beside the shop - which overlooks the church - might be repaired. The ESB meter box was also broken and looked a little untidy. In this area there are lovely views to the school downhill - and west towards Cloone. Concrete bollards in front of a house opposite the shop on the church road looked poorly. We can see the necessity of some safety barrier/feature here, but we would suggest that you talk to the owners and to the county council about upgrading the situation here at the centre of the village. The grotto near the community centre looked really well in its simple natural surroundings. However, the white gate might benefit from painting. At Martin's Cross the Medical Centre looked well and was nicely landscaped

The GAA premises and the adjacent childcare premises were very neat, apart from the cream splay wall at the metal gate - which needs repainting. On the other side of the splay the shrubs were admired. The splay wall near the CLG 1889 also needed repainting. At Legga the church and the parochial house were well presented. Gate piers opposite the church could be restored, and the gate in front of the shed with the black door might be painted. That particular shed is an attractive vernacular rural building, and we would suggest that you endeavour to have the black door at the side of the shed repainted. Perhaps marking out car parking with shrub beds - in due course - on the vast raw roughish set back surface in front of the church and the parochial house would improve the area.

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

Your existing trails are an amenity for the area. A proposed project is not a project undertaken this year - such as your rockery plans. You have extended the hedgerow at the public car park at the GAA and completed hard and soft landscaping here. You also have inserted a new wooden gate. As these projects are all at the same site it is sufficient to number the relevant work as a single project. The entire area at the GAA complex was beautifully landscaped. You mention the replacement of coniferous planting at the school under the Residential category but we credit it here where it belongs. A split tree trunk opposite the GAA needs attention. This is in an area of lovely semi mature avenue of trees.

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

You are concentrating a lot of your effort in this category on the swift project. This is important as the swift population is in decline. However we await the report and eventually the carrying out of the work to the roof of the Community Centre which will help the swift population and encourage them to continue to return to your area. Could you explain why the stone feature at Martin's Cross encourages flora and fauna? Is it the plant choice? We noted an advertising sandwich board adjacent also which related to plant donation - but was not informative of the species donated. Once again proposed auditing of all existing planting areas to determine wildlife habitats is not a project for this year, and should not be inserted in your entry form, but should be detailed in your plan under that category heading and given a timescale.

Have you been in contact with your County Heritage Officer in relation to helping you in working towards carrying out some good simple introductory work under this category heading? You live in rich countryside, and we would like to see you include the schoolchildren in perhaps surveying the school surrounds for flora and fauna. The Tidy Towns Handbook is a relevant helpful publication. The Heritage Council's 'Wildlife in Towns and Villages' booklet is also a useful resource. We observed some hedge cutting on the various approach roads. Remember that it is

permissible to trim hedging along cultivated ground (e.g. gardens) throughout the year. However with regard to hedge trimming bordering non cultivated land - you are reminded that it is an offence under the Wildlife Act 1976 and Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2006 to cut vegetation in a hedge or ditch on lands not cultivated between 1st March and 31st August annually - this is for the protection of nesting birds. Before considering trimming any such hedges please consult with your local authority who will deal with this issue if there is a safety aspect involved.

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

We are glad to hear that you are being supported by local businesses in the development of the community's sustainable waste management plan. Some details of the content of such support should be submitted. We see that you organised a WEE day. Well done on this. Once again a plan which you propose to carry out in September 2015 with the secondary school students is a matter for your plan and not for your entry form. The 10 step plan to a greener GAA club is very good. Let us know how this is progressing, and once again attaching a timescale would help you and us to follow progress. It can be inserted in your Tidy Towns Plan. We are glad to see that the school has carried out energy conservation work on the building. Do continue to refer to the Tidy Towns publication in relation to Sustainable Waste and Resource Management - the updated version sent to you as updated handbook extract. You could invite the County Environmental Awareness Officer to visit the community and perhaps hold Sustainable Waste and Resource Management Seminar.

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

What methods of weed control do you use e.g. at the cemetery area? We recommend non chemical methods. Your County Heritage Officer might advise you on this. You upgraded fences at the R198. Well done on your litter control plan. You do not appear however to have added signage to the bring bank. Please ensure that you only list projects in your entry form which you have carried out. The receptacles were dirty and the blue clothes bank was rusting. There was a small amount of litter around the banks which needed sweeping. There were a few papers in the landscaped area at the edge of the shop car park. We also noticed a few pieces of litter on the 5064 road into the village. Another place where we saw some litter was on the approach to Legga from road R198. Near the community centre the generic village information board for Dromard - which is the same type as seen throughout villages in the county - is faded and needs renewal. Two advertising signs for a local event out of the county were noted at Moyne junction. An empty metal advertising sign holder was noted on the road edge adjacent to the junction also. An empty enclosure at the Drumsih/Longford/Cavan/Arvagh directional sign appeared to serve no obvious purpose. The lettering on the Longford part of the sign also needed renewal.

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

An example of where you misplace projects under incorrect categories is here. The improvements to the unfinished housing estate should be listed here, under the Residential Streets and Housing areas and not under the Built Environment and Streetscape. Neither are the works at the national school relevant to this category. Well done in any event on the improvements to this estate in cooperation with the owner and Longford county council. The estate looked quite well despite its lack of occupancy. Parts were a little weedy, but we saw no broken windows nor do cracking pavements or other issues that sometimes 'bedevil' such unfinished developments. Individual houses were generally well presented.

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

You have left this project category blank. We would refer you to item 5 of the 'How to complete your Supervalu Tidy Towns Entry Form - which states "if you have no new work in any adjudication categories please do not leave that category blank. Just say 'no work for this year'. If any adjudication category is blank this may lead to marks reduction under the Community Involvement and Planning adjudication category. The widening of the entrance and other traffic arrangements at the school do not belong to the residential category where you have inserted this project but belong here. The maintenance and visual improvement of the fencing at Moyne Cross is noted also under this category heading.

Double field gates - on the Longford side of junction 1021 with road number 198 - need straightening and painting. The gate also needs a gate pier and replacement fencing. We noticed hedge cutting around the speed limit sign on both sides of the approach to Moyne village from road R198. Please see our comments above under Wildlife. There was broken concrete post and wire fencing on the left-hand side of the same approach. Planting would be in order here as well as repair of the fencing. The Lough Nebac/GAA directional sign at the Moyne junction needs painting/upgrading.

On the Carrickallen approach road 1021 we also observed hedge cutting. The 80 K pH speed limit sign on this approach was completely covered by tree growth on the left-hand side leaving the village. We also noted a gate which needed to be straightened and painted adjacent to this speed limit sign. On the approach to the village area by the minor church road the 50/80 speed limit sign on the right-hand side was obscured by vegetation also. On the 5064 road leading into the village from the main road (before the crossroads approaching from Arvagh) there was a rough surface at the junction, and on the road inwards to the village from here we noticed some further hedge cutting, and the necessity of some resurfacing in places. The fuchsia in this area looked well. Between the junction of the 5064 road and the main crossroads we admired nice landscaping on the village side of the main road, but also noted some more hedge cutting here. There was surfacing material and gravel in a rough pull-in on this area also. On the road to the South of the junction - the Granard road we noted that there were no speed limits and we also noticed a house boundary wall which needed painting. Nearer the junction on that road we noticed a gate which needed attention and a bent junction sign.

As one travels south westwards towards the Latin community centre we wondered if some planting could be organised on the side of the Forestry Company cut-off areas on both sides of the road. Along an old concrete post and wire fence here we would like to see more landscaping. The Drumard sign at the community centre is confusing. The 'caution children crossing' sign as one goes towards the school from the community centre needs cleaning.

Between the villages we noted that the area around the service station was somewhat weedy. The general area around the same station requires a little tidying. There were some dirty road signs on route to Legga junction. At the Medical Centre, the road outside needs resurfacing. The blue Legga sign was nicely presented against hedging and on a simple grass margin. The advertising Lotto sign adjacent detracted. The Legga black and white village sign was dirty and the 50 KPH speed limit sign is obscured by a pole with the remains of torn bunting. At Legga village the junction sign and the 50 KPH sign were skewered on entering the village from the Moyne road. The junction between this road and the road leading from road 198 at Legga village/the crossroads - appears to be under repair. The ensuing earth banks at the crossroad should be replanted. The L1026 sign at the Achadh na Cloiche also needed reinstatement of lettering.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

You have a huge geographical area to deal with in your entry. We welcome you back in this your second year of entry, and we hope that you will continue to participate. Go n-éirí libh!