

# Tidy Towns Competition 2015

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dromiskin** Ref: **492**  
County: **Louth** Mark: **280**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **24/06/2015**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2014</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2015</b>
Community Involvement & Planning	60	48	49
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	31	32
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	33	34
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	28	29
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	17	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	58	59
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	24	25
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	33	34
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>280</b>

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

Dromiskin is welcome to the 2015 Super Valu Tidy Towns competition.

Thank you for the very comprehensive entry form complete with supplementary material to support your submission. The package included the 2012 3 year plan, 2012 Dromiskin Biodiversity Enhancement Plan which is copyright to Louth County Council, a number of relevant leaflets and an excellent map which proved invaluable to the adjudicator in the course of his work on the day.

The contents of the response to the 2014 adjudication sheet were noted and your concerns were recorded.

Just in relation to your disappointment with the mark obtained under Sustainable Waste and Resource Management if it is any consolation to the committee this mark was higher than what quite a number of relatively high achieving centres got in other parts of the country and indeed within Louth itself.

I suppose it's worth bearing in mind that the scope of this particular category has expanded and the total marks on offer increased which meant all centres were working off the marks attained under the previous definition.

In explaining your other two concerns you have addressed them in a clear manner.

At this juncture this adjudicator has to point out he has done his utmost to be fair and impartial and given that final reports are usually 2 pages in length covering eight sections it was neigh impossible to address every detail of your entry form.

The committee of 12 is obviously committed to the cause judging by the work undertaken and the ability to mobilise people within the community to assist in doable projects.

Completing a community skills audit has obvious benefits when assigning tasks so well done on this.

Availing of an interest free loan from Louth Tidy Towns Together to help with cash flow is something that most committees around the country would be very envious of!

The appointment of a dedicated person to look after your web presence and social media is an excellent undertaking as it is important to be on top of this ever changing media form.

You have built up strong relationships with the County Council, Louth Leader Partnership the every reliable CE Scheme under the auspices of Solas and most importantly businesses and organisations/associations from within the local community.

Methods of communication are a mix of the tried and trusted like newsletter, local newspapers and the ubiquitous and ever changing forms of social media such as What's App which has become an alternative group connectivity medium to texting.

The committee has certainly embraced the need for involvement of the local school and as you say it has extensive grounds and some of the mini projects undertaken by the pupils of St Peters NS were viewed during the adjudication walk about.

Getting the younger generation involved through Junior Tidy Towns will have mutual the benefits of civil awareness for pupils and another form of enthusiastic resource group to help with specific tasks.

It was heartening to read how much the competition has contributed to the development of a pride of place

community spirit.

For these initiatives that were added since last year an increase in marks is warranted.

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

The extension to the old school is welcome as the adjudicator when in conversation with a local person was informed that there has been a large increase in new pupils over the last few years.

The school and its extensive grounds were in splendid condition and some of the mini projects undertaken by pupils will be dealt with under another section.

You have made great efforts to camouflage an area that takes up such a large part of the core area of the village and yes it was noticeable that many parts of the hoarding were decaying.

Hopefully the new owners of the site might show some civic spirit and relent and allow you to repair sections that are disintegrating

The adjudicator was not able to ascertain what the planning application is for! Let's hope it's not for something that will be out of kilter with the village.

In deed the relatively new map of the village is an excellent addition to an already outstanding combination of Notice Nature and Heritage panels that are positioned at various parts of the village.

The installation of two new sets of heritage finger post signs are a welcome addition for locals and visitors alike,

The following are additional observations that were made during the adjudication walk about; Heritys Pub in the centre of the village is a fine establishment in an excellent black and amber combination colour. The owners might be exiled Kilkenny supporters!

The AOH hall is a very well presented old building complemented by information panels, low bollard and chain fencing and rubbish bin to encourage people to take their rubbish with them.

Your note on the present status of the graveyard wall is noted and there is very little that a voluntary committee can do except to continue liaising with the other parties in question.

Both the new Centra Shop/Service Station and Pharmacy were also visited and both are two fine establishments.

The RC Church and its grounds were in splendid condition with extensive landscaping features

The area that appealed to this adjudicator the most was where the Viking long boat was sited with additional stone feature that housed the parish pump, planter /container and had a waste receptacle nearby.

The road surfaces were for the most part very good, the skyline was relatively free from criss crossing over head wires.

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

Note has been taken of your comment that most of the green space is in private ownership and the restrictions that this can cause.

The committee has adhered to the basics of good landscaping that of maintaining what is already in place in a good fashion ensuring the beds and glower planters are tended to regularly.

Well done on your cooperation with the owner of the undeveloped site near Rath Na Gloine on Commons Road and the resulting bed of low growing all year round shrubs on a pebble base is very suitable for that corner.

Lawler's Peace Garden was visited and it's a joy to behold.

The Adjudicator visited the general area of the RC Church and the extensive grounds around the school and viewed some interesting arrangements in the car park area near the outdoor class room where waste piping was used as a planter for colourful annuals.

The planting area near the viewing telescope was getting a little bare and needs to be revitalised.

Nice features were viewed at the green triangle at the Chapel Cross and in the green area in front of the AOH Hall.

Good to note that the Dream Time garden is given over to the Junior Tidy Towns committee for care purposes as skills of planting and plant maintenance will be learned in the process.

Overall the standard was very good and there is little more by way of comment that the adjudicator can add.

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

The marks attained last year reflected a year on year improvement in this category and this year a similar pattern has emerged.

In the region of 12 new add on mini projects have been listed for this year.

The Out Door Classroom concept in the excellent school garden was the one that took the eye of the adjudicator because of its educational value.

A full list of plants in English and in Latin was attached to the boundary fenced so well done to both the pupils and teachers for this effort.

The garden was very diverse and includes the now near compulsory insect village and hotel/motel.

Next year maybe the school, if not already done, might consider putting a little note together on the materials that make up the village or hotel and how they encourage wildlife species.

Just take note that the classroom furniture is need of wood preservative treatment.

The notice nature boards are of very nice design and similar to some other information boards viewed in one other particular village in the County- a sharing of ideas maybe through the Louth Tidy Towns Network.

As stated it is hard to leverage funds nowadays through such schemes as Public Area Enhancement so well done on this as it certainly allowed you to do some substantial work in this category.

Well done also on the completion of the Eco Tribes Project even thou this adjudicator is not a fan of painting old tyres as they get tatty if not looked after but that is unlikely to happen in Dromiskin.

Overall the standard was very good

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

The adjudicator has already, at the beginning of this report, explained the marking to date in this category and made it clear that your mark would be on the average to high side.

He is not going to get into the semantics of fail or pass percentages as he is neither a statistician nor a muinteoir, also creativity is not just confined to Dromiskin !

Its best just to list the projects and let them be judged on merit so to speak.

22 mini projects in this category is fair number to manage over a period of time and you are wished well in that context.

Comment cannot be made on each of them but suffice to say that an additional mark has been awarded because of the collective effort put in by all parties particularly the school children, paerents and teachers as per the example of the Walking Challenge.

Trashion seems to be the new buzz concept amongst the Louth Tidy Towns community.

As the committee is very much aware this category has been re vamped on foot of changes of practice in the whole area of waste and the production of same.

The EPA website has a section which gives information on the status of the National Strategy For Waste Prevention and also [www.localpreventin.ie](http://www.localpreventin.ie) is another website that involves itself very much with waste prevention as distinct with waste management/minimisation only.

Repak have a pilot programme in place that addresses how the company can prevent waste in the course of their manufacturing process and it might be worth having a look at this also for new project ideas.

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

The Village and its surrounds had very little litter except for few pieces in the following locations, at the base of wall at Lawler's Peace Gardens, near the old headless pump on the way in from the Chapel Cross and at the top of the School Grounds near the old school.

In fairness these wouldn't be even noticed in a larger centre and but Dromiskin is comparatively small and quite open.

There was some weed growth to be seen at the base of grey wall and hoarding in a central part of the village and one or two other parts of the village outskirts.

It's hard to control weed growth all the time especially when conditions can see it happen overnight.

Well done also for taking action on the cigarette butt problem by approaching the owners of the commercial properties and making them aware of their civic requirements

One would not associate anti social behaviour with a place as rural as Dromiskin but I suppose no place is immune to it but it is a pity that a feature such as the Viking boat has become a target.

Dog Fouling can be problematic these days but there are enough of deterrents in place to deal with it and the dog fouling sign in Dromiskin is very much in a central location.

Overall the village had a tidy and orderly look about it and well done on retaining the Gold Medal in the 2014 Louth Litter League.

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

The standard in this category was very good and it is obvious the residents of Dromiskin and its environs have a sense of pride of place.

Again it would be impossible to do justice to each area visited in this short report but the ones visited by the adjudicator bore out what you have stated in your application submission

The established Church Vie and its immediate area were exceptionally well maintained and had many fine individual homesteads some with fine frontages and very inviting name stone and landscaping features on both well cut green areas on both sides of entrance road

Insulin is a big estate with two fine green areas but the boundary walls, which admittedly are large, would enhance the place if painted.

The Hamlet has a nice green area and landscape feature and the houses are maintained in a very good fashion.

It looks like Seabrook is an estate that was earmarked for more development but must have stalled when everything else stalled.

St Ronans Villas in the central part of the village had a very fine green with an exceptional landscaping arrangement in the centre; the barrel feature was noted as well.

Overall the standard was very good.

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

The roads in to the village from Dromena, Stokes Hill and Chapel Cross were very acceptable and have been adorned with some Failte to Drumin Incasclainn signs and of course the Louth Litter Award sign which indicates to the outsider that one is entering a well kept village or town.

The hand carved "Welcome" signs were noted as well.

The adjudicator traversed nearly all of the external parts of the village on foot and so was able to see the improvements mentioned in your submission.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

This was the adjudicators first time in the village of Dromiskin and he was very pleasantly surprised to find a place with a great sense of pride in its achievements to date. You are wished well for the future.

