

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Louth** Ref: **899**
County: **Louth** Mark: **252**
Category: **B** Date(s): **24/06/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	43	43
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	31	32
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	29	30
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	25	25
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	9	10
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	57	58
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	27	28
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	25	26
TOTAL MARK	450	246	252

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Louth Village is very welcomed to the 2015 Super Valu Tidy Towns competition.

Thank you for the very informative and concisely put together entry form.

It was the adjudicator's first visit to the village of Louth and it was a very pleasant experience indeed.

The plan for 2009-2014 has now run its course and needs an updating even a yearly input would suffice also the OSI map might be replaced with a sketch map of the village indicating what and where in a work context

The committee of 7 is the right size to control affairs and oversee work programmes and no doubt you have additional support from the community when work projects need to be done.

Good to note that you have forged good relationships with Louth County Council, TUS and these have proved to be beneficial in acquiring grant aid and a scheme participant in the case of TUS.

Just to note that the bio diversity plan alluded to was not included with the entry form and must have been mislaid along the line.

It is also good to report that your local credit union has been very supportive of your efforts by giving a monetary contribution to the committee.

Your presence on the Louth Tidy Towns Together was noted but maybe the committee might consider using the various forms of social media to get your notices to a wider audience especially the younger generation.

The adjudicator is delighted to report that you have developed a strong bond with the local St Mochta's National School which if I'm correct featured in the Irish Independent last year welcoming its new principal.

The school seems to very proactive in its involvement in various projects and this will be of mutual benefit to its pupils and the Tidy Towns committee.

Your honest comments on what the competition means to the village are very much appreciated and after only 8 years entering the village is making good progress and will into the future.

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

The RC Church of the Assumption is the most striking building in the village primarily because it's on an elevated site with expansive grounds.

It and the adjoining graveyard were very well maintained and credit is due to the personnel that are responsible for their up keep as both cover large areas.

The work done on eliminating derelict sites has been noted and the village is lucky that, with the exception of the premises at the Dundalk/Dromiskin road junction, it has been over burdened with the problem.

As a committee you are to be commended on taking charge of maintaining heritage sites such as the Old Abbey and St John's Graveyard and it is good to have a representative on the County Heritage Forum as well.

The following appealed to the adjudicator for a number of reasons; Murnaghans Bar (half letter sign missing so one presumes its Murnaghan) a very nice frontage with an array of planters at roof, window and ground levels.

McGooeys on the road out to Carrimacross/St Mochtas GAA grounds, simple but effective frontage with window boxes overhead, Gus Kelly Butcher, Daybreak, The Ploughman's Inn and Louth Stores (Murphys). Some very fine private residences were viewed in the core area and on the outskirts of the village.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The standard in this category was very good and considering that you are only eight years in the competition what has been done in landscaping terms is a fair achievement indeed.

It takes time to get people to buy into tidy towns but the cooperation that you have got from both the business community and general population has been immense and nowhere has this been more evident than in this category.

The adjudicator was extremely impressed with myriad of colourful planters, window boxes and hanging baskets that were seen at individual premises.

It would be unfair to single out any individual property for mention.

The public planting arrangements such as the excellent rose bed at Abbey Court, the begonia dominated beds the triangle green areas at Carrimacross Junction, the excellent combinations at the green area Father Finn Park and the entrance to the well maintained housing development that is Feran Park all add to the high standard in this category.

It is important that the committee put together an interim village plan, no consultant needed as there is plenty of expertise in-house to use a manufacturing analogy.

When you do this a mini landscaping plan can be included which will further enhance what you have achieved and who knows within time the Village may become the Louth entry for Entente Florale.

An increase in marks is warranted

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

All over the country in the last few years this adjudicator has come across variations of the ubiquitous insect hotel, motel or village.

Lout Village has offered him an alternative in the more appropriately named ecology hotel.

The next add on to this would be to get the school children to do an audit of the material that makes up the hotel and describe what insects, larvae etc it are attracted to live in or visit!

The provision of bird boxes is very important for attracting various species to the area and well done on this.

The Fairgreen has been noted but unfortunately the adjudicator forgot to visit the wildflower planting area but is happy that it has been done in a proper fashion.

The surrounding area ie the Abbey offers you more options for additional work so it would be opportune to engage with the school to come up with a few practical ideas that can be examined and hopefully converted into a feasible project.

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

The Bring Bank Facility was orderly and nicely housed and accessible to the local community.

The Green Bin kerbside collection service is one that could be replicated in other similar sized villages.

Other projects that you have listed fall within the waste minimisation and reuse category which of course is extremely important.

The emphasis on this revamped section is on waste prevention and maybe over the coming year you might give consideration to this when devising a plan for next year.

www.localprevention.ie is an excellent source of information and ideas, the EPA website should be considered to get information on the present status of The National Strategy for the Prevention of Waste.

Also it would be worthwhile to get in touch with the County Environmental Officer to find out if any information evenings on Environmental Management were planned for the months ahead.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

These two important categories have been combined into one for the purpose of the overall rationalisation of the competition.

Also having them together helps to alleviate confusion of where crossovers occur.

The work that you have done in both weed control has obviously paid off as there was very little evident on the day and this is a very good considering that you are in an area where there is a high concentration of farm related activity. Residue from this activity at kerbside encourages weed growth.

Well done to the ever reliable CE Scheme workers, what would the country do without them, for carry out their duty to such good effect.

A few pockets of litter were observed at two locations but no doubt will be picked on the daily pick or by the junior patrol.

Some boundary walls were in need of repainting and there were a few untidy side areas that need to be seen to.

The "butt bucket" is a very good idea and one that seems to be catching on around the country.

Well done on retaining your Gold Medal in Litter League county wide competition.

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

Having the local housing estates enter the Louth County Council Tidy Estates Competition is a positive thing as it offers them an opportunity to compete and also to network with residents associations from within the county and pick up ideas.

The areas mentioned were all visited by the adjudicator and if he was to choose one it would be the long established

Feran Drive.

This is a testament to the efforts to present properties to a very high standard and green areas equally so plus the fact that it has a very nice name sign and flower bed as one enters.

Other estates visited were equally as well managed but the newish estate on the exit to Tallanstown Church View ? needs re emphasise the name on the name stone as its hard to make out.

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

The entrances in to the village were very well maintained and the work you have done especially on the Dundalk side has been noted.

Verges are kept in accordance with good practice and further enhancements by way of Failte go Sraibhaile Lu signs with attractive stone flower beds that gives a good overall impression as one enters the village.

Also the Litter League panels are an added bonus as it indicates one is coming into a tidy place.

One Failte sign is in danger of becoming obscured by hedge overgrowth, the adjudicator cannot remember which one.

The new children's amenity area is an excellent facility and was being well used on the day.

Concluding Remarks:

It was good to visit Sraibhaile An Lu for only the second time and enjoy the surroundings. You are wished well in the future.