

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Monasterboice** Ref: **1385**
County: **Louth** Mark: **225**
Category: **C** Date(s): **26/06/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	40	41
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	30	32
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	22	23
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	22	23
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	6	8
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	42	42
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	23	24
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	31	32
TOTAL MARK	450	216	225

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Monasterboice is welcomed to the 2015 Super Valu Tidy Towns competition.

It had been quite a while that this adjudicator had any contact with Monasterboice and one of its most famous establishments so it was nice to renew acquaintance.

The area to be adjudicated was hard to decipher at first but all worked out well and the adjudication process in this instance was both enjoyable and informative.

Thank you kindly for the very well put together entry form and accompanying map.

The Committee of 15 is very proactive in trying to make progress in the competition in this the 2nd year of re entry.

One presumes that there is an executive of maybe 4/5 that take the decisions of the main committee and oversee the implementation of same.

Good to note that you have developed good links with the local school and with other youth groups such as girl guides as getting the young people involved the start is a key component building a strong support structure.

Fair play to the woman from my neighbouring county and independent republic in its own right for rowing in on litter pick day.

You are lucky to have such a fine facility as your local Naomh Martin GAA Club a credit to its members and to the Community.

The adjudicator did a few laps of the walking track prior to setting off on the adjudication mission though it probably had more to do with being so well fed in the Monasterboice Inn next door.

The committee on its second year back in the competition has engaged well with Louth Council and other organisations such as Groundswell.

Well done to the main sponsors the aforementioned Monasterboice Inn and at this juncture the adjudicator would like to thank the ladies in the said establishment for a local geography lesson.

Your communication methods are ideal a mix of the old and new with the various forms of social media which gives options to get immediate messages to a wider and younger audience.

Networking is a strong point in your entry form and this will pay dividends in the future by way of practical work support.

For a group that has been only two years in existence you have achieved a remarkable amount of work under all the categories.

One comment that this adjudicator hasn't come across too often is the amount of new friendships that have been formed as the result of the communal volunteering effort.

Well done and for the way that you have set out your programme for the future an increase in marks is warranted.

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

The adjudicator has noted the projects that you have listed as completed or ongoing since last year and the ones

planned for the future.

Both of the well known local hostelrys the Monasterboice Inn and The Liffey Inn were very well presented and had car parking areas in an orderly condition.

The local Naomh Martin GFC Club, no hurling !, is one of the best facility of its kind seen by the adjudicator and a credit to the members for maintaining it to such a high standard.

The other very fine and needed feature in that part of the area is the new bus stop and the ancillary infrastructure and traffic calming measures.

Well done to the County Council for the provision of such a much needed facility for the local community.

The heritage/visitor centre at the Monasterboice Cross and Round Tower was well presented and orderly and facilities such as parking and toilets were up to an acceptable standard that one would expect from OPW run sites.

The National School unusual name S Buites and the RC Church in Tinure were both maintained well but part of the boundary wall at the school needs to be recapped.

The XL Shop and Service Station was in good condition and the curtilage was tidy.

The Self Storage Workspace complex was also in good condition and considering the range of activities there it had a quite tidy main yard.

Overall the standard was more than acceptable and worthy of a mark increase

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

You have certainly not been inactive in this category and the work that you have listed and completed has been visited by the adjudicator with the possible exception of Fieldstown Church as he couldn't find his way to it.

The stone beds at the twinning signs are very attractive and they give an excellent impression of the area as one enters..

The adjudicator assumes that area around sign as one enters towards the Monasterboice Inn is going to be re grassed.

Tenure community garden was well looked after on the day, grass was cut and generally tidy all round.

The new bus stop area near the GAA club will be fully complete with some nice and tasteful planting arrangements and we look forward to this on a future visit.

For the work undertaken in the last year an increase in marks is justified²

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fíadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádurtha:

The area which is quite scattered has a myriad of wildlife habitats and havens and to exploit these to the maximum is the key to success in this category.

What you have planned is very central to what is required in this category but you need to go a little further and maybe devise a focal and dedicated wildlife project involving other sections of the local community including the younger generation.

To do this one needs to maybe consult with the county heritage and wildlife officers for direction and ideas.

The adjudicator would suggest that this could be something along the lines of wild life survey whose results could be put into a visual format such as an information board to be sited away from the main heritage site either near the Monasterboice Inn or in a prominent position in Tinure Village.

You didn't state whether the informative walks were organised by a local walker's group or just a casual coming together of walkers.

Well done on taking proactive action in attending courses on wildlife topics.

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

It's good to see the list of activities in relation to waste management that you have become involved in.

Some fit under the education heading such as the visit to the Recycling Centre and the others which are replicated in other centres around the country fit the waste management and reuse definition.

Excellent initiative by the Monasterboice Inn and one which should be copied others in the catering business.

The next step and very much in line with the emphasis on waste prevention is to examine projects that broadly fit into that category.

www.localprevention.ie is a source of excellent information for idea generation and the EPA website will give an update on the status of the National Strategy for Waste Prevention.

Also it would be worth keeping in touch with the county environmental officer to find out if there are similar information evenings and courses as those for wildlife planned for environmental management.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The area is very scattered and sometimes totally different as in the village in Tinure and the wider rural areas such as Fieldstown.

The committee has a hard and varied job in trying to patrol all of this and even with the best will in the world it will be hard to get to a consistent standard immediately but over time yes.

The village of Tinure had good litter control except for a few pockets at the shop area and down near the workspace area.

Some kerbsides were a little messy as there was a lot of farm related activity ongoing and Louth being the tillage County that it is meant a fair number of large tractors on the road.

Your education of the younger generation in the aspects of good litter control and general tidiness is welcomed and it will have definite long term benefits.

All signs and name plates were clean and areas at junctions that you mentioned were orderly cut back in accordance with good practice.

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

There is an eclectic mix of homesteads in the area from large and well maintained farmhouses and yards, stand alone private house a few in the final throes of completion and the housing areas that make up the "village" of Tinure.

Tower View is very nicely kept little estate in Tinure and has remembered one its well known residents by naming a permanent seat on the small green area after him.

Glenwood Abbey built circa 1999! has a very nice name stone and the properties are kept very well one with a fine surround hedge.

Mullary Manor had some big stand alone house and it is maturing better than some of same time developments around the country.

The residents of the older established Tower View deserve credit for the manner in which they have presented their properties some with hanging baskets and well maintained front gardens.

You are correct in your summation that Monasterboice is a vast area and I'm not so sure is your description totally on track when you say that it's made up of "various clusters" etc.

To be honest this adjudicator sees Tinure as a standalone Village and bigger than a fair number of centres that enter the competition.

Also whilst chatting to local teenagers one detected that there were two sides to Monasterboice "the one above the motor way and the one below it" and a slight bit of inter parish rivalry. Rural communities never change.

Any way that's for the committee to sort out.

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

The entrances into both the Monasterboice Inn end of the area and into the Village of Tinure were well maintained and verges cut back in accordance with good practice for the conservation of wildlife.

Rural roads and the few internal ones in Tinure were in the main very acceptable except that some of those rural roads are very tight when confronted by young lad left loose on a massive tractor and a mobile in one hand and the steering wheel in the other.

Concluding Remarks:

It was a great experience to come to Monasterboice and re acquaint with the Cross and Tower and with the Monasterboice Inn. You are wished well for the future.