

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ashbourne** Ref: **570**
County: **Meath** Mark: **252**
Category: **F** Date(s): **28/06/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	41	41
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	35	37
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	35	35
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	24	25
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	9	9
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	42	42
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	22	29
TOTAL MARK	450	241	252

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Ashbourne TidyTowns is very welcome to the national SuperValu TidyTowns competition. Thank you for your much appreciated entry. Links with a variety of groups and bodies are noted favourably and your working relationship with the Youth Reach and local Leo Club is an example which many committees could emulate. Communications are varied and we like how you involve the local Chamber of Commerce. Getting buy-in from businesses is important in this competition. It is comforting to know that you were on the ball regarding relocating the old trees from the Main Street public realm improvements.

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

We understand that the Main Street has had a total overall this year with new footpaths, pedestrian crossings, lighting, landscaping and street furniture. Some minor bits and pieces were still being completed when we adjudicated. Ashbourne House Hotel looks well with the colourful hanging baskets; we question the requirement for the multitude of advertising here which detracts from the lovely heritage exterior. We also thought that Sean Kelly's pub deserved a special mentioned for its contrasting white and black exterior complimented by a pop of colour from hanging baskets. Perhaps all the Guinness flags are not necessary! You have done great work making the Ned Nulty Cottage presentable. Perhaps the Campus Filing Station could be enhanced with improved landscaping. We visited the Donaghmore/Ashbourne GAA Club, this is an excellent facility serving the community. The adjudicator wondered about the necessity of the security railings on each side of the road to the Club as many of these have fallen down and are not doing the job they were erected to do, perhaps they could be removed. You mention the Business Enhancement Scheme, we would be interested to hear more about this and wonder if you have an input. Views from various locations towards the town centre show that the multi-storey car park would benefit from painting. Ashbourne has a Heritage Trail to be proud of. Congratulations to the members of the Ashbourne Historical Society on this project.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

We admired the landscaping and semi mature trees at the entrance to the Ashbourne Business Park. Some hanging basket standards were empty but we note this was perhaps in response to the upgrade works on the Main Street. Landscaping opportunities exist at your roundabouts and we note that you make representations to the Council in relation to these and rightly so.

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

The most significant natural feature in Ashbourne is the River Broadmeadow and its river valley. Therefore, the

introduction of the wildlife boards serves to raise an understanding and awareness of this natural amenity. The recently launched Slí na Sláinte also allows residents to enjoy a walking route around the town and get an appreciation of their environs. Your adjudicator wonders if you ever commissioned a wildlife / habitat study for the area? Perhaps this would assist you moving forward. There are many opportunities to enhance biodiversity within the town by recognising the habitats that support wildlife such as insects, birds and mammals.

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

Unfortunately, you state that no projects were completed under this category this year. You mentioned supporting your local schools' Green Flag initiatives, which is worthy. Perhaps you could establish a School Liaison Officer who could liaise with the schools and find out what projects they are working on that could be relevant for the category that would allow you to include a brief synopsis under this category for next year. We are sure there are other smart travel initiatives and the like such as walking to work; car sharing the commute into Dublin etc that local residents are doing that could contribute to this category. Erecting water butts in strategic locations for use with your planting projects, organising a waste minimisation day, providing hints and tips to the community on how to conserve energy / water / waste are just some simple ideas which you may like to consider for next year. Consult the document produced by the Tidy Towns Unit on this category: <http://www.tidytowns.ie/publications.php> to help you with this category for the year ahead.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Local volunteers and Tús workers conduct litter patrols most days – thank you for this level of dedication towards litter control in your town. We like your Big Belly Bins and would be interested to hear how successfully they help to alleviate the problem of overflowing bins. Bins were overflowing in a few other towns we visited so your feedback to the local authority could be very beneficial to them. Some empty drinks bottles were noted at the Slí na Sláinte near the junction to Archestown Road. Some small bits and pieces of litter were also noted at the traffic lights at Dunnes Stores. Keep an eye out on the presentation of the road signage; some are dirty while others are leaning. These issues could be resolved with washing or in some cases replacement, consult the County Council Roads Section or NRA. Temporary advertising signage is quite prevalent in the town. There are a number of places where hoarding is concealing derelict / undeveloped sites throughout the town. Some are in better presentation than others. Broken glass was also noted on the pavement at the car park, opposite The Track and Barron & Co Solicitors. The Bring Bank facility was clean on adjudication day.

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

There are numerous well presented housing estates in Ashbourne. The Briars were well presented with a large well maintained communal green area. The tree-lined avenues in Alderbrook were admired. Deerpark was also presented to a high standard. We liked the use of climbers at the entrance to the Archestown Demesne. Is the area to the back of Archestown Demesne being developed in the near future? In Churchfields we noticed that stakes and tree ties looked no longer required.

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

The roundabout on the approach at the Pillo Hotel is quite overgrown, furthermore, there was some litter and advertising hoardings on the grass on the approach to the village from the north. Roundabouts in general in the town are a little unremarkable. Kerbside paving in the town centre could be power hosed in places to remove some weeds and grass (in the vicinity of Sherry Fitz and across the street). A significant amount of work would appear to have been carried out on the Main Street. We noted the introduction of new cycle lanes through the main street, upgrade of the existing footpaths, street landscaping, road surface with new markings and new street lighting. Had the cables already been underground or was this part of the works? The effect is very positive. A laneway between Paddy Power and Grimes EBS was rather dirty.

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you for your hard work and dedication to your town this year. We wish you continued success in your endeavours to contribute positively to the development and success of the town.