

# Tidy Towns Competition 2015

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Greenan's Cross** Ref: **2028**  
County: **Monaghan** Mark: **240**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **15/07/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	25	27
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	29	31
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	30	33
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	25	29
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	8	11
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	45	49
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	26	27
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	31	33
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>240</b>

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

Welcome Greenans Cross to the 2015 tidy towns competition and we appreciate your participation. We are pleased to read that you have a good core membership of 12 on your committee – this is impressive for a small village. Well done on building links with Monaghan County Council and we note that you have also obtained support from the Local Agenda 21 Environmental Partnership Fund and we wondered if this was a separate entity from the Council? You are also encouraged to approach Fas as they have been an invaluable source of assistance to other tidy towns groups in your county. There was no mention in your entry form of your links to other voluntary and community groups and we wondered if your development committee works with any other local sports (such as the GAA) or social clubs? Your communication strategy is comprehensive but it appears to rely on traditional means of communication and we encourage you to consider using digital means such as texts, e-mails or a website to publicise your activities and projects? We were delighted to read that young people in the village participate in your spring clean and also maintain some of your flower and shrub beds. This is highly commendable and we would urge you to delegate other projects to them – perhaps in the wildlife and waste management categories. It is also heartening to read that your involvement over the last five years has led to an improvement in the appearance of your village. Thank you for your completed application form and hand drawn map which was useful during our visit. The photographs were also most informative. Your action plan was observed and while this is considered to be a good start, you are encouraged to prepare a plan which identifies projects under each of the tidy towns categories for a 3 to 5 year period.

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

The village of Greenans Cross has a distinctive rural character which is emphasised by its native hedgerow boundaries, natural stone walls and the mature trees that can be seen on the approach road from Newbliss. Many of the buildings in the village are quite modern structures which are presented to a good standard. The only historical structure that was seen was the old National School Building and it is great to see that this building is being reused as the community centre. The committee is also commended on refurbishing this building and ensuring that it remains in good condition and in active use. We were also pleased to see that the committee is engaging in treeplanting and replacing the hedgerows in a number of areas and we would encourage you to continue with this project as the hedgerows will not only provide you with attractive boundary treatments but they also function as an important source of food and shelter for native wildlife and birdlife. It is hoped that the use of timber fences in the village will not be at the expense of native hedgerows.

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

This is considered to be a strong category for Greenans Cross as a number of very attractive schemes could be

seen during adjudication. The large landscaping scheme located between the L61061 and the L6160 (which is also the Ulster Canal cycle route) was admired as it accommodated an excellent diversity of perennial plants and it appears to have been recently maintained as no weed could be spotted in its bark lined bed. However, we were quite surprised to see that the area between the planting and the coniferous trees was being used to dispose of plant and tree cuttings and this detracted somewhat from the appearance of the bed. Why not use these cuttings to make compost for use in your landscaping schemes? A second landscaping bed (the shrubbery?) was observed at the junction of the L6160 that was also impressive. The newly planted bed at the junction of the E6400 and the Monaghan – Newbliss road also looked very well and we applaud your decision to use perennials and evergreens in this location as these species normally provide for good quality year-round colour. The planters at the entrance signage on the approach roads to the village were also observed and the colourful summer planting helped to enhance these locations and provide a positive first impression for the visitor. The colourful windowboxes at the Community Centre also looked well. Thank you for your photo of your spring floral displays and well done on planting trees and white Thorn hedging along the Monaghan – Newbliss road. Given the visual and ecological benefits of native trees and hedgerows, it is hoped that this becomes the preferred boundary treatment in Greenans Cross.

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

Congratulations on the launch of your new habitat in July 2014. We were delighted to read that the launch included an informative talk on the habitat and that since its launch additional improvements have been made which include the provision of a welcome sign and the positioning of two garden seats at specific locations along the walk. It is further noted that nesting boxes have also been provided and we wondered if these boxes are being monitored on a continuous basis? Well done also on providing a new entrance turnstile and a wooden boundary fence as it looked very well during adjudication. Regrettably, this adjudicator was unable to experience the full 300 m walk due to flooding (and the absence of appropriate footwear!). However, given the proximity of the Lake, we wondered if there are any plans to extend this walk – or has any consideration been given to linking up with other walks in your area? We noted that information signage on the wildlife that could be found along the walk has been prepared and we would ask you to consider undertaking a monitoring programme in order to assess what happens to the biodiversity of the habitat over time as we cannot simply assume that it will be maintained or improved. A monitoring program will also help you to identify future projects (for example, enable you to identify appropriate plants and trees for future landscaping schemes) that will preserve and enhance your habitat.

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

It is great to see that the committee has undertaken a house-to-house survey on waste management in the village and that the results indicate that three quarters of householders in Greenans Cross engage in recycling and are aware of the need to minimise waste. Given that there is such strong interest in this issue, why not organise a waste minimisation seminar with the environmental awareness officer in Monaghan County Council? Typically, waste management seminars cover issues such as home composting and how to minimise waste occurring in the first place. Don't forget to tell us about how the committee goes about reducing and eliminating waste in its day to day activities. More ideas for actions can be found in the tidy towns handbook.

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

We are delighted to report that your village was litter free as no litter could be found during adjudication. It would appear that the combination of your litter patrols and your anti litter signs (where these done by the schoolchildren?) are proving effective. Well done for completing a litter survey in response to the suggestion of the adjudicator in 2014 and it is particularly interesting to note that all waste collected is comprised of just four separate items – plastic bottles, cans, takeaway wrappers and glass bottles. This demonstrates that convenience food (or more accurately those who consume it and don't dispose of its packaging properly) are the principal source of litter in your village. It is recommended that these results are discussed with your environmental awareness officer in the Council in order to ascertain how they wish to respond to your findings. Perhaps antilitter roadside signage may have a positive effect? Please keep us up-to-date on this issue in 2016. You are also commended on your work devising a new logo and we wish you every success with this project.

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

It is noted from your entry form that all households in Greenans Cross support the efforts of the committee by maintaining and upgrading the appearance of their houses and gardens. You will be pleased to hear that the standard of presentation of individual houses and gardens in the village was particularly high and it was clear to the adjudicator that individual householders are proud of their village and they are keen to present their properties in the best possible light. Your plan to paint the school building is also acknowledged and while this was not complete at the time of adjudication, we look forward to seeing this improvement in 2016.

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

Our visit to Greenans Cross revealed that road improvement works appear to be ongoing as the section of the Monaghan – Newbliss road up to the E 6400 has now been widened but work (as evidenced by traffic cones and signage) now appears to be taking place between the junction of the E 6400 and the habitat. We look forward to seeing these works completed in 2016 and it is hoped that the road signage is renewed and the road verges are restored to good condition following these works.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

We were most impressed with the work of the committee (and residents) in Greenans Cross and there's no doubt that your efforts are making a positive difference to your village. Well done and we look forward to seeing further progress in 2016.