

# Tidy Towns Competition 2015

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballyfarnon** Ref: **291**  
County: **Roscommon** Mark: **296**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **25/06/2015**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2014</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2015</b>
Community Involvement & Planning	60	42	42
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	39	40
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	40	40
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	28	30
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	18	20
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	61	62
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	28	28
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	33	34
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>296</b>

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

Ballyfarnon is most welcome to the 2015 Tidy Towns competition. Many thanks for your application form with additional information. There are a number of easy ways in which you could enhance the presentation of your application form. In the first instance it is recommended that you use the electronic form over the hardcopy. This will give you all the space you need to describe your projects clearly and succinctly. The second point is to do with your additional information. The adjudicator welcomes the use of photos but these should be limited in number and be specifically related to projects undertaken. It is best to leave long descriptions out in favour brief captions which refer back to the application form. If presenting before and after photographs one of each is quite sufficient. Your additional information was tied together rather loosely in four different collections and this presented the adjudicator with a rather unwieldy volume of material. You could use a small ring binder or, better still, insert the photos digitally into the application form, thereby eliminating the need for loose pages. Your hand drawn map is very good and highlighted the areas for inspection. The key however should be much more succinct as descriptions of the projects have already been provided. Do not take these comments to negatively, they're merely matters of presentation. The content is really what matters and in this regard you are excelling. Your three-year plan for instance is excellent. Better presentation could win you more points and would ensure no confusion arises on behalf of the adjudicator. Your visit by adjudicators earlier in the year has provided you with some good advice which you can take forward.

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

You have been very busy with the paint and cleaning brushes since the last adjudicator's visit and each of your many projects have resulted in a material enhancement of the town. Well done. Alderfield Interiors have successfully maintained much of its traditional exterior and was well presented on adjudication day. T. Shivnan especially caught the eye with a simple colour scheme and clean traditional facade. The church is a beautiful heritage building in a prominent location. A simple project to further enhance its appearance would be to paint its gates. The Coillte/Court House duo is a really lovely traditional building and your painting work here was admired, a lovely combination of colour and textures.

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

The revamp of the shrub bed at the Sligo road junction was a big undertaking are you are commended for reusing the shrubs that were taken out. You have also done a significant job in refreshing the rockery at the church. Your energy in this regard is impressive. The use of birch trees in the centre of the town is very effective, these native trees have beautiful colour and texture year-round. The monument to Josie McDermot makes for an attractive central point of focus. The memorial garden is a beautifully tranquil spot with a nice dedication. The planting here is lovely and the wildlife sign adds interest. The wooden seat will be in need of repairs soon. The lovely herb border at

Rian na Ceárta was admired against the historic little corner of the town. Lawns at the church are very neatly mown but the landscape beds are weedy and in need of attention

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

Tackling Japanese knotweed is no easy task and you are commended for taking it on. No doubt you have taken good advice in this matter as it can take many years to totally eradicate this weed. It is welcome also that you have replaced cypress trees, they are not really compatible with our wildlife or landscape. You are fortunate to have a number of areas in your vicinity which provide easy access to the natural world. It is most encouraging to note that these are well utilised and that you even held a dawn chorus event. These are excellent ways for encouraging appreciation of the wonderful flora and fauna with which you share this part of the country. Your allotments sound fantastic and really give people an opportunity to get stuck in. The river is a great wildlife feature in the town itself. Try not to mow grass right to the edge of the water at the bridge. Allow the vegetation here to develop naturally as it is part of the wider ecosystem.

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

Congratulations on your new rainwater harvesting butts. It's great that you are sharing resource saving tips through your Facebook page. Is your school involved in the green flag program? If so we would like to hear about it here. Your forthcoming 'stop food waste' event will address an important issue. Try to think of ways that these events can be used to create momentum, rather than be an end in themselves. The 'trade a talent' idea sounds great. Are there ways to trade unwanted goods in Ballyfarnon? For more helpful tips and case studies from other Tidy Towns entrants please take a look at <http://localprevention.ie/tidy-towns/>

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

You are most fortunate to have a Tus worker who can help out in so many ways. You have done a lot in terms of individual tidiness projects and it is great that you remain vigilant in this regard. Your photos of the national spring clean showed the enthusiasm that people have for cleaning the area and you clearly achieved a lot on this front. Signage to discourage littering can work but can also add to clutter and untidiness. They tend to be ignored after a while so the trick is to move them around every few months. Well done to the school children and their teachers for getting involved also. Signage in the town is of variable quality. In places it needs to be washed and straightened so do try to address this for next year. The town however is very tidy in general. The streetscape benefits greatly from a lack of overhead wire clutter. Some weeding and moss removal is required along the houses adjacent to the Excol service station. The bring bank was very clean on adjudication day, the great display of oxeye daisies to the rear was admired. Watch out for flyposting particularly for events that have long passed and remove as required, e.g. on the lamp post at the church.

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

Entering the countywide tidy estates contest is a good way to ensure standards are kept high. Many attractive homes were admired throughout the town and all were presented to a very high standard. Well done in particular to those who made a special effort to hanging out colourful displays of flowers. Cois Coille is a lovely little estate with a fantastic view over the surrounding countryside. A dead tree needs to be replaced and some litter was scattered on the roadside. The lovely stonework was admired however. Nearby Fairgreen was living up to its name. The small murals are worth conserving.

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

Your work at the Cressna/Keadue road in building a stone bed is acknowledged. Try to eliminate the use of herbicide sprays in Ballyfarnon. Where they have been used on roadsides it has left unsightly dead vegetation. There is increasing awareness of the damage these sprays do to people and the environment. The shrubs at the Boyle road junction will mature well to fill this space. Try to remove traffic cones from this area they can take away from the general impression. The two Ballyfarnon welcome signs near here are in good order, is there a need for two? The older one is beautiful in its simplicity.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

We very much enjoyed our visit to Ballyfarnon and applaud you in the work that you are doing. Best of luck and we look forward to our return in 2016.