

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dromiskin - Droimineasclainn** Ref: **492**
County: **Louth** Mark: **323**
Category: **C** Date(s): **06/07/2019**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2018	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	51	52
Streetscape & Public Places	60	34	36
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	40	41
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	35	37
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	25	27
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	63	64
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	27	29
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	36	37
TOTAL MARK	470	311	323

Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Dromiskin – Droimineasclainn páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019. Thank you for your map, your application form and accompanying material. I was a bit worried when I first got your application as it appeared to be large for your center size. On reading through I understand why it is bulky, it is down to the level of work that you are doing. That said it might be worth looking at the formatting to see if the document could be slimmed down somewhat. I will not be able to comment on all the projects that you are doing, but all have been taken into consideration in the awarding of marks. Your map is of a very high standard. I have a couple of suggestions to add to it. Maybe include a scale on it as I thought your Heritage Park was much further from the center of your village. Also the numbers on the map do not correspond with the project numbers in your application, which is a frustrating when reading the document for the first time as it means having to search through for the particular project. Overlaying a grid on the map and using a grid reference might work better. It is also clearer to the new user of the map if landmarks are indicated with a letter, or another symbol/way, instead of using a number which is to indicate a new project. You have a reasonable number of people involved in your committee and volunteering for your population category which is good to see such interest in your work. Your use of a Community Skills Audit is a simple and clear way to see what skills you have and need. You have a good range of public, business and private organisations that help you with your activities. You have numerous communication channels and your Facebook page is active and up to date. You have established a strong bond with the local school and have a Junior Tidy Town Committee.

Streetscape & Public Places / Sráid-Dreach & Áiteanna Poiblí:

You mention in your application that the most challenging thing for you to deal with is the ongoing problems with derelict sites. You are limited in what you can do with this issue, but focus on what can be done. For this adjudicator the impact of derelict sites were very low, and had no real negative effect on my experience. In fact I was impressed with the way that a possible negative was turned into a positive at Ginnety's site with your "Wild and Free" designation. The railings also recede into the background as they are black. If possible it might be worth mowing a strip one mower width around the edge of the site on the inside of the railing to give it a maintained appearance. The fence might provide the support for appropriate works of art, photos/murals or a wildlife themed skirting to the bottom of the fence.

The animal sculptures are a wonderful feature, showing a high level of craftsmanship and knowledge of animal anatomy. It was pleasing to see the many heritage items and information arranged in your Heritage Park as well as the new banner poles.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You have carried out and maintained many projects in this category, too many to comment on individually. The metal edging and rose arbour are both high quality and long lasting additions. I really enjoyed the Tree Book Sign. You ensure seasonal colour with spring bulb planting. The large open space at St Ronan's Villas facing out to Chapel Road, was a bit of a disappointment. It occupies a central location and could be developed into a much more inviting space. I am not sure if it hasn't due to ownership or other issues but it struck me as odd that it was not developed more as a central landscape feature. The addition of some well placed large growing trees to the site could be the start of a long term project to develop the area as a public park. Species similar to those around the cemetery and round tower would extend the special atmosphere created there, into this area as well. If possible, professional advice should be sought for the long term development of this area. The medieval garden was an interesting and well placed feature. I wondered if the woven willow edging could become a key theme in your planting elsewhere.

Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality / An Dúlra agus an Bhithéagsúlacht i do cheantar:

You have listed numerous projects in this category which are all of high worth (awareness raising projects, partnership with farming community, delayed mowing, invasive species workshop/s, feasibility study etc.). When you are placing a Bug Hotel please don't have the area in its immediate vicinity too tidy as this tends to discourage insects using the hotel. The location of the Bee Positive Gardens struck me as a little bit strange and not appropriate for the location. This type of ornamental planting would be much better suited to a more urban setting. Maybe the planting can be used as a "nursery" for plant division for the coming years. In your wildflower planting ensure to use certified Irish wildflowers and not imported wildflowers. Some imported wildflower mixes include species not readily found in Ireland and may out compete native varieties. See the Biodiversity Ireland web site guide to Creation of a Wildflower Meadow for details of suitable suppliers. Please be careful in your works not to destroy existing valuable habitats such as dry stone walls and drainage ditches. In term of the competition and for your own planning it would be well worth spending the time making a habitat/biodiversity map. It is recommended that Tidy Town groups do a habitat map of what they have and look at best practice management for the different habitats. The Heritage Council has a Conserving and Enhancing Wildlife in Towns and Villages guide which outlines 10 habitats generally found and management of the same. You could do a simple map marking in the different habitats listed in the guide and then use this for your own use and for inclusion in this competition. The habitat map will show where there are links missing in the network and you can then target your work to that particular area. The map will also act as a base line of where you are now (or a couple of year ago), and you can add projects that you do over the years. This would be a quick and very effective way of showing your adjudicator the progress you have made over the years. There is also a Proposed Natural Heritage Area, Special Area of Conservation and a Special Protected Area within 1 mile of your center which you don't seem to mention in your application. You will find out information on them at <http://webgis.npws.ie/npwsviewer/> and from your County Biodiversity Officer. These sites are of national and international importance.

Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:

You have 39 projects listed under this category which is impressive. With the information that you have gathered with your Resource Management Survey use this as a base line to track how future behaviour is changed and what you can do to help change behaviours. Track the usage of the subsidised composting units/ household rainwater harvesting. Is everyone that has one using it? How many people have taken on actions in the Stop Food Waste leaflet that you distributed? All this information can be presented in a simple table format showing the progress and change in behaviour over the years.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Very little or no litter was seen on adjudication day. You have a range of different projects in this category to tackle tidiness and litter including: Nation Spring Clean, Good Friday clean up, working with other local Tidy Town groups, liaising with the litter warden, anti cigarette butt and dog fouling campaign, litter management plan (please include in next year application), and a weed control programme. Your litter bin heritage themed decals work very effectively.

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

What a difference a small amount of money, some time and imagination can make. The mural of the horse rider and rushes/ grass totally transforms the space. What I imagine was a narrow, uninviting space has been changed into an open and captivating one. The use of only one wall for the mural seems to make the space wider. Again you have numerous other projects listed here as well which are all very good.

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

Concluding Remarks:

Dromiskin is a very attractive village with considerable potential to do well in the competition. It was a pleasure visiting your village and I wish you well with your plans for the future.

