



Green Flag Community Award 2021

Name of Site:Dromiskin Heritage Park

Name of Community Group:Dromiskin Tidy Towns

Field Assessment Comments

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
A Welcoming Place		
Welcoming	<p>The first impression was very positive with a well maintained & inviting park entrance, name stone and banner signage.</p> <p>The Tidy Town members Liam, Mary, Henry & Pat who greeted us were very welcoming, enthusiastic and informative.</p>	
Good and safe access	<p>Good use of hard & soft landscaping materials at entrance, in particular the location of the name stone and the high quality timber gates & fencing.</p> <p>All entrance materials & boundary treatments (eg kissing gate, stone piers, timber fencing & hedge) are in keeping with the setting of a rural village.</p> <p>Separate service gate entrance for machinery and pedestrian entrance minimises risk to visitors.</p> <p>Lamp standards at entrance & within the park ensure safe access after daylight hours.</p>	
Signage		A directional sign from the village crossroads may be useful for new visitors.

	2no. high quality tall banner signs stating 'Dromiskin Heritage Park' clearly mark the entrance.	
Equal access for all	<p>Kissing gate and hard surface loop path are designed for universal access. There are no stepped paths or entrances.</p> <p>The park is designed to cater for a range of visitors, with positive feedback from wheelchair users.</p>	
Healthy, Safe & Secure		
Appropriate level of facilities and activities	<p>The park contains a variety of heritage signage, displays, art & interpretation boards which the judges considered a leading example for other community groups. These heritage themes include trees, sports, railways, religion and local people.</p> <p>The park includes a specific area for school pupils through the Eco-Tribe planting and Tree Book Quiz.</p>	Consider installing a picnic table and/or more seating as an additional facility for visitors and school groups.
Safe equipment and facilities	Current Safety Statement supplied with application. First Aid box available in adjoining Pharmacy.	No hazards identified during site visit. Park maintained to a high standard – clean, neat & tidy.
Personal security	<p>The park is located near the village centre with overlooking residential properties. Due to the open aspect of the park there is good visibility and sense of security.</p> <p>The installation of lighting columns has also provided a level of security after daylight hours.</p>	
Control of Dogs/Dog fouling	<p>Dogs are welcome with signage nearby on dog fouling and awareness messages via the Tidy Towns Facebook page.</p> <p>No reports or evidence of any dog control issues or dog fouling.</p>	
Well maintained and Clean		
Litter and waste management	No litter present during the visit.	Should litter levels increase with more visitors in 2022, identify potential control measures in the Management Plan.

Overall standard of maintenance	<p>The absence of litter bins encourages visitors to bring home any waste packaging.</p> <p>A very high standard of maintenance is evident – mowed lawn, trimmed hedges and litter free.</p>	<p>Continue with the daily litter patrol/checks, weekly activity events and the successful partnership with the CE Scheme employees.</p> <p>Monitor growth of young trees with formative pruning and continue with the pollinator plantings.</p>
Graffiti and vandalism	No reports nor evidence of any graffiti or vandalism.	

Environmental Management

Sustainable materials use	The Tidy Towns group has sourced a wide range of materials from local & national donors including Iarnrod Eireann and Kilsaranstone. The reuse of chipped tree prunings as mulch is a simple example of sustainable material use whilst the re-use of re-conditioned lamp standards & railway equipment demonstrates an up-cycling approach.	
Waste recycling and minimisation	<p>The use of grass mulching mowers demonstrates the waste minimisation approach embraced by the Tidy Towns group. The re-use of stone and scrapped garden tools into sculpture & seating was also good examples.</p> <p>The ‘Living Christmas Tree’ is a also a worthy example to be replicated by other community gardens.</p>	Continue with the clever re-use of materials in the creation of art and new park furniture.
Chemical Use	The park is managed chemical free.	
Peat use	As the park contains very little ornamental planting the use of peat in the park is considered negligible.	Include a specific objective/policy in the Management Plan to use plants grown in peat free media.

Biodiversity Landscape & Heritage

<p>Conservation of landscape & historic features</p>	<p>The existing roadside stone wall and boundary mature trees have been conserved and incorporated into the park landscape.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor the condition of these features and carry out appropriate interventions when necessary. It is noted that these features create habitats for insects & birds.</p>
<p>Conservation of biodiversity</p>	<p>The park was designed & is managed with the principles of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan including native trees, hawthorn hedging and flowering plants.</p> <p>The chemical free management ensures impact on the environment is minimised.</p> <p>The Management Plan contains good information on animal species and habitat types.</p>	<p>In 2022 hopefully you can fully resume the nature activities with the local schools and community to record species frequently found in the park – mammals, bats, birds, bees & insects. This information can be gathered as part of local/national biodiversity events and included in the Management Plan. Consider linking survey results & similar information with an updated Habitat Map within the Management Plan.</p>

Community Involvement

<p>Promotion of green space / project</p>	<p>The use of online resources (social media & website) has been successful in raising awareness & funding for the park development.</p> <p>The Schools Quiz was particularly important in engaging local children given the recent public health restrictions.</p> <p>Good use of images online and in the Management Plan of past events & activities.</p>	<p>Continue to include screenshots from the website and Facebook page in the Management Plan to demonstrate the frequency and range of activities.</p>
<p>Links to the wider community</p>	<p>The park was developed and is managed by the Community. The success of recent GoFundMe and sponsorship drives with local residents, the support of the church, public representatives & businesses demonstrates the strong links to the wider community.</p>	
<p>Involvement in decision making</p>	<p>The park has been developed and is managed by the community. The Tidy Towns Committee is the decision maker on behalf of the community.</p>	<p>Consider a feedback survey or similar methods to gather ideas for future park developments and as a means of maintaining engagement of residents & recruiting new volunteers.</p>

Involvement in operations	The park is managed by the Tidy Towns Committee with CE Scheme employees.	
Appropriate provision for the community	This heritage park is appropriate both in design and maintenance for the community. The park contains many features to engage a wide range of visitors including children, families and senior citizens such as the Tree Book, lawn area, interpretation panels and seating.	Consider installing a picnic table and/more seating as an additional facility for visitors.

Management / achievements

Innovation and creativity	The park is a leading example of innovation and creativity. The development of the park (via a lease with the parish), Tree Book & quiz and adjoining SUDS tree pits by the community are particularly innovative. The railway heritage display, 'Shovel Man' art and the Fr. Callan sculpture are particularly creative.	
Resources secured / used	The Committee has utilised a wide range of local skills to design, build and maintain the park. This has included people with experience in funding & procurement, marketing & communications, local historians, artists, landscape contractors and designers. The assistance of many external agencies including Iarnrod Eireann's Community Fund and LEADER funding of the SUDS project are good examples of the group's ability to utilise external resources including skills, materials and funding.	

Additional Comments

The judges were very impressed by the development of this new heritage park over a relatively short time period since 2017, the standard of maintenance and the enthusiasm of the local community & parish in supporting the park development.

There are many examples of innovation, creativity and community engagement that are considered best practice.

The award of its first Green Flag is highly deserved as a recognition of the success of the community efforts and the standard of park management.

