

Category

Runner Up

DROMISKIN



General Cleanliness

You have clearly found a formula that works and are implementing it to perfection to deliver the highest possible standard of cleanliness in your community. The village was scrupulously clean and tidy and we failed to locate even one cigarette butt, a real problem in so many towns and villages, on adjudication day. The sole offender was a small piece of dog fouling at the No Mow Zone in the Co-Op Field and it appeared to us to have been a fairly recent incident. Your well organised and diligent daily litter patrol teams are certainly delivering outstanding results. Weed management was also to the highest standard with not a kerbside weed to be seen and this adds considerably to your high ranking. Your Bring Bank site was not only spotless but presented as an attractive site with colourful planting in sleeper surround beds at the base of your inviting and informative signage which provides advice and tips on waste management, energy consumption, water conservation and sustainable travel. Your attractive Litter and Recycling signs, incorporating posters by local school children, have stood the test of time and add to the visual impact of the overall site which is also home to two

locally crafted, well stocked outdoor libraries and a unique outdoor Household Battery recycling unit.

Landscaping Works and Floral Displays

First of all can we say that the horticultural talent and skill displayed in the many, many planting arrangements throughout the village is inspiring in terms of design and plant choice with the standard of maintenance exemplary. Your landscaping programme has been exquisitely adapted over recent years to favour permanent planting while ensuring that vibrant seasonal colour also makes a joyful contribution. Your hanging basket displays were





sumptuous and opulent primarily consisting of richly coloured pink petunia with flashes of red and blue from geranium and lobelia. The entrance to the Church was saturated in glorious colour from tremendous planting in your flower towers to the backdrop of sparkling silver gates and railings. Summer planting in containers placed at brightly coloured pumps and on Main Street add further to the visual allure of the core village area. The Herb Garden at Centra never looked better as well as appearing very productive. The beautifully painted tiered containers are most eye catching in a lovely rose pink and yellow colour scheme with decorated stones adding to its positive visual appeal. Oregano, mint, parsley, thyme, sage, chives, lemon balm, rosemary and strawberries were thriving in the containers and we loved the natural looking bird feeders – this really is a lovely area that, we suspect, may offer the potential for expansion in future years. Your large and beautifully designed sign Celebrating 30 Years of Tidy Towns participation captures perfectly the huge progress made in the presentation of your village over three decades and highlights many of the significant projects undertaken in that time. The tiered planters at the Co-Op Field looked particularly radiant this year with striking red geranium adding glamorous colour to the permanent planting of viburnum which is in place to support wildlife on an all year basis. The quite extensive No Mow Zone is highlighted by decorative signage and mowed pathways to clearly indicate that it has been deliberately provided to support your commitment to wildlife and sits comfortably with your more manicured areas. We loved the simple but effective planting of nasturtiums in the wooden bollards which added further visual interest at this prominent location. The Crossroads Bed certainly has all the ingredients to create strong visual impact with bidens, lillies, lavender and agapanthus producing

glowing colour and beautifully complementing the three cypress trees that provide additional structure and texture to the planting arrangement. The Viking Boat is a key focal point in the village with delightful planting of lupins and geraniums in a large circular container really catching the eye and the purple and red colours of the plants being an ideal complement to the superb stonework of the boat. The nearby Birds Eye View sculpture, crafted from bog oak, is another masterpiece in craftsmanship and is nicely offset by appropriate planting. Planting arrangements on this green area were aesthetically pleasing and pollinator friendly in equal measures with the large bed of pink carpet roses being particularly eye-catching and many, many bees buzzing from plant to plant in the other beds. The Monastic Site, of course, dominates the streetscape in this area of the village with it's Round Tower demanding attention and helping to draw the eye to the Celtic Cross and Ruins of St. Margaret's Church with the background story of each structure concisely told, and beautifully illustrated, on the Information Panel on the external green and this, of course, is just one point of interest on your Heritage Trail. The new Places and Spaces panel is an excellent replacement for the former grubby Tain Trail sign and highlights local





range of exquisitely designed panels which illustrate the varied tapestry of life for current and future generations to understand and appreciate. New additions since last year include panels on Farming Heritage, Traveller Heritage and Famous Daughters as well as an exquisitely crafted seat by the one and only Seamus McArdle. We noted also the provision of a new litter bin and dog fouling bin and, of course, your Community Green Flag proudly flying on your newly installed heritage style flagpole – our congratulations to you on being awarded the prestigious

placenames, long forgotten by some and totally unknown to others, so that their relevance will not be lost in the annals of time. Lawlor's Garden is a lovely little pocket park with its strategically placed seat affording views of the Monastic Site and its planting arrangements blending the pretty with the productive with raspberries, artichoke, rhubarb, rosemary and apple trees prospering to the backdrop of colourful perennials. The Credit Union Garden continues to be a most inviting space with weeding and edging carried out to perfection in the more formal beds and a large No Mow Zone provided at the rear of the garden to support pollination. Deep red roses draped the wooden pergola for maximum impact and we have to say that we were most impressed with the quality and maintenance of the ground level planters at the Credit Union building. The trees planted as part of your SuDS scheme are thriving and create a most pleasing appearance on the Chapel Road where the section of paving that also formed part of the project was also admired. Your display of artistic paintings of local heritage sites, previous years Louth Looking Good photoboards and a magnificent hanging basket adorning the fence to the rear of the project completes the attractive presentation at this location. The impressive entrance to the Heritage Park arouses curiosity for what lies within and it certainly didn't disappoint as a visit to this serene and restful space is an enriching and educational experience and an invaluable capsule of life in Dromiskin in times past. Key figures and moments in time, from the community's rich past, are beautifully captured on a

Green Flag one of only 19 community managed parks in the country to do so. The driveway to the Church/ School car park was lined on both sides with wildflowers that produced a colourful spectacle that was certainly enticing buzzing bees in large numbers. The lengthy linear bed to the rear of the Church car park looked terrific with waving grasses, catmint, huge alliums and ruby coloured lilies just starting to come into bloom combining to produce charming appeal. Ginnity's Pond is a wonderful amenity to have in the community with its background story told on the impressive panel at the Viewing Stand – we're excited to hear about your short term plans to create a new entrance from the car park and longer term plans for the sustainable landscaping of the site and look forward to visiting to see those ambitious plans come to fruition. The Green Infrastructure Sign, framed by two sets of floral sculptures, is both attractive and informative and the kerbed beds in the





car park have received a tremendous facelift with all plants judiciously pruned and decorative stone provided in the quite extensive landscaped areas. Your Slip Slidin' Away sculpture is exquisitely landscaped – a simple but effective design of pink low level geranium that was alive with bees and butterflies on adjudication day. The furniture in the Outdoor Classroom was being painted on the day of our visit, the Dreamtime Garden was in full bloom and impeccably maintained while the upcycling project using Wavin and hosepipe cut offs as well as hubcaps was as extravagant as ever in visual appeal. Fruit laden trees were in evidence in the Incredible Edible Garden with the raised vegetable and herb beds having been replanted following the initial harvesting in June. The new planting arrangement at the Commons Cross provides a colourful introduction to the village at this busy location. The Biblical Garden is very neatly maintained but, when finances allow, we would recommend replacing damaged

sections of the box hedging and adding more decorative stone in the appropriate colour scheme. Purple reigned supreme in your Purple Pollinator Patch where the plants were coming into bloom among the natural vegetation and a most attractive sign has been installed to identify the site. The green area at Chapel Cross was well maintained while the Animal Sculptures, crafted and designed with exquisite precision, looked stunning this year as a result of the installation of sustainably sourced (and labour intensive!) cobblelock in the shape of a horseshoe and the provision of seven planters appropriately planted with geum. The Bee Positive Gardens were just coming into bloom with plenty of pollinator activity going on and the purple buddleia in the Butterfly Gardens were just starting to burst into colourful bloom. The series of Bee Fact signs and floral sculptures add further visual interest and educational value to the site. Lovely floral displays at the AOH Hall and Garden, using your themed planting of red begonia and blue lobelia, drew attention to the nicely presented building and charming garden presentation which includes a wonderfully majestic blue cypress tree, copper beech tree, Ring a Rosy sculpture, natural hedging, wild and free area and glorious hanging baskets on a pristinely painted stand. Your new and quite extraordinary Sunflower Mural is so vivid and so detailed it immediately commands attention and is a real showstopper on the Commons Road. The weather damaged mural on the other wall has been replaced with a gleaming wildflower panel that will allow easier maintenance at this location and it also puts its stylish stamp on its location. The detail on the new Cuchulainn mural is extraordinary with imagery of local heritage sites seamlessly incorporated into the overall design.

Appearance of Approach Roads

Bespoke, wooden Welcome Signs herald arrival to the village in a most charming manner with the planting of geum, penstemon and lupins in the raised stone enclosed beds providing a joyful welcome. The planting at Jack's Hill was just coming into bloom on adjudication day with rudbeckia bordered by marigold the ideal combination to produce glowing colour at this important junction. Your flags were absent this year but we note the very unusual circumstances that led to this and were delighted to see them safely reinstated and flying high when we briefly passed through the village a few days later.



Individual Contributions – Residential/ Business

This is an area where considerable improvement has been made over the last couple of years and it is very apparent that you have an excellent working relationship with Residents Associations in the village with a number of excellent projects undertaken at housing estate entrances in the last twelve months. The entrance to Seabrook has been transformed with the damaged name sign replaced and a new permanent landscaping feature, on each verge, framing the entrance already making a positive impact that will only increase as the planting matures. It was lovely to see the coordination of landscaping at estate entrances with a similar permanent planting arrangement newly in place at the entrance to Ard na Tuire. The new sculptural pieces at the entrance to Inis Linn are beautifully crafted with each bird silhouette on the piece representing a house in the estate – what a lovely, inclusive design feature and what a lovely impact is created as a result of this installation. The residents of Rath na Gloine were not to be outdone with a new, colourful wildflower swathe developed on the estate green and the entrance neatly presented and boasting one of your co-ordinated estate name signs. Church View, as always, put its best foot forward but there is, undoubtedly, scope for some additional planting in St. Ronan's Villas. The Hamlet looked great with two well planted shrub beds at the estate green and some most attractive individual presentations with Commons Grove also participating well – it was particularly impressive to see a number of residents in this estate bringing the effort into the wider community by



planting wildflower swathes and seasonal planting on roadside verges outside the boundary wall of the estate. Individually residents on all approach roads are to be commended – too many to give all the credit they deserve but your House and Garden Awards is definitely having the desired result. A number on Chapel Road particularly impressed - some wonderful informal planting and stunning floral displays on the Commons Road, a particularly charming cottage garden on the Dromeenagh Road, St. Teresa's on Docking Street and the St. John of God Community House are but a few of those that contribute so well to the very pleasing effect. The commercial sector also played a positive role with Daniel's Take-Away shining brightly with its well painted façade embellished with luscious hanging baskets. Centra, despite being a very busy functional site, was spotless on adjudication day and visually enhanced by stunning hanging baskets and ground level containers. Similar hanging basket





displays assisted the presentation of Herity's Public House but the building itself has become quite weather worn and we would urge you to try to encourage and support the owner to repaint the façade in a different colour palette if possible. It's the end of an era with Mulligan's Shop and adjoining house for sale but both looked well with luxurious hanging baskets on the house and radiant roses delivering compelling appeal in the Car Park. We note development in progress on Ginnity's site and this, when complete, will eliminate the final derelict site in the village and transform the crossroads scene.

Overall Impact

Evidence of commitment and innovation is very apparent throughout the entire village, with a positive spirit and a growing and enthusiastic team of volunteers being the driving force for the transformation of the village. This ceaseless energy and commitment has had a transformative impact on your community both in terms of its visual presentation and, equally importantly, community engagement. Overall success in Louth Looking Good hovers tantalisingly close – keep doing what you're doing and you can do it but don't take your eye off the ball as you also have very strong competition coming up in the rear.

