

Category

Runner Up

DROMISKIN



General Cleanliness

Your superb cleanliness rating is a clear indication that your determined approach to litter and weed management is working well and paying dividends. You may be classified as a small village but you cover quite an extensive area within the lower speed limit signs and we have to say that kerbside weeds were absent throughout and litter control was faultless. Your Bring Bank site was spotless and, while you still have a problem with derelict sites, you have done your best to camouflage these and it is heartening to see that a couple are the subject of current planning applications which may, hopefully, eliminate the problem in these key areas of the village.

Landscaping Works and Floral Displays

Your many and varied planting schemes are not alone exquisite in appearance but, because of the careful choice of plants, are providing food and shelter for wildlife and creating a living legacy for future generations. We loved visiting your various gardens and signed trails be they heritage, sculptural or ecology and marvelled at the exceptionally high standard of presentation at each and every location. You take the view that your new Heritage Park is a work in progress but we have to say that we were

enthralled with the high standard of design and workmanship together with the huge progress made since our last visit, which by no means delivered an unfinished look. Since last summer you have installed a most impressive entrance stone, produced a sporting Heritage Panel, to a design concept and quality unrivalled in anything we have seen in the county, and celebrated your Railway Heritage with a sign of intriguing design to mirror the image of the front of a train (we have to say that both signs made interesting reading and caused us to linger longer than planned!). The craftsmanship of the stonework in your two new raised beds is exemplary and the planting of roses and lavender in these beds is highly pleasing to the eye – how lovely to create such a high quality public tribute to celebrate 60 years of the National Tidy Towns Competition! Existing features in the park are well maintained including your Nicholas Callan sculpture, Christian Heritage Panel, Famous Sons Panel and Celtic Knot bed. We can't believe how well your trees have matured – the support of a landscape architect in your planting schemes is definitely delivering results! The two raised sleeper surround beds in the Co-Op field, which we suggested needed a bit of TLC last year, have received a tremendous face lift and are now pretty,

pollinator friendly beds that exude colourful cheer and were buzzing with bees and fluttering with a variety of butterflies – a real success story. Your tiered planters at this location are planted with the right balance of seasonal planting for year round interest with added impact through the planting of a border of luscious begonia in jewel bright colours. Your crossroads scene is defined by elegant lighting standards highlighted by your wonderful heritage themed banners and baskets simply bursting with extravagant colour. In fact your hanging baskets in the village centre can only be described as radiant with the deep pink petunia providing a unified flow of colour that was very much to our liking. Your heritage themed flags flying high over the Co-Op Field have, like your banners, been replaced at considerable cost but they looked terrific and their quality will ensure that they will stand the test of time. The landscaped bed at the crossroads has developed really well with day lilies, lavender and agapanthus alive with bees and butterflies on adjudication day – a striking feature at such a key location. The Viking Boat, as always, stopped us on our travels and we had to, once again, admire it for the important landmark it is in the village. The nearby bog oak sculpture, underplanted with angel fisherman's rod and waving grasses, is another arresting feature of high quality – the ferns unfortunately don't like dry weather and didn't survive. We were sorry to hear that your medieval garden was vandalised on a number of occasions but not surprised in the least to hear that your dedicated volunteers, young and not so young, carried out necessary repairs without delay – it's a most appropriate and well designed and planted feature in proximity to the monastic site. Lawlor's Garden is a very well maintained little oasis offering fantastic views of the monastic site in the graveyard – all planting arrangements have a great variety of thriving shrubs and your insect hotel, sign and heritage panels are added points of interest. The tasteful presentation of this garden enhances rather



than overwhelms the monastic site and is a tribute to your strategic approach to landscaping. The Credit Union garden is simply mesmerising with a series of versatile planting schemes radiating warmth, charm and positive visual impact while accommodating the needs of the local bees and butterflies who have made a home for themselves, in huge numbers, in this delightful setting. The wildflower meadow, while not as sensational as last year, still delivered positive impact and your contemporary sculpture of the Credit Union logo was highlighted by a display of lustrous begonia to great effect. Your Ecology Trail sign is brimming with information and even the entrance gate to the garden sparkled in the sunshine having been freshly painted in silver paint. The AOH Garden is another botanical treasure with its statement blue cedar tree, a very well maintained hedge providing blossom for insects and berries for birds while your delightful Ring a Rosy sculpture is framed by perennial geranium. Fabulous hanging baskets, hanging on an ornate stand, draws the eye upwards while the series of tubs of vibrant summer colour along the roadside boundary add further glamour. The planting in the colourfully painted tyres, arranged in the shape of the human body, has matured really well and has never looked better. We didn't fail to notice that the hall itself has been freshly painted and looked splendid. Additional planting has taken place at the village centre Bring Bank site where your wonderful, and well stocked, Outdoor Library has been freshly painted to good effect – a





thing of beauty as well as a functioning resource management utility. We must say that the detail in the design and construction of this unit is a notch above

the many other very good structures appearing in many locations throughout the county. The flower towers at the entrance to the Church are staggeringly impressive and create a WOW factor in “bonfire” colours of fiery red, yellow and orange begonia. The Church grounds are elegant in their simplicity with shasta daisies and warmly coloured roses providing a lovely complement to the distinguished Church building. The school grounds, which effectively double as a village park, are full of nooks and crannies with an imaginative approach used in providing points of interest at every location. The Incredible Edible Garden lives up to its name – it’s simply incredible what has been packed in to this piece of land and wonderful to know that the Junior Tidy Towns members are so actively involved in its design, planting and maintenance. Very well organised raised vegetable beds and thriving fruit trees demonstrate the benefit of Grow Your Own – it was great to hear that the young boys and girls harvest the vegetables and actually cooked a meal with their own locally grown produce. We particularly admired your ingenuity in upcycling hub caps to create a “floral” display along the fence of the garden and the addition of bee, butterfly and ladybird fence art really introduces colourful impact and gives a nod to your objective to get Dromiskin buzzing and fluttering with nature. Your composting area is enjoying huge success with nutrient rich compost now being produced by your new wormery to supplement that produced, very successfully, by your tumbler composter. Your new Stop Food Waste and Composting Makes Sense information signs are very well researched with the findings beautifully displayed in an easy to understand and visually attractive manner – packed with tips and advice to help the householder be more sustainable in reducing waste in the home. Ginnity’s Pond Viewing Stand is a wonderful feature with its telescope installed in your

well maintained decking area affording great views of this wetland and the Information Panel providing a background to the pond and the ecological value of the site. The railing baskets along the front of the school provide a vivid burst of colour while the permanent planting either side of the entrance delivers warm and elegant impact. The fact that much of the area was effectively a construction site didn’t deter your determined group of volunteers with the Dreamtime Garden, Outdoor Classroom and Biodiversity Planting, Insect Village and sculptures maintained to the usual high standard. The Biblical Garden is a unique feature that enjoys a good standard of maintenance although sections of the box hedging possibly need to be replaced at this stage. Your Heritage Trail, Sculpture Trail and Ecology Trail are all defined by aesthetically pleasing and informative signage to satisfy the demands of even the most inquisitive visitor. What a shame that your lovely Monkey Puzzle tree at Chapel Cross didn’t survive the harsh winter – have you plans to replace it if it is damaged beyond repair? Otherwise this small green space is presented in an exemplary manner and adds to the overall landscape splendour of the community where we must also pay tribute to the fabulous stone walls that characterise the streetscape of your village.

Appearance of Approach Roads

All approach roads to the village are home to hand carved wooden Welcome Signs incorporating the heritage theme that is so obvious in all your work. While we love the signs and the superb craftsmanship of the raised stone beds at each of the signs we wonder if there is an opportunity to extend these beds for maximum impact? We completely understand that you are limited in what you can do because of the width of the verge but, and it’s just an idea, would you consider another planting arrangement at ground level to the front of the existing beds to create a tiered effect and create more of a WOW factor. You have certainly achieved a WOW factor at the Ardee Road junction (Jack’s Hill) with wonderful colour from planting of black eyed susie and single colour marigold and your flags flying high – a first class introduction to the village. We noted also that construction work was underway on the Commons Road footpath which will be a fabulous amenity when complete and contribute also to improved aesthetics along this key approach to the village.



Individual Contributions – Residential/ Business

There is a marked improvement under this heading this year and it is clear that you enjoy a good working relationship with local commercial interests. We loved the fact that Hallinan's Centra, Herity's Public House, The Village Pharmacy and Fagan's Take-Away have all bought in to your co-ordinated hanging basket programme with each displaying magnificent baskets of your signature deep pink petunia which creates a real burst of co-ordinated colour in the village centre. All of these premises looked well particularly Herity's Pub which enjoys a key location at the crossroads. It's the end of an era with Mulligan's shop and Post Office for sale – the building has become a little shabby in presentation as a result but we hope that when new owners take over they will continue the tradition of supporting Tidy Towns. It is very evident that an increasing number of enthusiastic gardeners reside in Dromiskin with a number of stunning gardens noted along approaches and within estates. The presentation and, in particular, basic maintenance in the various housing estates has improved hugely since last year with the higher standard being particularly noticeable in Innis Linn. Your collaboration with the residents has resulted in graffiti removal at the entrance, the walls painted and a delicate and perfectly executed monochrome mural painted which transforms the entrance to the estate. Within the estate kerbside weed management was excellent and the cheerful

planting at the name sign was another indication of the significant improvement. The residents of St. Ronan's Villas are also to be applauded on a much neater and tidier appearance with the kerbside weed problem noted last year effectively dealt with leading to a much more favourable impression. Ard NaTuire was generally neat and tidy although the potential for greater engagement with the residents is worthy of exploration. Rath na Gloine is still a work in progress but effective well maintained landscaping softens the appearance of the entrance and significant tree planting has been undertaken within the estate. There is the potential to create greater impact at the entrance by paving or tidying up in some manner, the corners either side of the entrance but hopefully this will happen when the development is fully complete. Residences along Chapel Road are all very well presented with the two houses at Chapel Cross worthy of particular mention. The Old School, now a Pre-School, looked splendid and clearly has had a recent coat of paint with the glossy red colour beautifully complementing the stone work of the building. When the footpath is complete we wonder if residents along the Commons Road could be encouraged to paint boundary walls to add further to the positive impact?

Overall Impact

Your creativity and tenacity over the last number of years has served you well and Dromiskin Village is simply unrecognisable from how it appeared a few short years ago. You have a skill set among your volunteer base that must surely be the envy of many and this is so evident in the way you plan, design and implement your new projects but you also never lose sight of the importance of maintaining existing projects where your work is to an incredibly high standard. You can be very proud of your efforts and if the derelict site issue resolves itself there surely will be no stopping you!

