

Tidy Towns Competition 2018

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Collinstown** Ref: **106**
County: **Westmeath** Mark: **295**
Category: **B** Date(s): **16/06/2018**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2017	Mark Awarded 2018
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	41	41
Streetscape & Public Places	50	41	41
Green Spaces and Landscaping	50	40	40
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	29	31
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	9	11
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	54	56
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	36	36
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	39	39
TOTAL MARK	450	289	295

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

Cuireann an moltoir seo faille roimh Collinstown (Baile na cGailleadh) chuig Comortas na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu 2018 agus chuig Ceiliuradh 60 Bliainan Chomortais.

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Thank you for your excellent entry form which was concise and very informative on the happenings of your Tidy Towns Committee and your contribution to the development of your village.

The supplementary information supplied coupled with the excellent map of the village was most helpful to the adjudicator who was visiting Collinstown for the very first time.

You have developed a strong links with Westmeath County Development and other relevant agencies.

Of course the most important support that you have is that of the local community and it goes without saying that judging by the links with local organizations that this support ois testament to the work you are doing.

It is noted that you have embarked on revised action plan and just looking at the summary one has to be impressed with the practical approach that you are taking towards the implementation of same.

One presumes that the Tidy Towns Committee works under the guidance of the umbrella group Collinstown Action. The Committee of 8 with your main volunteer core of 17 is more than sufficient for the tremendous work you do on behalf of the committee.

You also have an excellent relationship with the local National School and isn't good to see your local GAA Club or should I say Hurling Club doing their bit for Tidy Towns in the Village.

Methods of communication are the traditional coupled with the various forms of social media that offer instant connectivity and this is the right mix to ensure that all of the local community stay informed of you activities.

Your comments on Biodiversity and particularly Sustainable Waste Management (Sustainability Doing More with Less) are heartening as many centres have had difficulty in embracing the concept "Doing More with Less"

Thank you for your endorsement of the competition and indeed it is good to read that more senior and juniors are getting involved with you.

Overall a good standard was attained in this category and you have very much stepped up to the plate in regards to planning in this category.

This approach warrants an increase of an additional mark.

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

The adjudicator liked the layout of the village with its traditional 4 cross roads in the centre.

The road infrastructure and condition of footpaths in the village was generally good but there were a few exceptions. Some of the footpath near the beautifully presented and newly painted Community Hall was a little cracked and that area needs to be surfaced in due course.

The Committee should get in touch with the Local County Engineer, if you haven't already done so, to see if it can be done as it would make a big difference.

Also some of the road markings for traffic calming in from Mullingar or Delvin (I cannot recall right now? needs to be re-lined, again a county engineer discussion item.

The skyline is not unduly affected by a myriad of overhead wires which is good as they can be very unsightly when hanging low or criss crossing.

I note that you state that area opposite the RC Church is being developed into a medium sized zero energy rated housing development.

Local knowledge, which may be exaggerated, led me to believe that there were 60 houses planned!

The RC Church St Marys, set back from the road, was in exceptional condition and the grounds were very well maintained but the surface of the drive up near the parking area was a little rough.

The National School adjacent to the Church was also presented to a very high standard and one notes that they have achieved significant Green Flags Standard.

The Hall has already been mentioned and one wasn't too sure whether the shop near the Roma Takeaway was still trading.

The Centre of the Village was very appealing and the business premises like Cost Cutter, McManus Maypole Inn, Daybreak at Corner of Village Square and across the way The Lough Lene Inn were all presented to a high standard.

Lough Lene GAA Grounds and pitch and putt course are very well looked after leisure and sports facilities that any Village of your size would be proud of.

Good to note also that you have been designated the first Age Friendly Village in the County.

Some entries in this category will cross over to the next category and will be considered under this.

Just a further observation; On the Castlepollard road and opposite the Pitch and Putt course the lake is visible to the onlooker. An entry to Lough Lene at this point would be a great asset to people living in the village. The village would be very enhanced by such a development. swimming, picnic facilities and fishing stands are available here.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The Age Friendly Walk will be welcomed by all ages – excuse the bad attempt at a bad pun.

The entry for the housing development would have been better placed in the previous section but at any rate the adjudicator has dealt with it by way of comment.

The adjudicator was impressed with the mix of summer colour and the sustainable year round year planting that you have put in place.

The Playschool garden was visited and as the adjudicator is very much into gardening he was more than impressed with the selection and quality of the pollinator friendly plants in place.

The Peace Garden in St Marys RC Grounds mentioned in last year's report was now matured and well done to whoever is responsible for its up keep.

Is it part of the Tidy Towns Committee remit? If so it should have been commented on in a little more detail.

There were a few beds that were a little choked with overgrowth of plants and these need to be thinned and made good.

The Wild Life area encountered on the way in from Mullingar is a substantial piece of ground put to very good use and is now an attractive feature given a good impression as one approaches.

Green Area in the centre of Village enhanced by Beech and Copper Beech trees with a very nice flower and shrub bed.

While I'm not adverse to that fine Country Singer from the neighbouring county but this is no place for this pop up placard advertising of Festivals etc.

This practice has got a little out of hand around the country and should be discouraged by the County Councils.

It would be remiss of me not to mention some very fine private gardens seen on the walkabout of the Village and Surrounds.

Overall the standard was good but with more potential to do even better.

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

The key components of this adjudication category are a) knowledge of local species and habitats and knowledge of local designated areas and b) being able to promote the knowledge gained to the local community and the passing visitor in format that would be easily accessed such as wildlife information boards in a central location.

Good wildlife advice and communication of the importance of the local wildlife heritage to the local community is so important

Being aware of invasive and possible destructive plants such as Japanese knot weed, of which you are, is also essential.

Your entry is one of the best seen by this adjudicator in this year's competition so far.

You certainly have embraced the objectives of what the category is all about as stated in the introductory paragraph

There is no point in repeating the 11 bullet point initiatives back to you but one has to be impressed with the very creative "Boyo Diversity" characterisation.

Well done to the teachers and children whose combined creativity and enthusiasm helped to create such an excellent project

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

The objective in this category has moved on from one of reduce reuse and recycle to one of promoting the concept of reducing the production of potential waste at source such as excessive packaging.

"Doing more with less" is a very apt

The practical benefits of good waste management and control of unnecessary production will be seen as a major contribution to a better environment.

You have listed 10 projects under this category a few of which are me too and have been replicated around the country as more communities become familiar with the category objectives.

The "One Small Change Campaign" is something that very much appealed to the adjudicator and indeed something with a difference.

Also its good to note that you have become part of Refill Ireland which is a campaign that is gaining credence countrywide.

One small concern is that the adjudicator hopes that you have the resources to manage all your projects in a sustainable manner

To get more out of this sector in terms of creating even a greater awareness of a more sustainable environment consider looking at the following websites for idea generation

www.localprevention.ie ,www.greenhomes.ie and www.sustainableprocessing.ie

Also something that this adjudicator became aware of during last year's adjudication is the circular economy.

It is a bit too long to explain the concept in detail in this report, but if you access the following www.dccae.gov.ie you will get a pretty good idea of what it's all about.

The idea of what is called a linear economy of "take, make and waste" is now being seen as not sustainable and alternatives need to be found.

Finally the Bring Bank at was compact, well managed and easily accessed

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Litter control was quite good and one might say that's easy for small villages but the community has to buy in to the effort of keeping places litter free.

As a committee you have promoted the concept of anti litter in Collinstown to members of the local community in a practical manner such as getting support for litter picks.

Facebook and other forms of social media are ideal for this type of information campaign.

Well done to both the ICA and the GAA Club for becoming involved in promotion your anti litter campaign.

Like other similar rural villages many of your local population do their bit by collecting litter on their daily walks.

This shows a pride of place.

General tidiness was very acceptable as well and comments were made in a previous section re road surfaces and footpaths.

Overall the standard was very good.

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

Gleann Alainn is very nice development of stone clad houses with very fine stone walls and wrought iron gates on some of the properties.

Many of these home owners had lovely gardens which were presented and a credit to their owners.

Only negative and this is outside control of residents maybe is that main boundary walls have stained to a grey red colour.

How one goes about addressing this is another question.

Maybe the Committee would be in a position to help and offer some advice re assistances for a residents association.

Beech Park is a nice development of dormer style detached houses and here properties were very well presented..

Green areas in both places maturing but maybe could do with additional planting arrangements.

The Hill and Murtagh's Estate off the Mullingar Road were both well looked after housing developments.

The Cemetery remedial work was viewed on the day

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

The Christmas Card photo was admired and a very nice type of initiative especially for exiles from the Parish that are in many places around the world.

The entrance into the village form Delvin has a very welcoming shrub and flower bed at the name plate and the verges were cut in accordance with good practice for the preservation of wild life.

The Mullingar entrance was also as equally as impressive with wild life area as an added dimension.

The road in from the Iralco Factory was in a presentable sate if a little overgrown in some parts.

The Catlepollard entrance is an expansive one with a view into the village from a slight incline.

It has Lough Lene on its left as one approaches the village.

The road out to the Lake and its excellent facility for water based activity was a little tight as one might expect with a secondary road.

Concluding Remarks:

It was a pleasure to visit the lovely village of Collinstown in North Westmeath and see first had what work is being done by a Tidy Towns Committee in helping the village to achieve its maximum potential in the competition.

You are wished well in the competition.