

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Douglas** Ref: **116**
County: **Cork(South)** Mark: **279**
Category: **H** Date(s): **24/07/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	43	43
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	37	39
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	41	41
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	31	33
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	14	15
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	45	45
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	29	29
TOTAL MARK	450	273	279

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Douglas is welcomed to the 2015 SuperValu Tidy Towns competition. Thank you for your application, map, copy of your plan and supporting documentation. You are also complemented on you logo which complements your colours, history and community park. You have a large active committee with a number of volunteers who work weekly on Saturday and Sunday mornings and one night per week during the summer months. You engage with relevant agencies and businesses that provide assistance and support to you for the activities you engage in. Communication to the wider community is by social media and newspapers. You also publish an annual newsletter which is distributed to all organisations around Douglas. You also get good support from the schools in particular the transition year students who are working to attain their Gaisce awards and join you for work experience. You are actively involved in the competition since 2000 and in that time it has created a better community spirit endeavouring to make Douglas a better place to work and live in.

Built Environment and Streetscape / An Timpeallacht Thógtha agus Sráid-dreacha:

You are congratulated on this year's project in this category. The heritage trail will be an important step for Douglas to ensure that the history and culture of Douglas is prominent for all visitors and residents alike. It is important that this heritage is celebrated and preserved. This will ensure that the old heritage of Douglas is not lost in the modern developments. When entering Douglas the first development to notice is Douglas Village Shopping Centre. This is the main artery of the area. It is positive to see new businesses opening in Douglas and occupying vacant premises outside of the main shopping areas. Some premises that added to the streetscape were Dinos, a splendid stone building suitably adorned with flowers. John Sullivan's again was well presented as was Barry's of Douglas, KC Restaurant and La Quila. They set the stakes high for presentation. ECO Douglas adjacent to the roundabout was superbly presented as was the Ulster Bank. The schools were visited and again were well presented. It is good to see the Community Centre getting a facelift. The outdoor gym and basketball court was visited, all looking pristine. The historic walls of Douglas were also noted, the adjudicator is glad to hear that expert advice is sought in there repair. Rochestown Park Hotel is a fabulous complex and has been enhanced future with its new entrance.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Again you have undertaken numerous projects in this category. You have undertaken to plant spring bulbs and perennials. Where possible year round plants are encouraged as they are more cost effective, are better visually and provide cover and food for wildlife. You landscaping at the river walk is impressive and is maintained to a high standard as well as screening the concrete of the fly-over. At the end of the river walk some new trees have been planted along the slip road. These trees have unfortunately been overcome with grass growth and ragwort. This is

something that would need to be addressed. The school are complimented on the planting of native trees. The Park has an abundance of trees, try to restrict over use of herbicide at their base. Some lower branches would also need to be pruned. The planting of planters around the town brought good splashes of colour to the area. The corner near the new water butt really stood out.

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fiadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádúrtha:

The Ballybrack woods trial was the first stop in this category for the adjudicator. The walkways and the loop walk are a great amenity to have. Some grass growth at the side of the walk would however need to be cut back. The concrete wall at the top of the hill has unfortunately been decorated with graffiti and even more concerning there was signs that a fire had been lit against the wall. On the loop walk there are more signs of where camp fires had been lit. This would need to be investigated. Notwithstanding this, the loop walk is a joy and the new handrail makes the walk very safe. How are you progressing with dealing with Japanese Knotweed as many clusters were noted? Please include details of training in next year's application. The planting of the whitethorn hedge was noted and seems to be establishing itself. At the entrance to Ballybrack woods again an overuse of herbicide was noted along the rivers edge. You are doing good work in this area, have you conducted any surveys on the wildlife and habitats that exist in Douglas? Do get the schools involved as much as possible in this. You should focus on three areas: first is education which is knowledge of species, habitats and designated areas in Douglas. The second is conservation which is all about maintaining wildlife areas and implementation of findings. This can enhance your already good work. The last area is celebration which is about taking wildlife advice and communicating local wildlife heritage. This can be done through information boards, wildlife talks and presentations. It's all about creating awareness of wildlife and habitats in your area.

Sustainable Waste and Resource Management / Bainistiú Acmhainní agus Dramhaíola Inbhuanaithe:

Sustainable waste is about reducing the amount of waste produced in the community. The composting demonstration that you attended shows how waste can be reduced through composting and used as compost for plants. More efficient use of resources needs to be looked at such as rainwater harvesting. Using a water butt to collect rainwater and use for watering of plants is one way. This you have demonstrated at the bus shelter. The community allotments where the community grow their own vegetables reduce the need for packaging which is a saving on the amount of waste produced. The Tidy Towns website offers more useful tips in this area. Register with the Green Home programme at (<http://www.greenhome.ie>) where useful tips can be obtained on where waste can be reduced. Stop food waste is another area to investigate, check out (<http://www.stopfoodwaste.ie>) for more information.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

It is great to see you have a plan in place for controlling litter. Is this done on a daily or weekly basis? You collected an enormous amount of rubbish in you spring clean. It is positive to note that you recycle your collections, do continue this trend as much as possible. Do you take part in any anti-litter league competitions? Some litter was noted on the day of adjudication most notably on the main street and in the park. Amounts were small given the busy nature of the street. Some graffiti was noted but you are doing good work to eliminate this. To combat litter it is important to raise public awareness, the schools are always a good place to start to spread the word. Your new logo will look well on you high-viz jackets.

There were some areas of untidiness noted. The river adjacent to the slip road at N40 had five trolleys dumped in it. The railings at this bridge were also in need of painting. The park was generally tidy but a broken seat distracted from the area. Some weed growth was noted at the base of kerbs which gives an untidy look. Cigarette butts seem to be a problem on the streets with numerous amounts noted against kerbs. Do continue your good work to combat litter.

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

It is unclear if new signage has been erected indicating the start and end of Douglas so with that in mind the adjudicator may have included a large area in this section. You are to be complimented on your support to residents in providing equipment and help. Best Kept Estate competition is a positive step as this gets people involved and encourages residents to have pride in their estates. Maybe a local business would sponsor a prize and you could publicise this to raise more awareness. Many of the estates visited however are a credit to the residents and they are to be complimented on their presentation. The Paddocks housing estate and Elden both caught the eye. There were many residents in the town centre noted and admired, the house across from St Luke's school caught the eye as did the cottages across from East Village medical centre.

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

The roundabouts as you approach Douglas are kept to a very high standard, especially the roundabout at Carraigaline and Rochestown. The box hedge and the presentation of the roundabout were exquisite. The area was exceptional busy on the day of adjudication but traffic flowed freely. Road surfaces were to a high standard. Footpaths were sturdy and to a good standard. Small amounts of signage in the town needed cleaning but overall signage was generally good.

Concluding Remarks:

Douglas was a joy to visit and adjudicate. You have a strong focus and have good projects and plans. Do continue the good work and continue to focus on developing areas around wildlife and habitats. You are wished continued

success in the future.