

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Douglas - Dubhghlas** Ref: **116**
County: **Cork(South)** Mark: **305**
Category: **G** Date(s): **19/06/2019**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2018	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	44	45
Streetscape & Public Places	60	41	42
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	43	44
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	38	40
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	17	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	49	49
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	35	35
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	31	32
TOTAL MARK	470	298	305

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh (Douglas) - (Dubhghlas) páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019. Thank you for your application, copy of your plan and maps. You have a committee of five members with a large number of volunteers willing to help with various activities. You meet regularly to discuss and update your plan and organise the work for the year ahead. There is great interaction with the relevant agencies and businesses. This also includes all the schools in Douglas. Communication to the wider community on your activities is through social media and there is also an annual newsletter distributed to all residents which keeps everyone up to date on your workload. As mentioned earlier there is great interaction with the schools through the Green Schools Initiative. These schools are commended on their achievements in this initiative to date. Students working to obtain Gaisce Awards give you good support and assistance through their work. Local Scouts are also very supportive so all in all there is good help from the youth of Douglas. You are always seeking and welcoming new volunteers to join your group from the local businesses. Participating in the competition has helped to create better community involvement which has helped to enhance and develop Douglas through many projects making the town a better place to visit and live. Keep up the good work.

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

Like most categories you approach this one in a logical and structured manner and have set out clear projects. Your support of the "Streetscape Painting, Signage and Improvement Scheme" is commended. We look forward to hearing the results of this project in next year's application. Your "Guided Heritage Walk" is an excellent initiative and is important for the community to get involved with. Could you develop a leaflet of some of the important points of this walk and highlight areas of interest to further develop and promote the heritage of the area. The streetscape of Douglas incorporates a mix of old and new developments. This is a thriving area and it is positive to note that the council are ensuring that new developments are in keeping with the area. This can slow down the process of new renovations but it is important that they are done correctly. We are delighted to see that work is progressing on unoccupied building and look forward to their completion. There is a building which appeared to be a cinema, which now looks vacant, is there plans to redevelop this? The many buildings that make up the streetscape of Douglas were admired. The Douglas Court Shopping Centre and surrounds was greatly admired and commended on its presentation. The cottages that form some of the streetscape were also admired and as mentioned earlier we are delighted to note that the council are ensuring they are maintained. Many of the business had brightly painted façades and are adorned with hanging boxes and window boxes. They are complimented for their presentation. Some areas of excessive cabling were noted but you are currently working on this. The Church and surrounds was also greatly admired on its presentation. The use of trees in carparks and especially around the Court Shopping was superb. The roundabouts are excellently landscaped. You use planting to soften the hard landscaping of paving and this was noted at the Service Station and to the front of the Shopping Centre. The Community Park is an

important amenity for the community and is in full use on a beautiful summers day. Well done on your work in this category.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

This category at its core is about the planning, design and management of greenspaces. You have demonstrated even in a highly populated area there is plenty of space for landscaping but planning is key to ensure it complements the area and enhances the buildings of the area. You support local businesses in this development and are encouraged to use direct planning planting where possible. The Ulster Bank complex, McDonalds, Beauty Clinic and Court Shopping centre certainly caught the eye. The River Walk planting was excellent and it has nearly screened the concrete of the roadway overhead. It is a beautiful walk and is unusual with the water below and the traffic above. However, it was greatly admired and enjoyed. The planting before the walk at the roundabout was admired and the novel painting of the service boxes. Do continue to work with the businesses and it is noted from your application that you have identified new areas to develop. This comes back to the importance of planning and design and it is clear you have a grasp on this. The use of tubs and boxes for that splash of colour was noted at numerous locations and business around the area. Even the information board was brightened with a tub at the base. You have also included new areas of development in this area, for example at Donnybrook Hill. The roundabouts also feature beautiful landscaping. The Fingerpost roundabout is just superb with its iconic signpost. Just a splendid presentation. Some trees were noted that have iron surrounds and were slightly impeded by them and were in need of attention. The Community Park is a beautiful area, with new planters noted in this area. It is also brilliant to see the use of pollinator planting now taking place here. Your development of the Independence Park is commended and this was beautifully presented. Try to refrain from planting at the base of trees as these compete with the tree for food. It was great to see the plaque for the official opening and the pride that the community have in the area. You have fully grasped the ethos of this category, well done.

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

Leading on from the previous category the development of Green Spaces and Landscaping play an important role in the nature and biodiversity of the area. Again you have looked to develop logical and structured projects. It's not until you see the Pollinators Corridor Map that you get an appreciation of the amount of green spaces available in Douglas. This map gives a great insight for future projects and how they should be planned. You are now on Phase 2 of your Biodiversity Action Plan. This leads on from Phase 1 of the habitat mapping. We look forward to hearing the results of Phase 2 next year. You are complimented here on the involvement of the school in this project. Phase 3 will give you a full action plan for 2020 and this will give you exceptional baseline information to future protect and manage your wildlife habitats. This information will also feed other categories such as landscaping. The 5,000 trees for Ireland is an excellent initiative and you are well on target to achieve this. The scouts are to be commended on their work and projects to enhance the biodiversity of the area, including bat boxes and the building of a bee hotel. The youth are the future of any area and it is brilliant to see their involvement and being educated in the area of biodiversity. The Mangala was visited on the day of adjudication and the whole day could have been spent in this area. You have definitely worked hard to protect and enhance this area since the adjudicator last visited. It is important that all the information you have learned, for example from Birdwatch Ireland, that this is shared with the community and visitors alike. More information boards and walks will help raise this awareness. The new paths were greatly admired and enjoyed. You are congratulated on the success of Phase 2 and 3 and wished well with Phase 4 and 5. Well done on your work in this category.

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

This category is about reducing the amount of waste produced by the community going to landfill. Recycling is one area where groups are good at doing and this is commended. Your projects for this has looked at different methods of recycling such as the compostable cups being used for seed planting. There is also the bikes for Africa project which covers two areas, recycling and reducing emissions. Other projects looked at could also come under biodiversity and this is good. Providing the relevant information on Facebook around different ways of saving on waste creates awareness among the community and helps keep them motivated. Have you carried out any recent surveys on the amount of waste going to landfill on a weekly basis. This helps to determine if the measures you have put in place are being adopted by the wider community and are doing more with less and reducing the amount of waste going to landfill site.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Well done to the dedicated students taking part in the Gaisce program that come out each weekend to volunteer. Also to the Community School students who help out with litter picks and clean ups. To combat litter, it is important to have a litter plan in place, which you do. This in conjunction with annual spring cleans helps to maintain the area. You have identified litter black spots and focus on these areas during weekly clean ups. You are fortunate to have the local Tus worker helping out also. Litter was at a minimum on day of adjudication, a small amount was noted in the park but this was fresh litter and amounts were small. Some was also noted at the entrance to the Shopping Centre but again footfall here is large. Some bins noted were full while others were in need of cleaning and replacing. Cleaning these bins would even be a good start. You are currently working with the council on this. Often more bins are not the answer, its continuing education and promotion of no littering in the area. However, you are doing excellent work in this area. As mentioned earlier the area around what appears to be a cinema is in need of attention. It distracts from a very tidy area. It would be lovely to see the green area to the back developed some day also. However, this area may be out of your reach and control. There was some weed growth at the entrance to the Park which also slightly distracted. Keep up the good work here.

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

It is obvious that the residents of Douglas take a great pride in their homes and this can be seen from the presentations of the many residences in the area. You are doing excellent work with supporting the resident association with clean ups and planting. The work at Bromley Park was noted and commended. Do you run a best kept estate completion or best kept garden? This is another way to get everyone involved. The playground, an important amenity in the area was pristine and very busy on the day. Well done to everyone in this category.

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

The approach to any area sets the standard and gives the visitor the first impression of the area. The approach to Douglas from the Fingerpost roundabout is excellent. You are working with the council to address planting on approaches. Some existing planting was noted and admired. The wildflower strip is an excellent addition and really brightens up approaches. Some signage is in need and painting and cleaning. Some poles need freshening also. Paths were in good condition with weed growth noted in places. Road surfaces were excellent and although Douglas is very busy traffic flowed freely. You are actively working with the council to address some of these issues and this will help define your area further.

Concluding Remarks:

It was a pleasure to be back adjudicating Douglas. You definitely have progressed since our last visit. You have a dedicated committee who wants to develop and enhance Douglas. You are on the right track and have some excellent projects in the pipeline. Continue in this format and you will continue to be propelled forward in the competition. Well done to date and you are wished continued success.