

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Johnstown** Ref: **2213**
County: **Meath** Mark: **201**
Category: **F** Date(s): **01/06/2024**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	34
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	27
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	28
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	17
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	9
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	38
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	25
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	23
TOTAL MARK	450	201

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Welcome Johnstown to the 2017 National Tidy Towns competition for this your first year in the competition. Thank you for submitting a well-considered entry form. Also a big thank you for your accompanying annotated and colourful town map, which proved very easy to read, and was a great help on adjudication day. We are delighted to hear that you have assembled an enthusiastic core Tidy Towns committee of 6 members who have given of their time to progress your communities participation in the competition. Having 52 regular volunteers is fantastic for any group never mind one just established. You have an excellent working relationship with your schools and your Facebook page is a valuable medium to keep up to date with current residents both young and old and the Johnstown diaspora. Well done for forging links with approximately 100 bodies in the community from the Local Authority to the Probation services. You gain support and also work closely with local sports clubs and the Meath River Rescue. Well done. The most successful tidy towns groups tend to be those that are able to harness the skills and support for their work from as wide a range of disciplines and agencies as possible, both at county and National level. You have a very proactive approach to addressing issues that affect you and your fellow residents and this structure seems to be working very well for you, judging by the works on the ground and the projects you have planned. To gain even more marks in this category, for next year, build on your annual summary of planned projects to develop a 3-5 year plan. This allows you plan projects in all categories of the competition and keep track of their progress with annual plan reviews. Look to the Tidy Towns handbook for guidance on its preparation. Keep up the good work.

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

The adjudicator enjoyed a very pleasant stroll around your town on a sunny summer's day with its range of building types from the old stone fronted shop at the old village core to your newer estates and modern council buildings. We note that you have started works in this category by establishing linkages with owners of empty premises in the town to address your empty units. This is a proactive approach to take and we wish you the best with this. We hope to see the mural advanced for next year's visit. Perhaps you could use one of the towns empty shop units to advertise you work and advertise the community's involvement in the competition? We note the issues with the Athlumney centre and hope this area can be improved over the years. The Crew barbers and high maintenance salon adjacent were buzzing with activity on adjudication day and were neatly presented. The church is a lovely focal point for the community and looked well. The fine entrance gates need a new coat of paint perhaps. The path from the church to the village could do with upgrading as its surface is poor.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Trees around your relatively new town are maturing nicely and are creating a lovely landscape structure for your

community. The avenue of trees and hedges beside the park frame the residential access road here and are establishing well. The Park is a real focus for your work and well done in its presentation. We wish you luck with progressing your plans for this important community asset and hope the play area will be part of your future works. The roundabout opposite the Supervalu with its central tree and neat clipped shrubs was lovely. Could a feature tree be established to the roundabout at the new school and housing junction? Done as part of tree week perhaps with the involvement of local school kids. To commemorate your first year in the competition perhaps? The water pump and yellow planter/bike was a nice feature on the road to the church.

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

We note you have been seeking advice from local anglers on how best to approach your riverside habitats. We would also encourage you to look to the Tidy Towns handbook for advice in doing a simple wildlife survey of the town. This allows you recognise the various habitats in your area and learn how best to manage and enhance them. Your local Environment officer may be able to help with this. And remember habitats are not only wild and remote areas in your town. Gardens and roadside verges have habitat value too. Could some of the open spaces in the residential estates be used as mini wildlife areas? Close cut lawns have great value for kids to play but the habitat value of the grass lands could be enhanced by letting some areas grow longer during the summer- saves on mowing too. Areas of chemical weedkiller were noted at the base of the walls opposite the entrance to Chestnut Crescent. And also by the Johnstown wood name stone. Try to phase out the use of harmful chemical herbicides in the town, hoeing and strimming should be encouraged as an alternative.

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

How great to see that the increasing the number of children cycling to school has occurred over the last year. Keep up your proactive approach to talks in the community to advance this category. The litter information listed in the submission really belongs in the tidiness and litter control category. To advance in this category we would encourage you to visit <http://localprevention.ie/tidy-towns/> . The Local Prevention website have added a specific 'Tidy Towns' page to allow you see what waste prevention projects have been done by other similar groups around the country. There are various case studies to learn from with practical tips, advice, free downloads of brochures etc. this is a great resource to gain advice on how to develop new initiatives in this category as it is an area where you can really gain marks. We note one of your planned projects is to encourage your schools to join the green schools programme. A great way to bring the sustainability message home to the community through your school kids.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Well done to all of your volunteers involved in the regular litter picks and this seems to have been a real focus for your group. Its success was noted on the ground with very little recent litter noted in any of the towns main circulation areas. Do you take part in the An Taisce annual spring clean? This is a nationally organised clean up that can really bring focus to your significant efforts here. Some limited roadside litter was noted blown against the gate at the old school gated entrance on the Old Road, ensure this area is covered in your litter picks. Some graffiti was noted by the bus stop on the main road. Again selective use of wall climbing plants will help discourage this as fewer expanses of bare wall will be available as canvas. A significant amount of rubbish was dumped at the rear car park at the Athlumney centre even though a prominent sign here gives locations of alternative recycling centres. A problem spot for you. Some bins needed a wash such as the pathside one at the old village junction. Best of luck with your bin it to win it campaign and let us know for next year's submission how this fared for you.

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

The standard of presentation of your residential areas was very impressive with communal areas neat and well maintained. Nice colour was noted with the planting to the entrance to Athlumney Hall. Perhaps the name stone at Johnstown Wood would benefit from a mass of groundcover roses to highlight the area and reduce the need to spray here. Best of luck with your proposed estates competition. We noted new homes being built in the town. Could their welcome pack include information on your group for new residents to both let them know the community's pride in its environment and also maybe garner you new volunteers. Hedges and boundaries to older roadside properties by the church were kept very well and really add to the overall appearance here.

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

From your submission and the conditions as seen on adjudication day we appreciate the effort and attention you put into ensuring your verges and pavement areas are keep in good condition. You might have a general review of the number of signs in your area. We noted that the old school signs were deteriorating on the old school road and should be removed as it seems this school access is no longer used. Talk to your Area Engineers about the possibility of removing these to reduce roadside clutter. Is there space to establish climbers along the base of the long boundary wall opposite Chestnut Crescent? Self clinging climbers or wall shrubs would mean the area at the base of the wall here need not be sprayed and would reduce maintenance requirements here once planting established. We look forward to seeing your name signs for next year.

Concluding Remarks:

Well done to all involved in this year's application and thank you for your hard work and commitment. We feel you are on the right track in approaching your involvement with the wider Tidy Towns family and we are glad to see that your involvement with us has given a voice to the community. We wish you all the best for all your planned work in

2018 and beyond.