

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Adare** Ref: **440**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **321**
Category: **C** Date(s): **30/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	49	49
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	40	40
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	47	47
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	32	32
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	15	17
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	60	61
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	35	35
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	40	40
TOTAL MARK	450	318	321

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Congratulations to Adare Tidy Towns Committee & Development Association for entering the 2017 SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition. Our wish for you is that your participation in the competition assists you in your ambitions for Adare in the coming year. Thank you for your submission. The photographs and the placing of the photographs enlivened and enlightened the text. One wonders why you included three maps, two of which were really ineffectual because it was impossible to read the script. One map is sufficient and the adjudicator was satisfied with the largest map. It is possible that you feel after so many years of being involved with the tidy towns that there is no need for you now to submit 3 to 5 year plan. This adjudicator encourages you to think long term for the future appearance and welfare of the village. It is impressive that you engage with the local Men's shed, the Active Retirement group in promoting your work. It is also impressive that you have created so many subcommittees to work in their particular area of competence. The adjudicator felt that your submission was laboured at times as, for instance, in your account of your engagement with UL Engage. It sounded like a 'cut and paste' from promotional material. It is evident that you use Facebook and WhatsApp to enhance your engagement with the local community. Well done

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

A major challenge for any community group in Adare is the maintenance and presentation of buildings dating from mediaeval times or in the case of many of the cottages dating from the early 19th century. Your main preoccupation with the built environment of Adare in the past year has been the maintenance and presentation of those wonderful buildings in your town. This work starts with the Lantern Lodge at the roundabout. Wonderful work. Works are continuing along the entrance to the Manor. A new lease of life has been given to the old railway station. It is heartening to read that the courthouse will have a renewed usage which is also meaningful. While the adjudicator did not visit the Monsignor's cottage it is great to read of its prospects in the near future. The Townhall will benefit from your attention also. Draíocht and the pizzeria are bringing flashes of colour to that development. The next commercial development on that road could benefit from your intervention also. The adjudicator was also delighted to see the improvements to the foot paths at the Boys school and would wish that the patch of road verge a short distance further along would be made safer with a similar initiative. There is no point in one reprising praise for the wonderful built heritage of Adare but one loves the manner in which modern schools have been planted naturally in the grounds of the Augustinian Priory, best seen from the River Walk, and the Trinitarian Church. Your actual streetscape contributes handsomely to the sense of a traditional market town on the one hand and a bustling tourist town on the other. Information boards abound but the plate that most surprised this adjudicator was that stating that Seán Ó Riada went to school at Scoil Naomh Iosaf. The town park, the playground, the pitch and putt and the Adare GAA grounds are all fine recreational facilities.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

There is always the threat that landscaping plans can actually detract from the rich built heritage of a town like Adare. In the view of this adjudicator that is not the case. One feels that landscaping policy is restrained and balanced while in the public realm and in residential areas the green fingered are given a free hand. Of course the rich inheritance of mature trees compliments the appearance of your grey stoned buildings throughout. One loves the beds of red roses whose beds are not bounded by stone or sleeper but appear from the ground. The landscaped bed at the entrance to the Manor must busy your Japanese visitors with selfies. But the adjudicator loved the nasturtiums smiling at one from the base of a hedge or a wall as if saying 'look where we planted ourselves in spite of all of your plans'. And then there are a few walls about where the residents planted casually on the top breaking the greyness again. There seems to be a policy to hang baskets on one side of the street only, and why not. The baskets certainly enhance their surroundings. While I do not know how the landscaping experts might react this adjudicator loved the treatment of the trees in at the Village with the stones at the tree base ensuring no damage from strimming nor from lawn mowers.

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

Wonderful to meet a group that takes this section as seriously as your group. Seriously should also be taken to mean enjoyable. The tone of your submission suggests that you get great satisfaction from dealing with bat populations in the Manor, identifying birds and plants and butterflies, sharing this information with the wider community, being aware of how the ducks are getting along, being hopeful that the otter population will increase as conditions for them are improved. There must be a sweet satisfaction in seeing the giant rhubarb march along the riverbank being halted by your war on this species, the few Japanese sentries had better watch out. Great to read that there is a bee keeper in your midst. The only bland comment was with regard to the information evening in the Woodlands which you say those who attended 'found it very useful'. One wonders what that means and would love to have got an observation or two that makes your group sit up and think. I am not so sure that the long inserts from the schools excites much satisfaction in me. Great if you are the teacher. Are the briars at the Avenue weeds that need curbing or bee pollinators? Bees are buzzing here so what to do. Great to see the Gunnera being treated and the outbreak of knotweed along the River Walk. One wonders why this work happened only on the riverside.

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

That is a long list of activities in your submission. The adjudicator admits that he felt there was nothing that showed advances in the elimination of waste or in the conservative use of energy for the first two pages. There was so much on recycling. I am not trying to downplay recycling but it is time to move on. Schools are to be congratulated for the many tasks they undertake. Great credit is due to their teachers for the innovative manner in which recycling and upcycling is approached in the named schools. But children are not the primary culprits when it comes to sustainability. The account from the schools seemed like a filler. So the change of direction in the later part of the presentation was a relief. The adult population was targeted. Food waste in the hotel, take the bus instead of the car, energy saving bulbs, the mention of Green Hospitality. Better though one would like to hear next year how the proprietors are taking to the green in hospitality. One came on a composting bin in Broad Street and came on a water butt while on the river walk. One is impressed with the gardening attempts spotted at two of the schools but the garden at the girls school wins the prize for its thriving beetroot, not to mention the healthy looking potato stalks and onions.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

What a busy town. You mention 20,000 cars passing through each day. Not to mention the tourists wandering about. And yet, while there is litter, the amount is minimal in comparison to the threats that the numbers suggest. So well done to all ages of litter packers and to those who supervise the work. Litter on the main road is most likely from passing traffic. You mention Drews Quay in your submission as a favourite dumping location but there is no sign of it on the map. But well done on the awareness you show. Well done on the poop bag dispenser on the river walk. There are lots of fine litter bins especially in the multi faceted town park. The finger signposting is delightful street furniture in itself. On the tidiness front the adjudicator would point up a few issues: Christmas decorations are unseasonable at this time of year; branches dumped along by the Pitch and Putt; cars parked on the Blackabbey Road create unease; farm gates at the entrance to Deer Park detract from the lovely entrance to Deer Park; the sign at the Park with the story of the women of Adare should be kept clean out of respect for their contribution to Adare living.

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

The willingness of the residents of the various estates to plant and to cut grass jumps out at one from your submission. No wonder one feels the obvious sense of pride as one drives through the variously estates. Stand alone houses also merit a distinction as their properties invariably enhance their front but that of the neighbour's also and that of the whole road. Many of the housing areas are as old as Aunty Lenas but those cottages in along the avenue are as much part of the housing stock of Adare now as they were in 1806. The pillared fronts are a joy. There is a sense of security and contentment in the Limetree Estate with the goal posts and a few footballs lying around awaiting the local Ronaldo to do the needful. The planting at the end of the various cul de sac in The Village is a credit to all involved. In Deeark one came on the pots of plants just sitting there along the boundary hedge, seemingly just for show. Well done to someone. One loved the pride expressed in cottages all over. But some residents might be encouraged to brighten up their dwellings with some planting.

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

Your work at the Lantern Lodge helps Adare to announce itself regally to the world. The walls and the trees on the route to the town maintain the sense of awe. Then the ruins of the churches, the river, the priory prepare one for the shock of the thatched cottages. Other approach roads are more sombre. But the tunnel of mature trees on the Killarney Road provide wonderful company as they seclude the houses from the public eye. There are some great footpaths but the one that should be most valued is the stretch out to the playground and the pitches. You might have a look at the Ballygarry approach with a view to tidying up. One did not like the use of weed killer at the base of a hedge on this road. But one loved the capping on the old, low wall on Broad Street.

Concluding Remarks:

Year after year Adare challenges for the title of Ireland's Tidiest Town. Your submission quotes somewhere from a person who believes that Adare is a great place to live. I believe that Adare is a great place to visit. I believe that those two latter sentiments trump the title. Well done on your work.