

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Bundoran** Ref: **697**
County: **Donegal** Mark: **264**
Category: **D** Date(s): **25/07/2017**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2016 | Mark Awarded 2017 |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Community Involvement & Planning | 60 | 39 | 41 |
| Built Environment and Streetscape | 50 | 39 | 39 |
| Landscaping and Open Spaces | 50 | 32 | 32 |
| Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities | 50 | 20 | 24 |
| Sustainable Waste and Resource Management | 50 | 11 | 13 |
| Tidiness and Litter Control | 90 | 47 | 50 |
| Residential Streets & Housing Areas | 50 | 31 | 31 |
| Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes | 50 | 33 | 34 |
| TOTAL MARK | 450 | 252 | 264 |

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Thank you and all your entry into the 2017 national TidyTowns competition. Your adjudicator was really pleased to note your return to the competition again. Your adjudicator particularly liked your entry form which is full of energy, was not too long, had a nice range of 'before' and 'after' photographs and got across effectively the essence of your work over the past 12 months. It also included a nice welcome letter with a summary of the work and any issues of note also. Was your entry form itself printed on recycled paper? If so, do mark it appropriately also as this would gain you marks in the S.W.A.R.M. category of the competition also.

You have a lot of bodies supporting your work, as well as schools, youth groups and even international exchange students! Could these international visitors help in other areas of your work – maybe building / assembling bird boxes or even being volunteer guides for visiting tourists? Your long-term plan demonstrates your sustained commitment to the enhancement of your community. How have you got on so far on your planned projects? It might be helpful to assign one or two bodies/personnel to lead on specific projects listed in your plan.

You state that your group's work is, and will be, a 'slow burner'. It is good to be realistic and have modest aims – but you are to be commended in your achievements this year. You have cleverly linked in with other organisations to help further your aims. Work with the Community Garden, Businesses, Donegal County Council, Dulux and Eclipse cinemas to name a few have paid dividends this year.

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

The freshly painted building at the seafront – the lifeguard tower and the seashells service unit – all looked well. A lot of visitors were enjoying the promenade areas on adjudication day. Commercial buildings on Bayview looked attractive, the choice of bold colours here worked very well. The Main Street of Bundoran is a mixture of old traditional Victorian premises and modern apartment blocks. This is probably your most challenging area and you have dealt with this on a number of buildings in a fantastic way through the installation of bright coloured coastal themed murals and multi-coloured surfboards(eg. Summerhill apartments). Other strategically placed buildings need to be addressed. For example the derelict property behind the tourist office on Promenade Way, and the other derelict property half demolished by the seafront. Ave you had any discussion with the council in respect to these buildings? They were not mentioned in your long-term plan but it is recommended that a long-term campaign is directed for some sort of action to take place. A number of derelict properties along the West End could also be addressed.

On the West End, Carty Land And Sea Sports caught the eye with its clever camouflage painting. Quite a number of premises looked well with hanging baskets and window boxes such as McGarrigle's at the east end of the town. Planters in front of the modernised nicely presented Allingham Arms hotel also looked well. The Donegal Bay hotel also looked very nice at ground level but the upper floors do need some tender loving care.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Your interpretation and information signs were admired throughout the town including details of the 'Fairy Bridges' and the tragic Canadian air crash in World War II. Planters were noted through the town. A number of tiered flower containers were planted side-by-side by Bayview. Your adjudicator felt these were a little lost and perhaps could perhaps be better positioned? Landscaping at the tourist office looked really well as befits such a location. Church landscaping was also admired. Do you use your own compost in your landscaping? Have you chosen flowers or plants such as lavender in your landscaping that can provide pollen for bees?

Attracted by the great photograph on the front page of the 'Discover Bundoran' brochure submitted with your entry, this adjudicator headed to Roguey Rock to explore the diving boards. They were also detailed on the town maps provided. Sadly the diving boards had either been removed or broken with only brackets remaining on the rocks...what a pity.

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

It was an absolute delight for your adjudicator to visit your 'Community Garden' and get an impromptu tour from Paul, one of the gardeners there. This is a great organic garden and on adjudication day there were lines of lettuce ready for local restaurants. There were also beehives, numerous vegetables, four star bug-hotels and biodiversity areas – all of which impressed. It is great that this is open for visits by schools and community groups. Indeed it serves as a great example to the many coastal-based TidyTowns groups who say they struggle planting and growing. In this coastal garden, banks of willow help protect the many raised beds of vegetables and flowers from the prevailing onshore winds.

The seabird poster researched by pupils of St Macartan's National School was admired. It would be good to try and erect more information signs about coastal wildlife along the seafront areas. Could the school children help with this - maybe develop a wildlife trail for younger visitors to explore and follow? The planting of 50 sunflowers by the pupils of St Macartan's would also help feed local birdlife and benefit local pollinators.

TidyTowns has signed up to support and promote actions outlined in the National Pollination Plan. Your community garden is a great example and maybe you can aim to extend their actions to other areas of Bundoran. Details of community actions are available to download from www.biodiversityireland.ie. Simple actions such as the choice of flowers or even letting some grass areas grown longer so they flower before they are cut, can help our pollinators.

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

This category of the competition is about promoting the management of our resources more wisely and diverting waste from landfill. In your entry form, you have incorrectly listed some actions relating to litter and tidiness. Recycling should be (hopefully) second nature now so in this category we are looking for other actions to promote the efficient use of our resources. Considering sustainable transport, it was nice to see the bright yellow fish shaped cycle rack on the seafront and bus timetables clearly displayed at bus stops. The grey water tank at the community garden is another good example. Have you linked in with the local charity shops to maybe promote custom here – 'second hand Saturday' or a fashion show from clothes from such shops? This schools may be doing this already. There is a useful handout on the TidyTowns website with a range of suggested actions that could help you advance in this category of the competition.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Your adjudicator loved the 'Sea Sessions' welcome posters by Bundoran TidyTowns. What a lovely idea and again you have pooled your resources and linked in the festival organisers who kindly agreed to share your message. You should also be commended for your direct action on dog litter. Maybe a more proactive approach could be adopted asking dog walkers on the sea front to pledge their support also? Sadly dog waste was noted in places along most of the Seafront from the promenade including Tullan and the Western pier. One community group in Roscommon highlighted dog waste with brightly coloured lime spray-paint to raise awareness of the problem! A special thanks to the students of Magh Ene College who collected 15 bags of litter in just 90 mins after the clean coasts roadshow.

The now closed toilet block by the car park could do with a little attention. Blocked off windows could be painted and the broken metal door could be repaired.

Do watch out for cable ties left behind on signs and posts such as at the small post at the top of Tullan Strand Road. At the Sea Road junction there is a redundant pole by the utility box and a discarded electrical sign was placed behind the low stone wall. The bring banks by the seashore were quite grubby but lovely new ones were noted that the West End of the town. The street sign at Elsmere Avenue needs some attention, as does the post box at the top of the access lane to the lifeboat station. Surprisingly a number of keg caps were noticed discarded in the yard entrance to the Bridge Bar but it was hoped that this was quickly picked up by the staff here.

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

Shamble lane bed and breakfast was lovely as were homes on Sheil Avenue. The new bilingual street plaques on Church Road were admired. You encourage estates to be involved via your newsletter. Maybe a prize could be offered to all estates involved such as home-made compost from the community garden or a bird box or a mix of bee-friendly annual seeds to sow?

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

Your adjudicator feels that the main roundabouts at the N15 ring-road could feature an icon such as a large

surfboard or even a fairy or World War II plane to entice the passer-by into the town. Once the works by Irish Water are complete, the West End will look much improved. Arriving in from Sligo there were many nicely presented homes. The now closed garage on the Donegal Road could do with some attention – maybe position planters here to help screen this area off? At the junction of the East End and Sea Road an old electrical sign for another garage had been left behind the boundary wall here. As many of your northern visitors would first arrive on this road, maybe more could be done to improve this junction?

Concluding Remarks:

From Tullan Strand to the West End cliff walk, Bundoran is in a stunning setting and the pedestrian can absorb information on history and local heritage whilst enjoying a walk around the cliff tops. On adjudication day many tourists were enjoying the scenery and entertainment on offer. The town was attractive and bright and your efforts would hopefully entice them to stay a little longer in your community. The Community Garden was a delight so it was great to see this also on the tourist map. Your committee is working steadily and in conjunction with key businesses and local groups to advance your aims, not just in terms of points for this competition, but in pride and in your endeavours to keep Bundoran Tidy. Well done.