

# Tidy Towns Competition 2015

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Rosscarbery** Ref: **691**  
County: **Cork(West)** Mark: **317**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **16/06/2015**  
**10/08/2015**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2014</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2015</b>
Community Involvement & Planning	60	47	47
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	40	41
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	44	45
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	35	36
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	19	21
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	59	61
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	27	28
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	37	38
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>317</b>

### **Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:**

Rosscarbery is most welcome to the 2015 Tidy Towns competition. Many thanks for your entry form. The first thing that strikes the adjudicator is the scale and breath of work in which you are involved. It is obvious that you have embedded tidy towns into all the aspects of your community and this is wonderful to behold. The second thing that strikes the adjudicator is your application form, all four volumes of it! This needs major surgery so that it can be made concise and succinct. The application form serves the purpose of conveying to the adjudicator the projects in which you have been involved since our last visit. Really there should be little more to it than that. One application form should detail all that is required. Additional information is acceptable and indeed photos are especially welcome. However any additional information should be directly relevant to the project that it is supporting. Your map is essential in orienting the adjudicator and pinpointing the locations of projects. It needs to be separate from the application form as the adjudicator will carry it around the town. Your map is a little schematic but does identify key features and project locations. The numbering system is good but there should also be a key on, or near, the map itself to reference briefly the projects. If you imagine yourself as the adjudicator you will quickly appreciate where the enhancements are needed. Also make sure your project is only listed once, under the appropriate heading. Try to cut down on duplication as much as possible. These comments should not be taken as a negative reflection on your work, which is exemplary, but rather is encouraging you to present it in such a way as to maximise of the points available. We trust they will help you make an even stronger entry in 2016.

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

The refurbishment of the old Post Office is a major enhancement of the streetscape. Similarly the appearance of the house next to the Abbey bar is vastly improved. The locations of these works did not seem to be marked on your map. This category is also looking at how you interpret your built heritage, i.e. how is the story of Rosscarbery communicated to visitors and locals? This can be done through school projects or events during heritage week for instance. Rosscarbery has a very charming built centre that is easily overlooked when bypassing on the main road. In many ways you are fortunate that this busy road is so far removed from the tranquillity of this central space. Many businesses stood out on adjudication day including Nolan's, the Abbey bar, O'Callaghan Walshe, Market House cafe and others. The Rosscarbery information panel was admired outside the Lily House Chinese restaurant, a version of this map for your application form would be so much better than what you are using at present. Centra was clean and tidy but was such a shame they insistent on blocking out their windows, it does a disservice to the streetscape. The Celtic Ross hotel is looking very well and its palm trees are indeed striking. The Abbey graveyard is a fine heritage feature of the town. The extensive use of herbicide sprays has left unsightly brown vegetation throughout however. Consult the Cork county council heritage officer on best practice in this area so that you can preserve your heritage in a more sustainable manner. St. Factna's Cathedral is a stunning piece of architecture, simple but beautifully conserved. The tidal clock is a new contrivance to this adjudicator and an intriguing one at

that. It complements the nearby information panel in making this an interesting spot to stop and take in the estuary.

### **Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:**

Well done for all your efforts in tree planting and maintenance of the usual green areas. You are also focusing on additional areas in need of attention and this is excellent. The National tree week event is a good initiative. If reseeding areas see if it is possible to include wildflowers to enhance areas for pollinating insects. Clover is especially valuable to bees and would be of great benefit if mixed with grass for low-maintenance verges for instance. Congratulations on the acquisition of your new ride on lawnmower. Landscaping of the square is superb. The well maintained trees provide leafy cover while the set piece planting displays add dashes of colour here and there. The newly landscaped area at Andy's well is excellent, well done. For new planting it is remarkably effective and it is hoped that plants chosen will further fill the space to provide the required impact. Newtown Park is a very well maintained amenity space and your new trees were admired. The wildflower garden on Serpentine Road seems unnecessary. The reed bed to the rear of it is the prime wildlife feature and the flowers chosen here are, in the main, not Irish. For real wildlife benefit this area would be best left to grow into a meadow (although Japanese knotweed is growing up through one of your beds!). There was evidence of spray use and garden waste has been dumped in the reeds, these are bad practices that harm the environment. The picnic area at Ghairdín an Ché is very inviting and it is easy to see why it is well used. The new fence and the graveyard looks sturdy while cotoneaster will mature well. Do remove the plastic once it has become established.

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

You are commended for your proactive approach to the eradication of Japanese knotweed. Perseverance will get rid of it but it is a stubborn plant. Do work with the heritage officer to ensure other centres in West Cork benefit from your experience. Between your various projects you have now a strong wildlife basis in your work programme. You need to think about how you can build on this momentum so that you meet the aims of the category, which are to raise awareness of the value of your natural heritage. The estuary here is a proposed natural heritage area and so is of national importance to wildlife conservation. It would be great to see events take place to highlight this important status. Your woodlands trail at Newtown Park is a great feature. Minimal interference is required although it is noted that Japanese knotweed is a problem here. It is a particularly sensitive spot given its proximity to the stream. For added wildlife value try leaving areas of grass unmown, cutting only in the autumn.

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

Warm congratulations to St Mary's primary school on their third green flag award, this is a wonderful achievement and the photographs provided show how proud the students and teachers were. They are engaged in all the projects that the adjudicator would like to see being a part of our daily lives. How can you bring these ideas out of the school and into homes and businesses across Rosscarbery? Well done to the Ardagh boys school on their significant milestone. St Michaels secondary school is also making great strides in their biodiversity flag, well done to them. Planting their own vegetables shows how easy and rewarding this is. The cookery demonstrations with the hotel was an excellent event in highlighting the issue of food waste. However this seems to have been held during the 2014 judging period. How have you maintained the momentum since then? It is important to repeat the message, sometimes in a different way, so that it sinks in. For more helpful tips and case studies from other Tidy Towns entrants please take a look at <http://localprevention.ie/tidy-towns/>

### **Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:**

Well done to the Ardagh boys school on the clean coasts achievements. Litter is now among the most serious threats to our seas, is there any work being done in the boys school to link the issues of environmental health and the volume of plastic on our beaches. When contacting properties regarding tidiness issues it may be useful to accompany it with an offer of practical assistance. Well done on your new cigarette butt bins it is hoped they will be utilised with enthusiasm. The standard of tidiness and litter control throughout Rosscarbery on adjudication day was to a very high standard, well done on this great achievement.

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

It is noted that you have taken into consideration the points that were raised by last year's adjudicator. Hopefully you will meet with some success in this regard. Do provide some photos of the winners or entrants (displays that is) in the flower display competition as it is very hard to judge such an event from this remove. The Celtic Irish cottages are looking very well with clean white facades and freshly coloured doorways. Homes in the centre of the town really add to the charm and character here. So many have freshly painted facades and/or have made an effort to hang out summer flowers. The effect is superb. Barrack Lane is another enclave that follows this pattern. Terraced houses on Tanyard Lane were admired for their attractive stone finish.

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

The approaches to Rosscarbery are both scenic and well maintained. The new stone sign on the Skibbereen approach is very effective. Your newly re-constructed and capped wall on Serpentine Road was admired, well done for completing this demanding project. The causeway is remarkably well maintained given the length of this stretch for your grass cutters etc.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

Overall this was a very impressive entry for Rosscarbery and you are now competing at the top tier of the contest. Well done on all your efforts in 2015 and we look forward to return next year.

### **Second Round Adjudication:**

Rosscarberry looked wonderful on the day of second adjudication also and thank you for the well thought out and presented application which made the task of adjudication more streamlined. Your second adjudicator agrees with the content and marking of the first adjudication and would like to add the following observations.

The Centra premises need to be refurbished to some sections of its roadside facade particularly under the windows and its National Lottery sign needs attention also.

Some wire fencing within the environs of the playground could be refurbished and / or planted.

a section of stonewall/earth bank needs refurbishment on the road by the recycling point (Dunmanway Road).

A large untidy looking undeveloped curtilage area to what appears to be an old garage on the Dunmanway Road near the recycling point needs attention. A second large undeveloped (fenced off) site across from the Star Gardens Social Housing development is noted also and looks as if works are in progress. A water pump near the Star Gardens development needs refurbishment and a bollard on the main thoroughfare needs realignment.

The curtilage area of the Timothy O'Mahony Memorial Hall (club house) could be surfaced and its perimeter landscaped. The following might be a source of ideas for future sustainable waste and resource management projects: Any initiatives that make less waste; use less water, less energy or less materials; reuse, upcycle, repair, swap, exchange, restore; new life for old goods by the community, householders, businesses, schools, with the local authority, or other organisations is desirable and eligible for adjudication. Use the "Greener Gardening" guide in your Tidy Towns activities

[www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/waste/wpp/greenergardening.html](http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/waste/wpp/greenergardening.html). Introduce the "greener cleaning" guide into the community; [www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/waste/wpp/greenercleaning.html](http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/waste/wpp/greenercleaning.html). Help green your local festival or event For more information visit: <http://greenyourfestival.ie/>. Food Waste Prevention Activities [www.stopfoodwaste.ie](http://www.stopfoodwaste.ie). Hold a 'Water Saving Awareness' Night

Other ideas

Green the TT 'office' activities, e.g. print double sided; use online promotion instead of printed materials; use recycled paper; don't use disposable cups and cutlery at meetings.

Gardin CHE and its information / interpretive panels on Rosscarberry's Tree Trail, Wildlife Trails, Wildlife of the Estuary and Angling in Ireland is elegant and of course the butterfly box is charming. Other landscaped and wildlife areas were equally impressive.