

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Straide** Ref: **1970**
County: **Mayo** Mark: **258**
Category: **A** Date(s): **01/07/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	33
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	36
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	37
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	24
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	11
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	58
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	26
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	33
TOTAL MARK	450	258

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Straide Rural Social Scheme (under the auspices of Straide Development Group) is welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns competition 2015. We enjoyed our first visit to your lovely village that you obviously have a lot of pride in. We note that Straide's previous entry was submitted in 2012 by a different committee. We hope that you will enjoy your participation in the competition and see the benefits and improvements it will bring to your community over the coming years.

Thank you for your entry form, which was clear and concise. The map was difficult to follow – we would recommend that you mark your new projects on a hand-drawn sketch map of the village. Please mark in all approach roads and key landmarks. Your photos were most helpful, particularly the 'before' and 'after' ones. Please put captions on your photos and relate them to the initiative in the main entry. We would kindly ask that you carefully read the blue text under each of the category headings. Some of your information was not in the most relevant category and therefore you risk valuable information being missed by the adjudicator. Thank you also for submitting your new 3 Year Tidy Towns Plan (2015 – 2017). This ties in with your broader 5-year Community Action Plan (2014 – 2019), supported by Mayo County Council. You use a variety of methods to communicate your messages including your parish website and Facebook page. Great work has already been done in Straide. This is reflected in your marks, which are unusually high for a first-time entrant. Well done for taking on board the recommendations of your previous adjudicator. We look forward to your yearly entries.

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

The church was nicely presented with new steps and freshly painted black gates. Perhaps the graveyard gates could be painted in the near future? We noted ongoing conservation work at the lovely Friary site, which is overseen by the OPW. Do continue to show in your Tidy Towns entry that any such work is been done by experts or with specialist guidance. The Davitt museum was neatly presented - just keep an eye on weeds around the car park. This is a difficult surface to maintain. We admired the school with its cheerful colour scheme and gardens to front (sensory and vegetables). The new graveyard has a fine beech hedge, stone wall and good tree planting. Just keep an eye out for debris building up in the corners of the car park. Both the Davitt lounge and the Copper Beach were in neat order.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

We were very impressed with the overall standard of landscaping and attention to detail. The highlight for us was the open area around the Davitt Museum. Green areas were beautifully maintained as were your colourful flower beds. Straide is blessed to have plenty of mature trees that further enhance the overall appearance. All seats and

picnic tables were in good condition. Tidy up work was ongoing at the beds on the Castlebar road. The containers along the timber fence give visual impact to the village centre. Do send us a photo of your spring bulbs next time.

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

You show a good awareness of your natural rural environment and the importance of preserving it. Well done to the Straide Walking Group for mapping out a local 5k walk. We look forward to being able to find it next time. Could you incorporate a nature trail here or in any other area of the village? We did notice a lot of evidence of weed killer use. Do you have any policy in relation to using it where absolutely necessary? Are users aware of the risks it may cause to the environment and to wildlife? The hedgerows on the way to the school have so far been left undisturbed and were a blaze of wildflowers. Do the school children carry out any nature studies here at the stream area? In your future plans, you might consider planting native hedgerow along this unattractive wire fence. To connect this road more with the village you could trim a narrow verge along the road edge, while leaving most of the verge in its natural state.

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

Congratulations to Straide N.S. for achieving 3 Green Flags and for reusing items from local businesses for their garden project. They have also been saving lots of energy through their 'Walk to School' days. Perhaps you could provide a few examples of how water was conserved? Were any messages brought home and implemented there? Do you have any water-saving measures for your summer watering programme? Do tell us next time what theme of the Green Flag programme the school is now working on. Your Reuse of timber for your flower boxes and wooden fencing is also noted. Any other Reuse examples in the community? e.g. jam making, school uniform or school book/uniform exchange?

Please refer to the 2015 guidelines and pick a few ideas that would work best for Straide. Alternatively, visit www.localprevention.ie/tidytowns to see what other initiatives are happening around the country. We look forward to hearing of further progress next year.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Straide was litter free on the day of our visit so well done to all involved. Your litter control programme sounds organised and focussed. Do give us a bit more detail on your awareness raising as there marks available for this.

Generally, Straide presents a very tidy appearance. There were a few old posters on poles that should be removed. A broken sign should be removed from the 'Copper Beech' main sign. There was a broken sign on the Castlebar Rd. There was an empty sign frame on each approach road. Perhaps there is an imminent plan for these? Otherwise they should be removed. A broken sign near the 'Foxford Way' map should be removed.

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

Residences along the approach roads were neat and freshly as was the terrace of houses near the pub. We admired the stone house opposite the Davitt Lounge.

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

As we approached Straide, we were greeted by attractive stone walls, tree planting and neat timber fences. We must commend the skills you have amongst your group with regard to building and repairing stone walls, fences etc. Verges were well maintained. Road and car park surfaces and lining were in excellent order. The Knockshanbally signpost (L5796) appeared to be facing the wrong direction. We observed a lovely native hedgerow near the new graveyard – perhaps in the longer term you might consider continuing the line down as far as the main road. Whitethorn would work well. Your photos show the impressive transformation that has taken place on Straide's approach roads in recent years – well done to all involved and keep up the good work.

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you Straide for an excellent presentation and we wish you success with your future projects.