

# Tidy Towns Competition 2018

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Johnstown** Ref: **2213**  
County: **Meath** Mark: **213**  
Category: **F** Date(s):

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2017	Mark Awarded 2018
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	34	36
Streetscape & Public Places	50	27	28
Green Spaces and Landscaping	50	28	30
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	17	17
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	9	11
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	38	39
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	25	27
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	23	25
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>213</b>

### Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Baile Eoin chuig Comórtas na mBailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2018 agus chuig Ceiliúradh 60 Bliain an Chomórtais. We would like to welcome Johnstown back to the 2018 Supervalu Tidy Towns competition – only your second year in the competition! We are delighted to hear that Tidy Towns is bringing the community together and giving you one representative voice as you strive towards improving your environment for all to enjoy. You are already achieving positive results. Your excellent map was most helpful in finding our way around your large area. Your new and ongoing projects were clearly described. You might consider including a few photos of some of your projects – ‘before’ and ‘after’ photos are particularly useful. You are forging good links with local businesses, schools and residential groups. It takes time to do this and we would encourage you to continue your positive efforts. Getting the youth of Johnstown on board and taking ownership is key to the future of Tidy Towns and a better environment there. You rely strongly on social media for engaging with the residents. Do you have representatives of various residents’ associations on your committee or at least linked in for communication purposes? We would concur with last year’s adjudicator with regard to submitting a 3 Year Plan. Keep up the good work.

### Streetscape & Public Places / Sráid-Dreach & Áiteanna Poiblí:

Your efforts to engage with owners of derelict properties are commended. We note your comments in relation to the Athumney Centre. The recently refurbished Johnstown Shopping Centre appears to be at the central point and looks very well. Your frustrations regarding the vacant Old Gym Building are understandable. We thought the building itself looked fine, just the weedy front detracts from the overall impression. If the grass and weeds at the front could be managed, it would blend in with the other nearby buildings. Taylor’s is neatly presented. The nearby Health Centre is missing some lettering. Meath County Council is a fine contemporary building. Up at the old Johnstown village, some attractive shops were admired, including High Maintenance and Crew Barber. The former Village Store still brings a lot of character to this area – hopefully the building will be put to good use soon. The nearby church and car park are both nicely presented, particularly the car park with its attractive boundary planting.

### Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You are making some good progress here. The Johnstown roundabout is a focal point and you are right to try and ensure it is presented at its best. We must give credit to the owners of Taylor’s Bar for the quality of the landscaping there. The curtilage of SuperValu as well as the car park are also presented to a high standard. Up around the old village, attractive timber planters give a lift with their colourful displays. Further planters outside Macari’s brighten up the streetscape – just ensure such displays don’t block paths or make it difficult for visually impaired or those with buggies. The large green areas at Johnstown Wood do indeed require some thought, in

conjunction with residents. It wasn't looking great. It didn't appear that any sections had been tried out as wildflower meadows. In these urban areas, we feel that the cut grass should be removed instead of left there. Your efforts to use landscaping to improve the appearance of the former Petrol Station are commended. The park at the Priory Estate is a wonderful amenity and is well maintained. The seasonal hanging baskets were not yet in place – perhaps for next year they could be in place in time for adjudication?

### **Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality / An Dúlra agus an Bhithéagsúlacht i do cheantar:**

We didn't notice any wildflower meadows at Johnstown Wood – all the grass appeared to be cut and left on the ground. This is a good idea in vast areas of open space - perhaps in areas no required for children playing etc. This is a category where some technical guidance is useful. Perhaps you have somebody in the community with an interest or qualification in this area, who might like to get involved? There are also lots of free resources out there that you can tap into, in order to progress in this category. This includes Birdwatch Ireland (walks/talks available), Batwatch Conservation Ireland (advice/walks). Another idea is to encourage householders to get involved in online national surveys such as the Irish Wildlife Trust's Garden Bird Survey. We would also recommend that you have a look at this 'community' section of the National Pollinator Plan 2015 – 2020) to see what simple steps the committee and community at large can take. There is also a junior version this Plan available online, that can be used in schools and youth groups. Please be a bit more specific regarding initiatives such as the magazine article. Which magazine and was this a Tidy Towns or wider initiative? We welcome your efforts to discourage the use of weed killer as this can cause threat to our wildlife. We also note that you plan to adopt a sustainable planting scheme going forward - keeping in mind wildlife food and habitat where possible. There is ideal opportunity to link in with your local schools when they are working towards their 5th Green Flag for biodiversity. This would be of mutual benefit to you both.

### **Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:**

You have included some good initiatives here. We are glad to hear that many children are walking and cycling to school. Are there ways this can be encouraged even more? Needless to say, safety is paramount. Using your community magazine to promote tips for preventing waste is a good idea – do give us specific examples. Do also tell us which particular Green Flag the school is working on at present as there is close connection to this competition. What was the winning costume in the school competition and what was it made of? Tidy Towns and communities can use such competitions to raise further awareness by displaying the winning costume perhaps in a vacant window display or at another suitable location for all to see. It's a pity that the recycling facilities had to be removed. We hope that people are travelling to the next nearest facilities. We would have thought the Supervalu Car Park would be ideal. Unfortunately these sites have to be closely monitored in order to maintain a good standard. ;Your efforts to use coffee grounds as an impediment to the slugs are impressive – do keep us updated on results! This reduces waste but more importantly avoids the use of nasty chemicals which can threaten the wildlife you are trying to encourage. Can you pass on the learnings from the 'Food Waste' workshop through your local channels? Reusable posters are another smart idea to minimise waste of resources and money. Well done for organising your first workshop relevant to this category – hopefully there will be zero contamination in Wilkinstown's Recycling bins! A tie-in with the school would also be expected here as they carry out Action Plans to reduce waste/water/energy/travel, particularly in relation to their 'inform and involve' which should involve community outreach. The community herb garden is a lovely initiative that saves waste, provides healthy/local produce and brings the community together in a social way – well done!

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

As a relatively new group, you know the importance of tackling the visible issues first and litter is one of them. You have made good strides to reduce the amount of litter in the community - your efforts to carry out fortnightly and ad hoc litter picks are paying off. You might try and get volunteers onto your rota so that more regular litter picks can be carried out – daily in summer months if possible. The overall impression in Johnstown was good, however a few small areas detracted somewhat. There was minor littering at the bus stop opposite the shopping centre, also in the long grass at the old gym. The Peoples Park near the Priory was spotless, with plenty of mutt mitts available. Up in the old village, both bins at Mace were in good order; however the nearby black County Council bin was full to overflowing, causing litter on the footpath. The Johnstown Shopping Centre was very neat and tidy as were most residential areas. Do keep us updated on the dog effectiveness of dog poo bag dispensers and signage.

Johnstown presents quite a tidy appearance. A broken kerbstone at the church car park requires attention. There was very little graffiti evident so well done for your efforts in this regard.

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

Johnstown is mostly made up of housing estates. The standard of presentation was high throughout and estates we visited well-maintained and litter-free. Colourful flower beds enhanced the overall impression at some estates. Athlumney Wood, The Priory and Cairn Hill caught the eye. Good two-way communication between all residents associations/areas and the core Tidy Towns group is crucial so that everyone is working together for the benefit of Johnstown community. Well done to all involved and keep up the good work.

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

The new 'welcome' signs on each of your approach roads are a good addition. They help define Johnstown as a distinctive community. Johnstown has good road surfaces, markings and cycle lanes. Some sign posting appeared to be pointing the wrong way from the Johnstown roundabout. The schools weren't found too easily. Johnstown

Roundabout looks well with its central tree feature. Approach roads and verges are well-maintained.

**Concluding Remarks:**

You have made a great start in Johnstown Tidy Towns and positive results are already there to be seen. We hope you can use your achievements to date go gain momentum and win over some more volunteers/community support. Continue with this can-do approach and with building local links and relationships. Keep up the good work and we wish you all the best with future projects.