

# Tidy Towns Competition 2018

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Rathmullan** Ref: **906**  
County: **Donegal** Mark: **256**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **24/06/2018**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2017	Mark Awarded 2018
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	38	38
Streetscape & Public Places	50	36	37
Green Spaces and Landscaping	50	36	37
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	20	20
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	13	13
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	50	51
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	30	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	30	30
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>256</b>

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

Welcome Rathmullen: The Way Forward Group to the 2018 Supervalu Tidy Towns Competition. Your entry is very much appreciated. Thank you for your bound volume with entry form, map and key to the map, photos, business support, school involvement and sample fliers. With a population of 540 your category is Village B. Your committee numbers 12 and your volunteers 20. Both figures are in proportion to your population. In next year's entry form please tell us about the frequency of your committee meetings. Do you have an annual general meeting? Are the public invited to it, etc? In addition to those that you list as your supporters, do you engage in other forms of fundraising e.g. church gate collection, etc?

We were happy to provide €1,000 to mark our 60th anniversary. Your channels of communication range from traditional print media to social media and Facebook. You engage well with your schools. We also note the assistance that you get from the "Coastal Warriors" from Letterkenny. We also commend your local Youth Club for their assistance. We asked you if you had a specific project which required a special effort and you nominated clean ups and landscaping. Perhaps you would include a copy of your 3-year plan with next year's entry form. You summarise very well how The Way Forward Group contribute to your community.

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

Rathmullan Abbey had "Keep Out. No visitor access" signs. It is very much a work in progress. On the same road as the Abbey a village tap had been painted. The Battery also has a "Keep Out" sign. The grass is neatly cut. The pitch and put was in operation. Two information boards are Fanad Drive and Aquaculture and Lough Swilly. Flower bed beside the entrance admired.

White Harte has stickers on its windows on a variety of offers but nothing about a beach accessible wheelchair. St Joseph's National School 1901 is very well presented. A large sign states its name proudly. Lots of colour. Building well painted. Picnic tables. Large wooden planters on legs are full of flowers. The school wall was raised at the bus entrance. A fish motif was crafted onto the wall. St Columb's Church of Ireland is impressive on an elevated site. Graveyard neat and tidy. St Joseph's Church is imposing on its elevated site. The extensive grounds with a grotto are well managed.

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

The wall at the Rathmullan District Resource Centre has 6 stone beds full of flowers. A very attractive display. The Millennium Park benches had been painted. 1 dead tree and 1 new tree. Only part of the painting and repairing of the fence had been completed. A work in progress. A rusting frame of what may have been a name for the park is

all that is left.

On Main Street the butcher's premises looked very well, nicely painted and with several tiered planters full of flowers. Opposite was a beach with a green area which had a picnic table/benches. No one was using it on what may have been the hottest Sunday of the summer.

The nautical garden was not in use. The beach was almost deserted. From the footpath it was clear that attempts had been made to build walls separating the picnic area from the garden and elsewhere along the wall. The long terrace of houses could have been laying claim to sections of the area inside the wall. A notice "Public Welcome" would be helpful. The area known as the Arch was visited. A wooden pallet blocked the arch. No gate yet. It seemed dangerous. There was no barrier between the edge of the grass and a considerable drop onto rocks on the beach. The bedding plants had been planted in the large bed at the battery. The various flower beds around the village were admired.

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

We are pleased that funding has been granted for information boards. Please let next year's adjudicator know where they are sited when they have been erected. Inch island is accessible by road from Inishowen but not from Rathmullan. The walks undertaken by Aengus Kennedy sound very interesting. Is there a central notice board where details can be found?

The school is fortunate in having biodiversity talks and a foraging walk for herbs. These may be part of its Green School programme. There is an information board in Rathmullan on sea angling in Donegal. The Bath's Walk was explored. It has a viewing point with seats and also a circular bed of flowers.

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

May this adjudicator gently remind you that priorities in this category have changed and the changes date back to 2013 and were in the Tidy Towns handbook issued at the time. Subsequently marks were increased from 20 marks to 50 marks in recognition of the time and effort given by Tidy Towns groups to this category. This was EU motivated. Also, this category has evolved in line with current waste prevention and best policy guidelines. The EU Waste Management Hierarchy now puts waste prevention ahead of waste treatment in terms of priorities. To progress in this category, you need projects in waste prevention. You also need to use your communication channels to promote to your community the need to stop waste entering in the first place. You should tell your community that priority is now elimination rather than reduction, although that is still important. Substituting one's own coffee mug for the take away container is a good initiative. So was the talk on waste management and recycling. In next year's entry form please tell us where the new benches made from the felled tree are located. Schools in the Green Flag programme are increasingly substituting glass bottles for plastic ones. These are good initiatives but, as explained above, the top priority now is to stop waste entering the village in the first place. The mantra now is rethink, reduce, reuse, recycle. The public discussion night on Waste and Sustainability on 22nd May last sounds interesting. Perhaps you would include brief details in next year's entry form.

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

Please let us have examples of your campaign to persuade home owners to dispose of their rubbish responsibly. Your examples of notices for village clean-up day made interesting reading. We note that these clean ups are held every month. We would be interested in learning about the quantities that you collect. Are they increasing/decreasing? Is the problem increasing/decreasing?

The bottle bank has 6 clean bottle bins and 1 clean metal clothes container. No litter in its environs. Well done to the Coastal Warriors who come every Wednesday from Letterkenny to clean the beach and car park. The public toilets/Information Office is the most modern building in Rathmullan. It is excellent.

A public shower is next to the toilets. Well done to all involved. This adjudicator watched a man with a high viz vest paint a colourful sign on the footpath at the beach car park. The sign is part of the anti-dog fouling programme and it urged dog owners to use the special dog waste bin. Adjudication day was a very hot, sunny Sunday and huge crowds descended on the beach and pier area. To everyone's credit there was very little litter evident throughout the village. Well done to all. Noted that funding had been secured for "Adopt a Road" schemes.

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

Noted that new playing equipment was installed in the playground. Market Street is not marked on your map or in the key to the map, so the adjudicator was not able to see the derelict building. There were 2 end of terrace houses in the Battery area that were derelict. An effort had been made to paint boarded up windows. The Tidy Towns Handbook had advice on ways to camouflage derelict buildings to good effect.

Approach roads should be included in the Approach category. The archway is listed as A5 in the Streetscape category. This category is an important as each of the other categories. The text in the entry form for this category says, "Where possible individual estates should have suitable name signs". It would help the adjudicator to locate the estates if you marked them on your map and in the key to the map. This adjudicator did visit Maolin Park because it is centrally located and is on your map. It has its name sign at the entrance. Residences looked well. No litter or weeds.

The residences on Coastguard Station Road were also seen. An old Garda Station is painted white as are all of the residences on this terrace. The front wall to all of the houses was freshly painted white. All looked well. Donegal County Council operates a Tidy Estates Competition and many Tidy Towns groups encourage their estates to participate in it. Are Rathmullan's estates taking part?

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

As you know, approach roads are important because they help to create the first impression of a village or town. It is unusual for the Tidy Towns group to provide a "Welcome – Failte" to visitors when they arrive at the village or town boundary. The 60km speed limit sign is usually used as the boundary marker. That speed limit sign may have the village name on it, often bi-lingually.

In your 3-year plan do you have a project to provide "Welcome" signs at your boundary on approach roads? We note that 2 walking trails are a work in progress and will be completed during 2018. Please ensure that these are marked on next year's map for the attention of next year's adjudicator. Also, the Sli na Slainte if it is completed. Perhaps funds could be secured from the Heritage funding for town signage for "Welcome" signs on approach roads.

**Concluding Remarks:**

It was a pleasure adjudicating Rathmullan. We look forward to receiving your entry form next year.