

CROOM TIDY TOWNS ACTION PLAN 2014-2016



Action Plan 2014-2016.

Introduction:

Background.

This is the three year Tidy Towns plan for 2014 through to 2016 for Croom Tidy Towns. The process began with a review of the plan for 2010 through to 2012, and looking at the adjudicators reports for each year, making a comparison between the interpretive and statistical finding.

A survey of the Town was then carried out between the 16th and 20th of December 2013 outlining projects and recommendations, that could be taken into consideration for the forwarding plan.

Updating of Plan

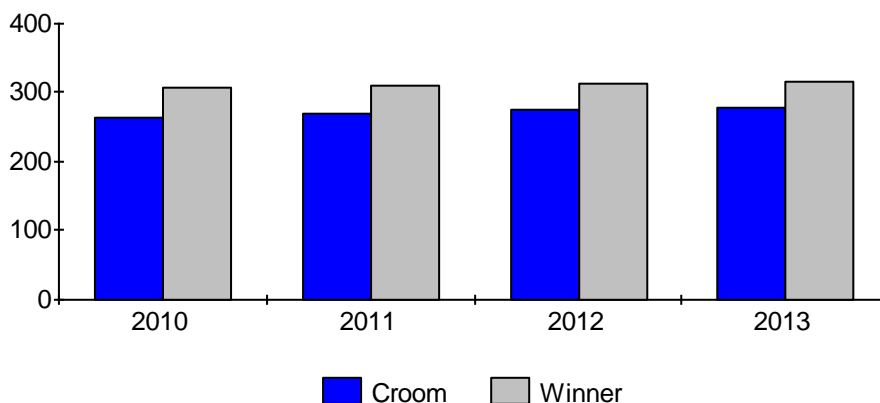
As recommended by the previous plan, the three year plan should be updated in November of each year by the Tidy Towns committee. When updating the plan we should consult with the organisations and agencies supporting the work of Tidy Towns to ascertain what they are planning or what they can assist us with.

This plan will be reviewed each November and a list of all the projects that have been achieved during the year will be made, we should also take a step back and see the benefits that these have brought to the community and any projects that have not been completed or achieved, should also

be listed and put forward. Tick marks ✓ in the tables below indicate the years that the project/action is planned to take place. Many of the actions are annual in nature and therefore will have a tick mark for each year.

Performance Benchmarking should also be taken into consideration as it is a good way of comparing our marks with the marks of the overall winners.

The table below is based on the overall marks received by Croom and the overall national winners of the competition, during the period 2010-2013, which is giving an average difference of 39.5 marks awarded in favour of the winners.



The comparison between Emly the 2009 winners (with our congratulations) and marks awarded to Croom in 2009, shows a deficit of 49 marks. This indicator is evidence, that Croom is making good progress.

Introduction



“Marks in this category have been increased with greater emphasis placed on the overall quality of the entry from town/village map and appropriateness of back up material submitted with your entry. Other key issues are the participation of the local community, businesses, schools and youth in general; working partnerships with local civic agencies; work carried out and appropriate projects completed; existence of an achievable updated Tidy Towns Plan. Considerations will be given to social inclusion, whole of community approach, the role of volunteers and new residents that is apparent in activities“.

The application needs to indicate the numbers involved and their status in relation to the projects. In other words how many are on the committee? How many volunteers engage, etc., and the level of engagement and commitment, (how many meetings, and general involvement). A list of the businesses and agencies that support the projects to be carried out should be included. The application also needs to indicate the way in which they communicate with the community stakeholders, and how they engage with local schools and youth clubs etc. The application should state the number of years they have engaged in the competition and the benefits it has brought to the community, and summarise how they see the group’s work contributing to the development of the community.

Photographs should be taken before activities begin, and after, on any projects, and submitted with the application, giving the adjudicator a better understanding of the scale of the projects being undertaken.

The map that is to be provided with the application, should display a reference mark in relation to any projects the committee wish the adjudicator to take into consideration. An example would be, that if a project was referenced marked 2, then the number 2 should appear on the map where the project is located.

As we enter this competition each year we gain momentum and support from businesses and residents alike and thus have a membership of 22. In addition, there are a number of volunteers who assist with various projects during the course of the year, these may amount to between 20 and 30 individuals at any given time depending on the project. The executive members 2014 are as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Chairperson: | Maureen Curtin |
| Secretary: | Catherine Kennedy |
| Treasurer: | Elaine Butler |
| PRO: | Seamus Sheahan |

Litter/Waste Management: Moss Lynch
Padraig O'Carroll

Landscaping Advisor: Martin Hallinhan

Wildlife Liaison Officers: Seamus Sheahan

Residential Representatives: Reg Turner
Majella Enright
Geraldine Walsh
Nancy Frawley
Rachel Vuckevic

Tidy Towns Committee meetings are held at least once a month from September to April and on a fortnightly basis from May to August. We have undertaken an audit of the Community, the approach roads, main streets, back lanes and estates in order to ascertain what work needs to be undertaken and to plan for our activities, This is reviewed on a monthly basis to ensure that areas are covered and that any new issues are planned for. We have 7 Residential Estates in the town and we actively link with the Residents Associations where we can to inform members of the community and they also form an important part of our committee

We first entered the competition in 2009 after four years of absence and were delighted to get 256 points putting us third in our category in County Limerick. At that stage our Town was probably one of the dirtiest towns in Limerick and during one litter pick alone 56 bags of litter was collected from the Town Park area.

Cleaning up of the town then and still continues to be a huge achievement for us and is testament to the hard work of the volunteers, committee members, traders etc, The local businesses have been very generous with their time and funding and continue to support our work. There are some that for one reason or another still need to develop the premises that they operate from and we are supporting them where possible to achieve this. We have a number of business' in the community that have upgraded their buildings in previous years but with a number of landlords no longer living in the Country we struggle to maintain our Main Streets. Dereliction continues to be a problem for us in a small rural town but we link closely with Limerick County Council to come to a solution that benefits all concerned.

Work is presently underway in the Town Park Project on Main Street. With approximately 13 acres to be upgraded with Park, Wildlife area, Playground & Civic Centre, this is a very large venture for us as a community. This long spectacular site runs between the Main Street in Croom and the river Maigue and is an area every town in Ireland would love to have available to their community. The site has over 800m of river bank which includes a number of weirs on this famous river. These facilities together with a comprehensive landscaping plan will make this development a huge attraction for the local community and enable them to utilise what is a very valuable public space and a draw to bring people into Croom. We are actively involved in the project which is due to open at the end of the Autumn and we have a number of exciting projects planned for it over the course of the next 12 months.

This year with improvements becoming more visible we noticed greater interest from everyone which is evident in the growth of our committee. We have 7 housing estates in the town and have established Residents Associations in almost all of them with a new Forum formed in 2014 that brings all of these together. These Residents Associations have taken responsibility for their area, shown pride for where they live and we support their actions for the betterment of their estate. Many have also come to the stage where they are successful in their application to Limerick County Council for Maintenance of the Green Area grants. We are sure that our participation in Tidy Towns has certainly helped to promote this activity. We continue to strive to meet the targets we have set for ourselves and along the way perhaps set a few extra.

This Action Plan was compiled in 2014 and we have been fortunate to have it reviewed by the Tourism & Heritage Officer in Ballyhoura Development Ltd.

The Built Environment and Streetscape:

50 marks

Introduction

This adjudication category is concerned with the presentation of all aspects of the built environment and streetscape including any monuments or other structures.

This category also examines the conservation and presentation of heritage building and the quality of shop fronts: design, sustainability and suitability of new structures to their location and environment; treatment of derelict sites and unoccupied buildings; design and suitability of civic amenity buildings.

Adjudication in this category covers like parks, “streetscape, furniture; street lighting, appropriately designed nameplates, parking and access points to finding and general use access for everyone”.



category also covers Public spaces paving, landscaping and street building façade lighting, signage relating to streets and place locations, historical trails, walkways local amenities and facilities, way-of Irish language; sustainability and

In this category it is recommended, that organisations/community stakeholders, share a common interest, in the appearance of buildings and streets in the area. This could be achieved by agreeing on colours, that harmonise or contrast with the streetscape, and looking for shared initiatives that improve the amenities in the area, in order to enhance the trading potential that the area has to offer, and to improve the wellbeing of people in the area.

Organisations that should be targeted for this category:

*Local Development Association,
Local County Council,
Local Employment Agency,
Local Business Association,
Heritage Council www.heritagecouncil.ie*

The following are projects for consideration in this category:

Projects	2014	2015	2016
Continue talks in regards to wires-cape removal	✓	✓	✓
Inspect information panels, yearly, update information if necessary and cleaned regularly	✓	✓	✓

Inspect steel works, public and private, include main Bridge in the town, railings and gates, clean, repair and repaint has necessary.	✓	✓	✓
Inspect crash barriers at roundabouts and dangerous bends, clean and repair where necessary. Make sure grass is cut and trimmed.	✓	✓	✓
Inspect stone walls and pavements, clean and repair where required,	✓	✓	✓
Inspect painted and cemented walls in public view, clean or repaint if necessary,	✓	✓	✓
Inspect street signage, check directional is correct, clean or replace if required and paint all poles to agreed colour scheme,	✓	✓	✓
Businesses should ensure that pavements are free of clutter & advertising and that customers should avoid parking on paths.	✓	✓	✓
Consider treatment of shop fronts (occupied or unoccupied) Clean, paint, repair where necessary.	✓	✓	✓
Review derelict properties in the town and support owners to make these safe and presentable.	✓	✓	✓
Murals, clean and touch-up where necessary.	✓		✓

Introduction



This is an important category as it puts the emphasis on our understanding and appreciation for the positive impact that the landscape can have on our community. The emphasis here is based on appropriate planning and management of open spaces, selection and sighting of native trees, shrubs and flowers for year round effect, and maintenance of planted areas. Presentation of roundabouts and all grass strips”.

In this category it is recommended, that advice should be sought, in relation to any landscaping projects, as there are environmental issues that have to be taken into consideration.

Rivers influence the diversity of vegetation, birds fish and invertebrates. Expert advice should be sought in relation to the planting and maintenance of river banks.

The maintenance of the landscape, is a resource issue that needs to be looked at from an ongoing perspective. Pooling resources and distributing them in a constructive manner should reduce cost and enhance the appearance of the landscape.

Organisations that should be targeted for this category:

- Local County Council*
- Local Development Association.*
- Local Employment Agency*
- Local Business Association.*
- Residential Associations*

The following are projects for consideration in this category:

Projects	2014	2015	2016
Consider Landscaping Guidance recommendations in relation to planting native species of plants and trees. Check with the Heritage Council	✓	✓	✓
Plant for all year round effect	✓	✓	✓
Paint flower containers and baskets where appropriate. Seek permission from LCC in regards to hanging of baskets on poles and public buildings	✓	✓	✓
Evaluate all maintenance of green areas and consider guidelines and resources in place to support wildlife.	✓	✓	✓

Consider resources in relation to approach roads. Weeding of shrub beds, pruning and grass strip trimming.	✓	✓	✓
Remove any dead plants	✓	✓	✓
The shrubbery at the old train station needs more plants. (Seek advice).		✓	
The area above the stone wall, in the laneway behind the Spar shop, needs to be landscaped. (Seek advice)		✓	
Keep Roundabouts weeded and maintained	✓	✓	✓
Work in conjunction with the Town Park Committee to undertake and advise on projects in the Town park		✓	✓
Maintain plants on approach roads (consider improvements to be made during the winter months when existing plants are not feeding.)		✓	
Seek expert advice on river banks maintenance and management.		✓	
Use photo library in relation to Tidy Towns adjudication where appropriate.	✓	✓	✓

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities:

50 Marks

Introduction

“Raising understanding and awareness of the natural amenities in your area, including any aspects that make your area important for conservation (e.g. waterways, field boundaries, coastal features) An appreciation of how species and habitats should be best protected and managed. Provide evidence of good co-operation with expert groups relevant authorities, especially in carrying out work in sensitive areas. Provision of access to natural areas and interpretation of key aspects”.



and

In this category it is recommended that expert advice is sought and recommendation documents are included in the Tidy Towns application. Information panels should be installed where appropriate given details on the species that habitat the area, in order to attract interest and show appreciation for the natural amenity.

Organisations that should be targeted for this category:

Local County Council

Local Development Association.

Schools, Sports Clubs, Youth Clubs,

Residential Associations,

Documentation of recommendations from the Department of Environment, or a Representative of the Department,

The following are projects for consideration for this category:

Projects	2014	2015	2016
Provide evidence of plants / trees planted that encourage wildlife development and also encourage pollination at different times of the year	✓	✓	✓
Quarantine off areas where appropriate for the creation of natural wildlife. Promoting its biodiversity potential. Allow a selected area or areas to grow wild, to support wildlife in the Town Park.		✓	✓
Remove storm damaged trees from the Park and reuse as mulch for various landscaping projects as well as logs for habitat areas.	✓		
Develop a tree trail in the Town Park.		✓	

Develop an Insect Hotel & Insect Spiral in the Park and install Information Panel		✓	
Continue to encourage schools to engage in wildlife projects	✓	✓	✓
Consider installing additional information panels in the Town to enhance those already in existence perhaps on Croom Castle, Croom Mills, and Croom's Angling club		✓	✓
Cut grass regularly at a medium to high setting, and avoid collecting grass, work from the centre to the perimeter, allowing habitats to escape from cutting equipment.	✓	✓	✓
Seek advice from the Department of Environment in relation to unwanted species of plants or pests. Do not use pesticides, Consider health issues.		✓	

Tidiness and Litter Control:

90 Marks



Introduction

Tidiness and litter control have been emerged into one category putting a emphasis on a good standard of maintenance in both the built environment and landscaping categories.

“Tidiness: General lack of clutter, unblocked footpaths, redundant lamp poles, unsightly overhead electric cables, absence of graffiti and fly-posting and evidence of control of weed growth at kerbs. Absence of unsightly and / or inappropriate advertising banners on shop fronts. Please note that although general tidiness is evaluated and marked in this category, tidiness is also considered under other categories including the built environment & streetscape, Approach Roads, Streets & lanes, etc”

“Litter: the adjudicator will assess the absence of litter and dumping. evidence of litter control strategy, including regular litter patrols, segregation of collected litter during clean-ups and promotion of anti-litter awareness throughout community“.

In this category it is recommended that litter control initiatives are pursued as in litter workshops, segregation of litter for recycling and engaging organisations and institutions in litter patrols, checking bins are emptied regularly and keeping place of business tidy.

Organisations that should be targeted for this category:

*Local County Council,
Local Development Association
Local Schools, Sport Clubs, Youth Clubs,
Local Business Association,
Residential Associations,*

The following are projects for consideration in this category:

Projects	2014	2015	2016
Participate in National Spring Clean	✓	✓	✓
Continue to identify black spots during spring clean. Highlight areas prone to dumping to council	✓	✓	✓

Encourage community stakeholders to participate in litter control initiatives use of recycling centres & bottle banks	✓	✓	✓
Carry out litter picks daily	✓	✓	✓
Encourage businesses to maintain litter control outside place of business (keep area tidy and empty bins regularly).	✓	✓	✓
Encourage businesses property owners to keep properties clean and freshly painted.	✓	✓	✓
Consider hosting a presentation on the benefits of living in a tidy and clean area.		✓	
Communicate with schools and youth clubs to encourage children to be litter conscious	✓	✓	✓
Keep name/speed signage clear and maintained. Consider bilingual name signs.	✓	✓	✓
Consider addressing removal of graffiti at back of “Croom” sign on Bruff approach and any other sighting.	✓		
Consider addressing parking problem on Main St when Town Park car park is in place.		✓	
Promote use of bottle banks, and recycling centres	✓	✓	✓
Consider a strategy for the segregation of litter during litter picks. Bags for bottles and cans to go to bottle bank etc.	✓	✓	✓

Introduction

The objective of this category is to take environmental issues into consideration in relation to the unnecessary production of products that put strains on our resources and to avoid them finding their way to landfill sites.

“Marks in this challenging category, marks have been increased in recognition of the efforts being made by Tidy Towns committees. Describe activities on how you manage waste and promote efficient use of resources (e.g. water, energy, transport) in your community. Provide evidence that practical steps have been taken to prevent or reduce waste produced across your community (e.g. householders, businesses, and schools) or how you reuse your resources. Provide examples of awareness campaigns, events or activities hosted by your community (e.g. details on workshops/demonstrations held since your last entry”

In this category it is recommended that initiatives such as recycling, composting, use of biodegradable products where appropriate and the engagement of businesses, schools and householders, in waste management from a cost saving prospective.

For information on Limerick recycling centres www.limerickrecyclingcentres.ie/

For information on home composting, you can find a mini guide published by the Clare County Council at

<http://www.clarecoco.ie/water-waste-environment/waste-and-recycling/waste-prevention/home-composting-mini-guide-3746.pdf> or you could contact Citizens Information or view their web page at

http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/environment/waste_management_and_recycling/composting_domestic_waste.html

Organisations that should be targeted for this category:

Local Development Association,

Local County Council,

Local employment agency,

Schools, sports clubs and youth clubs

Local Business Association,

Residential Associations

Documentation of recommendations by the Department of Environment, or a representative of the Department.

The following are projects for consideration in this category:

Projects	2014	2015	2016
Pursue waste minimisation audit		✓	
Green flag program, continue to support and encourage all schools to participate	✓	✓	✓
Consider running workshops to promote recycling and waste management.		✓	✓

Promote Community recycling days and car boot sales	✓	✓	✓
Encourage School book and uniform recycling initiatives and unwanted mobile phones	✓	✓	✓
All shops that sell batteries must take back old batteries for recycling (encourage battery users to engage)	✓	✓	✓
Encourage traders to promote the usage of reusable shopping bags	✓	✓	✓
Development of a Green Waste Community Composter in the Town Park		✓	
Locate a water butt at the Civic Centre to conserve water and use rainwater in the Park Landscape areas		✓	

Introduction

The residents of housing estates and housing areas need to consider the presentation of their area. This can be achieved by preparing a check list for the purpose of surveying the area. The list should include the condition of (boundary walls, fences, hedges, pavements and kerbs, greens and shrub beds and signage). This should establish a situation analysis for the area. A list of resources should also be prepared in order to establish a plan of action for the coming year.

Grants are available for the maintenance of open spaces, and there is also a priming grant which residential associations and action groups can avail of. For further information contact.

*Environment Department
Limerick County Council,
County Hall,
Dooradoyle,
Co. Limerick
Tel : 061 496214
E-mail: jpower@limerickcoco.ie*

Unfinished Estates

There is one unfinished estate in Croom (Cois Sruthain) and is listed as a unfinished estate on the following website <https://www.householdcharge.ie/faq.aspx#fk32>

Link with LCC to manage and improve where possible.

Residential Streets and Housing Areas in Croom.

Residential streets:

Main street
High street
Bridge street
Church road

Housing areas:

Caemore Court 1-10
Caemore Court 11-26
Kylefea Estate
Elm Park
Elm Park Drive
Glen Ma
Coshma
Cois Sruthain
St. Senan's Tce
Towerfield

“Residential streets that include Town Houses are integral parts of towns and villages and should be treated in a similar fashion to public and private housing developments. Considerations is given to proper presentation and maintenance of all properties with due cognisance given maintenance of frontage, boundary and gable end walls. Gardens, where applicable, should be presented to a good standard. In housing developments green areas should be cut back regularly. Children’s play areas to be considered with equipment maintained to the best standards. Where possible individual estates should have suitable name signs - stones, plaques, sign post, etc. preferably bilingual. Unfinished estates will not reflect badly on the efforts of any community but examples of how the community is addressing this issue should be highlighted“.

In this category it is recommended that residential estates and housing areas have their own association that focuses on the areas needs and pool resources to achieve agreed projects.

The following are projects for consideration in this category

Projects	2014	2015	2016
Circulate Residential Areas check-list of each year	✓	✓	✓
Remove any grass and weed growth at kerbing	✓	✓	✓
Develop a strategy for litter control and maintenance of greens and shrub beds.	✓	✓	✓
Keep name/speed signage clear and maintained	✓	✓	✓
Consider presentation of shrub and flower beds, keep clean and weeded.	✓	✓	✓
Cleaning and Painting of boundary walls, fences and railings		✓	
Encourage home owners and tenants to park in driveways or common spaces and avoid parking on footpaths	✓	✓	✓



Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes:

50 Marks

Introduction

As pointed out above in the Tidiness and Litter control category there is a emphasis on maintenance and presentation of the approach roads that correspond with the speed approach resections of the town, and the streets, and lanes in and around the town.

“Appropriate presentation of approach roads, including road side verges and their boundary treatment. The appearance of town and village streets, connecting roads, laneways, bridges and cycle lanes. Provision for inclusive access and pedestrian connections“.

In this category it is recommend that the appearance or the impression that a stranger would take as he/she approaches and looks around the town is taken into consideration as well as the value of good directional signage.

Organisations that should be targeted for this category.

*Local Development Association,
Local County Council,
Local Employment Agency,
Local Business Association,*

The following are projects for consideration in this category.

Projects	2014	2015	2016
Consult with local council in relation to resurfacing of laneways. Apply for Community Involvement Scheme for the upgrade to the Back Lanes	✓	✓	
Consult with council in relation to a strategy for maintenance of approach roads (power washing walls, use road sweeper etc)		✓	✓
Undertake where possible maintenance of approach roads (grass trimming, weeding, litter picking etc)	✓	✓	✓
Consult with council on a strategy for the repairing of stone walls and Bridges ie Crecora Road, Bruff Road, Manister Road and Old Cork Road		✓	✓
Consider installing an information panel with map of the town.			✓

Consult with council in relation to safety for Pedestrian access to the town.		✓	✓
Check all Life buoys on river banks are in place and safe for use.	✓	✓	✓
Make sure that Sign posting for amenity areas are in place.	✓	✓	✓
Use heritage colours to enhance the character of the town.		✓	✓
Encourage Derelict properties owners to make and keep their properties presentable.	✓	✓	✓

Pictures of Croom 2013-2014







