

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Swinford** Ref: **361**
County: **Mayo** Mark: **248**
Category: **C** Date(s): **30/06/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	39	41
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	35	36
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	34	35
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	27	28
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	13	15
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	40	40
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	26	27
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	26	26
TOTAL MARK	450	240	248

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Swinford is welcome back to the Supervalu Tidy Towns competition 2015. Your active committee of eight members is backed up by a number of volunteers. We are delighted to hear that there has been a renewed emphasis on Tidy Towns in recent years and that residents are seeing the benefits of your work. This is coinciding with the implementation of your 5 Year Community Action Plan (2014 – 2019), commissioned by Mayo Co Co as part of the 'Community Futures' project. The comprehensive survey process involved in the consultation has resulted in increased awareness and community groups coming together. You have the invaluable assistance of your RSS and Tus schemes. You have forged good links with outside agencies such as Mayo Co Co, Fisheries Board, OPW and the Mayo NE Development Company. You have the support of many businesses are in good contact with several community groups. Having green schools representatives on your core committee is very helpful in terms of working together on projects. You are making good use of social media to promote your messages to the wider community, as well as your website and tradition channels. We are delighted to hear that Tidy Towns has helped you increase community spirit and pride. Keep up the good work!

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

We admired the stonework at the new cultural centre/public library – at the site of the old train station. This is a wonderful addition to Swinford and all was in good order here. We admired the nearby Mayo Co Co office, which was undergoing some renovations. Well done to all involved in the new playground project – this is a wonderful new amenity for younger Swinford residents. The community centre looks bleak, weedy and uninviting. We hope funds can be found soon to rejuvenate it. We observed good use of Irish on all name signs. Many businesses along the main streets were neatly presented including FG Phelan & Co, Matt Duggan Auctioneers, Campbell's Funeral Home, O' Connells Pharmacy, Bank of Ireland and AIB. Swinford has some lovely old laneways and you are starting to embrace these and highlight their special character. Work is ongoing to improve the appearance of Pound Lane. We admired the 'woman and baby' sculpture. The Gateway Hotel was neatly presented as were Andy Madden's butchers and Moran Butchers. The schools on both side of Station road were very neatly turned out with impressive landscaping. The 'Baxter' grounds were nicely presented.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The grounds of Aras Attracta were nicely landscaped and greatly enhance the Park Rd area. Swinford District Hospital also has attractive grounds, though the front gates require attention. We admired the lovely stone church with its nicely landscaped grounds and the lovely area with the sculpture nearby. The planters along your grass verges look well; however we would recommend that you consider permanent planting for your grass areas (or leave them as neat verges) and save your planters for areas of hard landscaping where they will provide visual

impact. The Ballina approach road had some nice pockets of colourful planting. We also admired the planting opposite the neat fire station. We commend your efforts plant native trees and hedgerows where suitable.

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fíadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádurtha:

The Swinford Amenity Park is a wonderful community facility. Planting a hedgerows or creepers along the long stretch of concrete wall would soften the bare look near the entrance. You have implemented some good initiatives under this heading, including the 'Save our Swifts' project, in conjunction with the Green School Committee. Well done to the Swinford Scout Troup for carrying out a bird and bat survey. Please tell us their results next time. They have also been busy monitoring their bug hotel in the Brabazon Woodlands. We positively note that you worked in partnership with the OPW and East Mayo Anglers Association to clean up your stream, which is an important spawning ground for salmon and trout. We observed the newly planted wildflower bed and hope that this will be a success for you. We wish you continued success with these and new projects.

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

You show a good understanding of this category and have been implementing some worthwhile initiatives. We are delighted that you are encouraging Swinford residents to save on resources, as part of the 'Green Home' challenge. Please give us an idea of how many residents are signed up and what positive results have emerged, if any. Well done for securing funding for your rainwater harvesting project that ensures no fresh water is required for hanging baskets or flower beds. Do keep us updated on this next time. Well done for hosting a well-attended workshop on Food Waste and composting (Oct '14), in conjunction with Mayo Co Co. A similar event was held at your Agricultural Show, which also included a rainwater harvesting demonstration. Well done to the primary school for achieving their 5TH Green Flag and we wish the secondary school success with their Green Schools Programme. We did notice a second-hand charity shop on our walkabout – you could include this as an example of 'Reuse' in the community. Your ongoing recycling initiatives are noted, e.g. farm plastics, WEEE, scrap metal and cash for clobber. You may like to visit www.localprevention.ie/tidytowns to see what other initiatives are happening around the country. We wish you continued success with these worthwhile projects.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You are keeping on top of the litter challenge with your organised litter management programme. You have focussed campaigns related to your specific litter challenges – dog fouling, cigarette butts and chewing gum. Your ongoing litter picks and awareness campaigns are paying dividends. Participation in events such as National Spring Clean and Mayo County Council's anti-litter league are further assisting you in keeping the community motivated. There was one bag dumped at the (Tesco) bottle banks and quite a few pieces of litter strewn in the shrub beds at Tesco's. Is this area monitored by Tesco staff? There was minor littering at the Park Rd Junction and in the Swinford Amenity Park. Your efforts in relation to dog-fouling are lauded – we note that seven new mutt-mitt bins have been installed and are maintained by Tidy Towns. We like the concept of your 'Clean Street League'. Do you segregate any litter for recycling? Well done for ensuring that litter was controlled at your recent festivals. You might now consider going one step further in trying to prevent, reuse and recycle waste associated with such events. You can visit www.greenyourfestival.ie or contact your Environment Awareness Officer for advice.

It is great to hear that residents and volunteers are tackling general tidiness issues as well as just litter picking. This is making a positive difference to Swinford's overall appearance. The corner of Rathscanlong Rd was quite weedy as was the footpath kerb along the Ballina Approach Rd. Well done for your ongoing encouragement of property owners tidy up the appearance of their buildings. Do keep us posted on yearly progress. This is important in terms of making Swinford an attractive place to stop and spend time in.

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

Residences along the street were freshly painted and colourful. Some were enhanced with window boxes or tubs. Swinford has a large number of housing estates, mostly neat and tidy. Brabazon Heights was very neat and tidy as was the nearby 'Orchard'. There was a lovely house with hanging baskets on St. Ita's Terrace. We admired some attractive houses and gardens on Circular Road. A nearby cottage was being refurbished. Railway Terrace was neat, with flower pots adding a splash of colour. Sancta Maria Terrace looked well as did the terraced homes on Pound Lane. We admired the fine house beside '2nd Thoughts' charity shop but weren't sure of its use. Well done to all involved.

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

Park Road is one of the highlights and is where most of the leisure amenities are. The front of Robert McCallion Memorial Park was somewhat bare. Is there any scope to plant a hedgerow along here? The lettering on the 'Park Rd' name sign and the 'Swinford' sign (Kiltimagh Rd) requires attention. The grass was very high around the latter sign. We would recommend that you maintain verges on all roads as far as your 'welcome' signs, also that you try and source uniform welcome signs for all your approach roads. The Dublin Rd looked very well.

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you Swinford for all your recent improvements. We wish you well with your future projects

