

# Tidy Towns Competition 2013

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Swinford** Ref: **361**  
County: **Mayo** Mark: **237**  
Category: **C** Date(s): **26/06/2013**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2012</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2013</b>
Overall Development Approach	50	35	37
The Built Environment	50	32	34
Landscaping	50	32	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25	26
Litter Control	50	25	25
Sustainable Waste And Resource Management	20	11	11
Tidiness	30	14	14
Residential Areas	40	25	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25	25
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>237</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

Your adjudicator would like to welcome Swinford to the 2013 TidyTowns Competition and your participation is important to the competition. Thank you for the folder with your entry form pages in individual plastic holders. However this is unnecessary and it is fine to staple together the pages and is easier for your adjudicator. Do make sure to number the pages. It is important that in your entry form each new project for the year is numbered and that these numbers are keyed to the map. The map appeared to be a photo copy or an online print out. Much of this was faded and was impossible to read. An original printed map is preferable and if not available an accurate hand drawn map is fine. The Notes section at the beginning of the entry form will provide further guidance to your committee. It was great to see that Swinford has such a large TidyTowns committee and twenty five volunteers available also. Your adjudicator was delighted with your concept of the Street League and this is an excellent way of getting the total Swinford community involved. It was encouraging to learn that more groups this year have offered their support for your work and that all the appropriate agencies seem to be involved with you. The media mix that you use to publicise your work is excellent as are the all important links with local Schools. Your entry form listed short / medium / long term objectives for your committee. It is strongly recommended that you develop this into a 3 Year TidyTowns Plan for Swinford using the ten adjudication categories as a framework. An implementation year should then be allocated to each project with a note of likely supporting groups or agencies. You will find this approach to be quite helpful in planning your work year on year. At the end of each year the Plan should be revised and moved on by one year. Do make sure to enclose an up to date copy with your entry each year. Do make sure that projects are detailed under the correct adjudication category. A phrase in your entry form seemed to sum up the Swinford TidyTowns situation perfectly - we 'enjoy backing of our entire community'.

### The Built Environment:

You have made good progress on handling the difficult problem of derelict buildings. Many buildings have been repainted and these were examined. Your adjudicator especially liked The Hogan and the strong yellow colour works well here. Repainting at the old Fire Station and the Handball alley was also visited. The new Library beside the old Station is a delight as it the excellently presented Church and grounds. The Church on a height has a fine site and is greatly augmented by excellent grass areas and landscaping. The well painted railings also caught the eye. Murals were admired in various areas including the tidy car park. Painting at what was the ESB shop was also noted. Progress has been made at some of the premises on the Kilkelly road. The Golf Club and

the GAA premises nearby were both quite tidy and the buildings neatly painted. Further along at Central Supplies on Park road well cut rolling grassy roadside areas were admired. At the Amenity Park area near Tesco the gates needed to be painted. Across from the Youth Club entrance railings needed to be repainted while the hanging sign at The White House was appreciated. Other premises in the centre of Swinford that your adjudicator noted were Eileen's and Molloy's. The graphics and painting here are eye catching. A good colour use was seen at the Gateway Hotel. The use of the Irish language on signage is required under present legislation and this should be encouraged where appropriate. On signage the Irish language must have the primary role.

### **Landscaping:**

Your good work on flower beds and flower boxes was examined in many parts of Swinford. However at Tesco the black membrane in roadside landscaping was visible and should be concealed. Planting at the Swinford signs was noted. The landscaped area at the sculpture on Chapel Street was visited and the low railing to the back would be improved if repainted. At the Hospital entrance it is suggested that the raised area at the entrance sign is landscaped to bring a bit of colour and cheer to this area. Good work has been done at Topaz in landscaping terms and their work is appreciated. Another area that was enjoyed was the planting at the Host Town side at Riverside. Work on weed control at the base of trees is acknowledged. Your adjudicator reminds the Tidy Towns Committee that the cutting of roadside banks and ditches in the period 1st March to 30th August is not permitted under Section 40 of the Wildlife Act 1976, incorporating section 46 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

Your contact or intended contact with OPW in regard to riverbed and bank development was mentioned in your entry form. Your adjudicator was wondering what work you had in mind as both environments are really sensitive in wildlife terms. Presumably you are also talking to Fisheries? Your work with the Schools on environmental issues and projects is commended and do continue this support. The wildlife area at the timber poles on the Dublin road was visited and you adjudicator wonders what development you have in mind here. Your entry form also spoke of work on walks but did not provide details. Work on Davitt Place on the woodland walks has been taken into consideration by your adjudicator. How are you promoting the Looped Walks? For next year we look forward to details of the work on the Bird Watch Programme for these walks.

### **Litter Control:**

The introduction of what you have well named as Doggy Bins is welcomed and hopefully they will be used as intended. Did you get a large turnout for National Spring Clean Day and well done to Swinford Beavers on their good work? Work by your committee on cigarette butts and chewing gum has been noted and little evidence of these problems caught your adjudicator's eye. The Bring Centre at Tesco was excellently presented in every way and the screening here is good as is the concreted area to the front. A little litter was evident at Cloonlara. At the Bring Centre in the car park littering was evident together with a little dumping; the units needed to be washed. However the car park here was tidy. The third Bring Centre at Corrib Oil was visited and this was poorly presented with much litter visible under the units. Along Main Street a minor scattering of litter was evident. The condition of two of the three Bring Centres has prevented your adjudicator from increasing your marks in this section each year; the excellence of the Tesco site has prevented a mark reduction here.

### **Sustainable Waste And Resource Management:**

The participation in the composting course is understood from the entry form. Do continue to support the Schools in their Green Flag progress from year to year. For next year to consider how waste in Swinford can be eliminated or reduced as this goes to the core of this category. The Tidy Towns Unit enclosed a very useful paper with your entry form that gives many suggestions for consideration by your committee in the year ahead.

### **Tidiness:**

Along Main Street the display of retail goods on pavements was evident. This looks untidy and can cause problems for the disabled. Immediately outside the bridge on the Ballina road railings needed to be painted. Work on the removal of old signage is warmly welcomed as are your efforts to discourage the use of flyers. When were the overhead cables on Main Street placed underground? In several areas it was noted that recently cut grass had not been removed. The cleanup of the Brabazon area was noted when the area was visited. Street furniture including litter bins was quite clean. Near the old Railway Station platform a pile of stone needed to be removed across from the Area Office. On the Ballina approach road a long length of road boundary wall by some trees on both sides of the road needed to be repainted. A small untidy area beside VTOS needed attention. Opposite Gulf an untidy grass area was noted and near here the old petrol pumps area looked quite untidy with bad weed growth.

### **Residential Areas:**

Redevelopment work at the Parochial House is acknowledged. It was good to read of your work in encouraging estates to set up their own Residents Associations. The Orchard would be improved by the planning of some native trees while at The Fairways good landscaping and trees were examined. The metal gates at Larch Hill would be improved if repainted. A steel container here should be removed or screened from view. At Fraunhill a good entrance grass area caught the eye. The estate was tidy. Some recently painted houses on Circular road

were admired. On the Main Street out from the bridge a tall gable wall at the terraced houses needed to be painted. Another gable was being painted when the area was visited. The musicians sculpture at the entrance to Bollingbrook Drive caught the eye but they needed to be repainted. A few houses here and road boundary walls also needed painting attention. The house beside Second Thoughts was admired because of the good architectural proportions and detailing. Some attractive houses were noted along Bridge Street on the Dublin road. Native tree planting would improve Druids Court.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

On the Dublin road at the short timber poles the cut grass had not been removed. Wire fencing on the Ballina approach just before the 100 KPH Speed Limit signed would be improved if replaced with timber post and rail. The wide Main Street was admired and the feature cobbles that defined the edge of the parking area. Kerb weed on the Cloonlara road was evident. Additional verge cutting is recommended on the Kiltimagh approach road out to the 100 KPH Speed Limit signs. Quite good grass verges were evident along Park Road.

**General Impression:**

Your committee is a well organised and respected one and you continue to make good progress. Good luck with your many ambitions for the year ahead when we will be back.