

Tidy Towns Competition 2014

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Swinford** Ref: **361**
County: **Mayo** Mark: **240**
Category: **C** Date(s): **08/06/2014**

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

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Fáilte Swinford. You are a welcome entrant to this year's Tidy Towns Competition. Your population of 1,435 places you in the small town category and you have worked well over the past year to bring Swinford to a better condition. We note that this advance was achieved through the endeavours of fifteen committee members assisted by twenty-five volunteers. It is great to see that you have your own town website and that you have inspired a wide variety of bodies to sponsor your work. These helpers include people putting up wall brackets and other such practical tasks like funding/supervising the painting of flower beds.

You are commended for involving pupils from the secondary school in your work. This is a great initiative, especially for those students in transition year who are becoming aware of the wider issues facing the community. Hopefully, some of these pupils will become committee members at a future date. Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí. These young people often enjoy such tasks as painting murals or planting trees and they can see the rewards during the subsequent years. Thank you for the map included with your entry. Next year we would ask you to send it in a larger format that is more easily read.

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

We strongly commend Swinford for the re-use of the old railway station for the library. It is, in itself, an attractive stone-built structure, probably with many stories to tell. Alongside the library, we saw the large house occupied by the County Council offices. It is very well maintained and we admired the tree planting to the front.

The school (Scoil Mhuire agus Phádraig) was finely presented and we praised the mural we saw on the opposite side of the road there. The Post Office looked well, as did the Gateway Hotel. At Swinford District Hospital we stopped to admire the Willows building. It is a beautiful heritage structure. Its downpipes deserve attention due to the activity of the local birds. This building really enhances its surroundings. We thought the Garda Station had a pleasant open aspect.

Swinford Photography was well presented as was the premises of FG Phelan. Nearby, the Davitt Place building (Courthouse) is in need of some refurbishment. Other well-presented properties included Mace and Andy Madden, Spain's, Horkan's, O'Connell Medical Hall, Swinford Motors and Topaz.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The library refurbishment project benefits greatly from the complementary tree planting. We particularly liked the Monkey Puzzle tree and we hope it inspired the imagination of the young readers.

Several public monuments and sculptures caught our eye. We admired the torch monument dedicated to the Sisters of Mercy, with its accompanying seats. We also liked the ESB mural promoting your objectives. Well done to the young artists for giving this their time. The Musicians monument is nicely set off by planting at the Bollingbroke

estate.

The Connacht Gold garden centre was seen to be bright and cheerful. It displayed a wide variety of planting material. Within the district hospital grounds we came across the famine plot and it appeared well-tended. It is a secluded and thought-provoking place.

The trees along the Main Street had been neatly pruned. Well done to all involved with these varied projects.

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fiadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádúrtha:

We note you are planning more of the scheme for the looped walks and hopefully adding on the element of bird watching. These are commendable initiatives that should increase awareness of the rich heritage and resource of wildlife so close to the local people. It is great to see that you are pursuing this work with the involvement of the school pupils by installing bird boxes and insect hotels. You may consider an annual survey as an outcome in terms of keeping track on the number of species, whether they nest locally, etc. Young people often enjoy this kind of survey work. You have a notable diversity of flora and fauna around the town. We sat listening to the rooks calling close to the bridge at Rathscanlon

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

The recycling centre at the shopping centre was found tidy and well ordered on adjudication day and so was the waste collection/recycling facility at the Topaz site.

You are commended for initiating projects such as composting, and other innovative waste management schemes. We could see that the sewage treatment works is well-managed. At the primary school we came across the composting beside the raised bed. This is a commendable initiative to encourage young people in sustainable gardening as well as good waste management. Well done.

The marks available in this category have been substantially increased and we hope this will encourage Swinford now to extend its waste management further, with greater emphasis on the avoidance of waste generation in the first instance (at the source). This can gain you more marks over the next few years.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Your work in regard to this category is noted. We especially commend the street league system you operate along with the regular clean-ups. They inspire local residents to care for their immediate surroundings, all adding incrementally to the town. Pay Coyne's wall verge deserves some weeding and the Hancock Building on Main Street requires attention as well. We found the entrance to the Baxter Healthcare site neat and tidy.

Congratulations to you on winning the award for the most colourful place in 2013. In view of the constant flow of traffic through the main street you are dealing well with the issue of litter and tidiness.

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

Meadow Park houses were well presented and the timber fencing at Railway Road is quite varied and well set-off with bright planting.

The Rivergarden estate would benefit from attention, including the name plaque.

Larch Hill has solid gates and there were several dormer bungalows nearby that we admired. Fraunhill was neat and litter-free, as was Coill Abhainn. Rath Dubh had some weeds in the verges but otherwise the place was well kept and litter-free. Druid's Court looked well and Gleann Darach was nicely presented although some of its trees on the open space need replacing.

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

There are kerbside weeds along the approach from Ballina. Beside the graveyard the speed limit sign is being obscured by plants. The cemetery itself is well-kept. We note the number of dilapidated buildings and we praise your efforts in tackling this issue. This is clearly something that cannot be achieved all at once. Molaim sibh.