

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Gortaganny**

Ref: **634**

County: **Roscommon**

Mark: **164**

Category: **B**

Date: **01/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	25	
The Built Environment	40	24	
Landscaping	40	20	
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	14	
Litter Control	40	24	
Tidiness	20	12	
Residential Areas	30	20	
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	20	
General Impression	10	5	
TOTAL MARK	300	164	

Overall Developmental Approach:

Gortaganny is a welcome new entry to the National Tidy Towns Competition in 2005. Thank you for your submission and development plan. The map included with your submission was useless to the adjudicator as it contained no reference points. In next year's submission ensure you highlight the main road through the village and the names of towns at either end together with reference points; perhaps a more up to date map is available? Whilst your overall plan is good we do need more details and specific objectives. You are referred to your Tidy Towns Handbook which gives excellent advice on how to proceed with the preparation of a plan. The village enjoys a good location off a busy thoroughfare and is situated in picturesque countryside adjacent to important amenity areas. Your long term plan should include developed walks to the amenities in the wider hinterland. Well done on your fund-raising and sponsorship activities and on the hosting of a traditional weekend in September, perhaps information on this could be provided with next year's submission.

The Built Environment:

Both the Marion Hall and church were presented to a high standard as was the school. Well done to all concerned in this presentation and, in particular, to the workers on the Rural Social Scheme. The stone enclosed water pump is an attractive feature; If there is a social history associated with it perhaps this could be provided on a small vandal-proof, weatherproof interpretive panel. As the village has so few buildings and no commercial premises it is important that features such as stone walls and boundary walls are maintained to a high standard.

Landscaping:

We note from your plan your intentions to landscape the church, the hall, the area at the water pump and the village signs. Do ensure that landscaping is predominantly permanent trees and shrubs as these are longer lived than bedding plants. Also ensure planting for seasonal interest so that these areas will be as attractive in winter and spring as summer and autumn. Try where possible to plant native species as these are supportive of wildlife. Your landscaping plan might include planting to the concrete post fencing beside the church (hedgerow) and the field boundary located across from the church with a climbing plant or indeed this wall could be simply plastered and painted.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

As the village is so close to the lakeshore this should be the prime natural amenity and recreational facility in Gortaganny. A signposted walk to Slí na Sláinte standards should be put in place and access to the lake improved. A wildlife survey of the lake and its shores might be undertaken over a number of years and the results promoted in a nature trail, perhaps around the lakeshore itself or by the use of interpretive panels highlighting the type of species that might be encountered. Other surveys could be a bird count, and Birdwatch Ireland can help with information in this regard. Again you are referred to your Tidy Towns Handbook for ideas on how to get started under this heading.

Litter Control:

Litter control was excellent in Gortaganny on adjudication day, well done. We note from your submission that you prioritise the environs of the church, the Marion Hall and the school, well done on this too. Do you have an overall litter management strategy? What are your daily litter control activities? What are the problem areas? What type of litter is most frequent? It is this type of detail that can help you perform better under this heading.

Tidiness:

Gortaganny is generally well maintained and has an overall appearance of tidiness. A few outbuildings here and there look a little shabby and weed growth at the base of walls and kerbs and road edges should be kept to an absolute minimum. We did not note the presence of recycling facilities in the village, you might like to compete under this heading by providing a recycling point for the community. Encourage people to keep their side and rear areas, especially those that can be seen from the public road, to a high standard.

Residential Areas:

Residential properties are well presented in most respects. To compete successfully under this heading it is important that roadside boundary walls to dwellings together with areas outside of these walls and the overall curtilage area of the dwelling is maintained in a neat and tidy manner. At the time of first adjudication there were no residential developments or housing estates in Gortaganny, these may appear at any time over the next few years and if not handled properly by the community could put you at a disadvantage. It is important than any new residents be integrated into the social life of the community and encouraged to participate in Tidy Towns.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Well done on your wonderful new nameplates. They stood proud and erect, they are clearly legible and presented to the highest standard. Roadside verges should be maintained neatly trimmed within the limits defined by the nameplates during the growing season but some were a little overgrown. Verges along approach roads can be allowed to grow that little bit longer, providing they are not causing a hazard to passing traffic or walkers and some communities like to keep the inside

of the verge displaying wildflowers with the outer roadside edge neatly trimmed. We note the inclusion in your plan of the maintenance of both hedgerow and roadside verges. Be vigilant regarding street furniture as it is added over the next few years, eg. litter bins, picnic tables, public seating, etc., as these must also be kept in a good state of repair and well painted.

General Impression:

Gortaganny is a pleasant village located close to a major amenity and at the time of adjudication it was obvious that the village can improve its standing substantially in the competition, particularly in respect of access to amenities. Thank you for your interest, we look forward to charting your progress over the next few years.

Second Round Adjudication: