

# Tidy Towns Competition 2008

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Geashill** Ref: **754**  
County: **Offaly** Mark: **283**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **08/06/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	45
The Built Environment	50	38
Landscaping	50	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	24
Litter Control	50	36
Waste Minimisation	20	13
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	36
General Impression	10	9
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>283</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Geashill Tidy Towns Committee would appear to have a large number of members given the village's size. We were pleased to hear that you have such a high level of support and aid from Offaly County Council and the local community generally. Group text messages sound like a good way of communicating local events and is a method that this adjudicator had not heard of being used before by a Tidy Towns Committee. The local school's litter control wardens sound like another excellent idea. Congratulations on your great achievements to date such as the Cherished Place award and the Tidiest Village in Offaly Award. Perhaps you could include your map with next year's application as there didn't appear to be either in one very large submission?

### **The Built Environment:**

Bryan's shop looked quite charming in a stone cottage on the green. The Post Office was quite fresh and the school looked well. Hamilton's was also quite fresh. Carruthers looked fine although its sign will need repainting before next year's competition and the adjacent pebble-dashed wall needs to be re-whitewashed. The High Chaparral was quite fresh. We were pleased to hear of the completion of the old school building. The picnic area stone walling is a project that will stand the test of time. The work on the Rev. Thomas Burbage monument is well worthwhile given its prominent location in the village. Plans for the Grotto were read with great interest and we wish you well in this regard. Promotion of the Irish language on the approach roads, Post Office, tree labels and signage is all to the good in this category of the competition.

### **Landscaping:**

The green area looked magnificent as usual with its low stone wall surround and flowerbeds planted at the crossroads. The grotto was being well maintained and all landscaped areas are generally most attractive. We were pleased to hear that the picnic area on the Portarlinton had been completed. It looked marvellous

on the day with its stone walling with castellated piers, maturing trees and well maintained street furniture. Maintenance of the mature lime trees is a marvellous initiative, as these are a marvellous asset to the village. Planting of new native trees is also a good idea and an asset for future generations. We were pleased to hear of your plans for the Glebe Walk. The lighting of the Village Green sounds like an interesting project – hopefully you are going to use energy efficient methods for this project. The attractive planted area by pump was also admired.

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

The maintenance and conservation of the hedgerows is a marvellous initiative and the whitethorn hedge on the Portarlington Road is a fine asset for the village-for its residents and visitors alike. The designation of the Glebe Walk as a wildflower and wildlife area was read of with interest and all of the native flowers and trees are a marvellous demonstration of the wealth of wildlife that we have in this country. The fact that you have labelled these in Irish as well as English and Latin is a wonderful idea. The local habitats of bird, insect and animal species are also a marvellous asset to have. The planting of native trees and hedgerows and the erection of information boards is also of great benefit in respect of this category of the competition.

### **Litter Control:**

Unfortunately some litter was evident at the picnic area on the Portarlington Road and along approach roads in places. The presence of litter is all the more prominent in a village of Geashill's size and vigilance is called for in this regard. We were pleased to read of the school's success in the Green Schools programme. Their programme for appointing the students as litter wardens is a very innovative and interesting scheme. The success of the woodlands area as a dump free zone is good to hear. The signage in respect of dog waste is a good idea and hopefully will prove a success as this is a distinct problem throughout the country. We were pleased to hear of the new recycling bin and your participation in the National Spring Clean programme. The presence of the litter warden must prove very effective. This particular adjudicator was pleased to hear of the banning of election and referendum posters, as these can give roadsides a very cluttered and messy appearance. The weekly motorised sweep of the village will hopefully prove effective.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

Signage for the recycling area is a good idea and we were pleased to hear of its erection. The Green Flag status of the school is a marvellous achievement. The new green bin for recyclables is a good initiative. The plans for composting bins is also a marvellous initiative. Have you looked into conducting workshops for local residents?

### **Tidiness:**

Some of the Perspex signage in the village is yellowing and we look forward to its replacement. Dead weeds were evident to kerbsides on one of the approach roads. Graffiti was also evident to the slow sign opposite the school. Resurfacing of the roadways will make a positive impact on the village's appearance as will new footpaths and cycle-ways. We were pleased to hear of your approach to signage by means of regular cleaning routine and of the lack of graffiti in the village.

### **Residential Areas:**

An attractive garden extending onto the roadside by the pump on the Portarlington Road was greatly admired. Castle Hill is an attractive house with a lovely garden. St. Oliver's Estate was fine. Ballydown is a new estate which had stone wall entrance and signage in place but the houses had yet to be constructed. In the same vicinity, the thatched cottage of Ballydown was greatly admired. Generally houses were in good condition although one or two boundary walls were a little patchy in appearance. The attractive houses opposite the High Chaparral are most charming. There was good planting noted to the modern houses nearby. Ard Riada Estate is well finished with good planting and attractive stone walling to the front. The creeper clad house at the green was also admired. The use of local and natural materials in the new Ard Riada estate such as timber, stone and brick is all to the good and we were pleased to hear that you managed to have a positive impact into its completion and appearance. The use of judicious planting of trees and shrubs is also a positive contribution. We were also pleased to hear of St. Oliver's Residents Association success regarding the stone entrance signage and improvements lottery.

### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Approach roads were generally most attractive. The village streets were generally well maintained. Some weeds were apparent at the Edenderry road. The Portarlington road is a magnificent approach to the village with its trees, high stone walls and well maintained stepped green areas. It sported some attractive new trees. Some of the signage was grubby, as was the nameplate on the Portarlington Road closer to the village. Honeysuckle and wild roses were evident in some hedgerows. Some of the road surfaces were not in good condition. Planting of new trees on the Portarlington, Ballinagar and Mountmellick Roads was read of with interest. The completion of the picnic area is marvellous to hear about, as was the planting of native

whitethorn hedgerow on the Tullamore Road. The resurfacing will make a great difference throughout the village.

**General Impression:**

It was a pleasure for the adjudicator to visit Geashill after a number of years and to see that the village is still being maintained to the highest standards and its residents still obviously care greatly about the village's appearance.