

# Tidy Towns Competition 2008

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Walsh Island** Ref: **292**  
County: **Offaly** Mark: **247**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **08/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	33
The Built Environment	50	31
Landscaping	50	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	19
Litter Control	50	39
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>247</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Walsh Island Development Group is welcome to the 2008 competition. Many thanks for your completed application form and clear map which were most useful on the day. You would appear to have a high level of community involvement at 80 %. We were pleased to hear that you are managing to get more and more people involved in your work, especially the youth of the village. Have you thought of putting together a work programme? This was also mentioned by last year's adjudicator in his/her report.

### **The Built Environment:**

The shop, Kavanaghs, looked very well although some of its signage seemed a little faded and should be replaced with traditional-style timber signage. The pub was fine although some of its signage also appeared to be a little dated. The church looked well as did the graveyard opposite. The school was quite fresh although the gate was in need of attention. The limestone forge is very charming and its retention is commendable. We were pleased to hear of the maintenance and improvement of the relic at Raheenakeeran, and look forward to the introduction of additional species of wildlife.

### **Landscaping:**

Is there a possibility of developing the old hand ball alley as a landscape project? The landscaped area at the crossroads was greatly admired although its bench should be washed down on a regular basis – it was quite grubby on the day.

The planting of mature trees in Parkers Hill and Island Lodge estates was a good initiative, as was the hedge planting at Moore's Cross and the wildflower seeding in a number of locations. We were pleased to hear of planned expansions of these initiatives.

**Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

We applaud the use of bird boxes and spreading of wildflower seeds. We look forward to seeing the results of your negotiations regarding public walking routes. Have you considered conducting a wildlife survey of the habitats in your locality?

**Litter Control:**

Some litter was evident at the crossroads at the bench where a bottle was spotted and a few papers were also noted opposite. Litter control is all the more important in a village of Walsh Island's size, as even one or two papers are all the more obvious. The signage to the recycling area should be washed down on a regular basis also. The litter bin at the shop was fine although that by the school should be replaced, as it appeared quite damaged. We were pleased to hear of your daily litter picks. The talks at local schools are well worthwhile and we were pleased to hear of the encouragement of the children to recycle. Have you considered encouraging the local school to participate in the green Flag Programme?

**Waste Minimisation:**

The programme for the collection of scrap metal seems like a well-worthwhile initiative. What other recycling programmes do you have?

**Tidiness:**

Some overgrown grass was evident growing at kerbs at the Tullamore Road and weeds were also evident at that location. Do be sure you screen industrial premises from public view, as they can look untidy. We were pleased to hear of your weed control measures. Do you use environmentally friendly products for this task? We were also pleased to hear that you discourage fly-posting as this practice can result in very untidy appearances to approach roads and streets.

**Residential Areas:**

There are many individual houses and estates in the village. The standard was a little inconsistent although was quite good for the most part. Estates seemed to keep their open areas extremely well and stone walling was particularly admired. New trees had been planted at Parkers Hill. In terms of individual houses, Rose Cottage was quite charming. The tree planting and wild seed sowing were interesting and successful initiatives. You would appear to have a good relationship with local estates in regard to ongoing advice and support. The proposal for new signage is a good idea.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Clean signage and a bench on the Edenderry Road were greatly admired where attractive stone beds with floral displays were also evident. Wild flowers and ferns were evident in the hedgerows. The "drive slowly" sign's pole was a little bit rusty. Road surfaces were not in the best of condition and you should approach Offaly County Council in this regard. We were pleased to hear of the ongoing maintenance of seating areas, the black well, the bog ewe sculpture and, in particular, the marking of unmarked graves, which all seem worthwhile endeavours.

**General Impression:**

Walsh Island was a pleasure to visit for the first time. It is a peaceful place despite its high residential population. The soft drone of small aircraft from the parachute club was the only noise to break the peace!