

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Glenties** Ref: **702**
County: **Donegal** Mark: **298**
Category: **C** Date(s): **01/07/2008**
22/07/2008

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	44
The Built Environment	50	36
Landscaping	50	42
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	28
Litter Control	50	41
Waste Minimisation	20	12
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	33
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	35
General Impression	10	9
TOTAL MARK	400	298

Overall Development Approach:

Glenties is welcome to the 2008 TidyTowns competition and your involvement over the past 50 years. Thank you for submission this year.

It was good to note the work you are undertaking with your school to coordinate clean ups, recycling and the planting of flower beds. It is very important to involve children in the projects not only from their education point of view, but also with the view that they are the future caretakers of Glenties.

We are also pleased to hear that you have a good relationship with the various community organisations and local businesses as partnerships do indeed allow for a more thorough approach to meeting your TidyTowns goals.

The Built Environment:

Glenties is an attractive town with many traditional shops in the main street.

The St Columba's Comprehensive school is an impressive building. The colours selected are strong, but their slightly darker tones added a maturity to the building whilst still keeping it appealing to the students that attend here. The surrounding stone walls and the well kept landscaping allowed the building to stay in keeping with the local area. The GAA field across the road was in immaculate condition.

The National School looked well kept. There was a rockery under construction on the day of adjudication and this will look good when completed.

Ard Connell featured attractive seating and landscaping. There were a few weeds on the tarmac which was a

pity as all other elements were presented well here.

It was good to see public toilets available and in a reasonable condition. The path leading to the toilets needs some resurfacing ideally.

The Community Centre looks bright, bold and inviting.
The Owenea fisheries Centre was well painted and maintained.

It was pleasing to see the old railway station has been restored and is being used. It looked well maintained from the road.

It was noted that the old hotel at the end of the main street is to be made into a shopping area. Hopefully this will be in keeping with the traditional tones of the town.

Landscaping:

Flowerbeds at the entrance to the GAA field and on the approach roads were well planted. The window boxes and hanging baskets in the town added colour and fit with the Glenties character.

We congratulate you on including the local school children to be involved in maintenance and flower planting.

The church was well landscaped but the car park itself was quite roughly surfaced.

The upkeep of the thatched cottage is a worthwhile endeavour to preserve the historic nature of the town.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Menenalargan Walk held lovely views and is a great place to escape to for a truly rural walk. It would be helpful for visitors to signpost the beginning and the end of the walk and also to include the distance. A further sign in town with a map showing the walk, information on distance and information on flora and fauna that could be accounted along the way would be very beneficial. Perhaps one of the local schools could do a project on the species that are located along the walk for this purpose.

The work you are doing to promote the walks in the area is very beneficial to both your residence and visitors to the area. We look forward to seeing more in this area.

The school garden project is a wonderful endeavour and we wish you well with it.

Litter Control:

We are pleased to hear that fly posting is banned and there was no evidence of it on the day of adjudication.

Your regular litter patrols also have been fruitful in keeping the town tidy especially considering that the town has quite a social nightlife area which can sometimes result in issues with takeaway containers and cigarette butts. On the day of adjudication there were some bits of litter, but this was minimal.

Waste Minimisation:

Congratulations to St Columba's Comprehensive school on its recent Green Flag accomplishment. Well done! The Waste awareness officer presenting talks at the school is a good enterprise.

It is good to hear that some of the estates have communal composting schemes. Perhaps there could be a town one available for those not in the estates? This could then be used on the flower beds in the area.

Tidiness:

The old school was tidy and it is noted that it will be used for the new health centre.

The old Health Centre was slightly down externally and could be brightened up with some paint and plantings. There was also some weed growth out the front. From your notes it appears that the Health Centre is relocating to the old school. Hopefully the old health centre may be used for another community purpose.

Residential Areas:

The older estates in the town are very well thought out. The green centre area of each of these estates contains seating, play equipment and sometimes a small bandstand. This is all very useful in creating a sense of community in the estate.

In the newer estates there were green areas, however there was no seating or play equipment. It would be good if these new estates also developed this practice. Future developments could be requested to include this as part of their development

The new development at Mountain Walk with its wooden doors and stone detailed houses fitted in well with the older houses in Glenties. All the new estates appeared to have stone features. The adjudicator was unsure if this was a planning request, but it is very beneficial to the town that new developments contain features like this so that they fit into the existing township.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The entry to the quarry looked well with the large stones featuring the length of the driveway and out onto the roadside.

The Station Road entrance sign was well planted with colourful roses.

It was very good to see that all the roads were signposted and this was definitely helpful in locating different places in the town.

The sign to "The Rock" needs to be repositioned as it appears the entrance to the estate was moved.

All entrances to Glenties were well maintained and well signed.

The new footpath leading up from the town is a good addition, but the area around it needs to have the grass cut back.

General Impression:

Glenties is an attractive town that has a traditional feel to it. It is important to retain that feel with appropriate new buildings as has been the case so far. It is also important to ensure new areas enjoy the same community spirit that is evident in the more mature estates.

Second Round Adjudication:

Pride in the village track record in the TidyTowns Competition is evident from reading the Glenties submission. From the time one arrives into the village itself one is reminded of those heady days. The present committee is doing its utmost to maintain the proud achievements of the past despite what is seen as many difficult challenges. There is a plaintive tone to your submission which suggests that you feel aggrieved with the nature of the challenges your committee faces and feel isolated by the agencies that might support your projects. At the same time one sees the fruit of your labours in the wonderful work being carried out on landscaping and in the development of the town park at present. Adequate funding seems to be a major issue for your committee. The support of your business community is vital. Your success in the past seems to have been achieved through your voluntary effort and this may be the only recipe for further success. It was heartening to meet two ladies, in the middle of a wet day, out picking up litter in their high visibility vests. Surely this represents the true value of involvement in the TidyTowns Competition. Congratulations to Ard McGill Estate on their wonderful coup in 2007 in winning the national landscape award. The estate that beats them this year will earn their spurs as the area is a joyous wonderland. The approach roads are the first signal that Glenties is a special village. The roads are well maintained and manicured, with the major exception of one minor road and this is a massive challenge to your committee. On arrival from the Donegal side one is greeted by a series of period buildings, all beautifully presented and welcoming. The appearance of the Community Centre is an expression of the pride of this community. Is there a more welcoming Garda Barracks in the country. A feature of the streetscape is the way residences which were once business still keep the name over the door and add to the interest of the street. The village lamps are another attractive feature of the street. Throughout the village the various hostelrys compete with one another to attract the eye of the passer by. One wonders is the attractive appearance an invitation to drop in or is it their way of showing support for the TidyTowns! Either way they embellish their surroundings. The same can be said of the various B/B establishments throughout. Signage for the Bluestack Way and Meenahalla beckons one to stay and sample the delights of the area but the finger signposts are in need of renewal. The adjudicator took to the country path to find the waterfall but failed to experience same. Then suddenly there were no more signs for the waterfall. Apart from the road to the GAA, already referred to, the major disappointment in Glenties was the Church surroundings. The highlight was the sight of the two ladies. Sorry Ard McGill. Those ladies embodied the true spirit of TidyTowns.

Glenties is still a delightful experience. This adjudicator would encourage you to keep your submission more concise, including material that is relevant to the various sections of this competition.