

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Raheny** Ref: **176**
County: **Dublin(City)** Mark: **257**
Category: **E** Date(s): **11/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	41
The Built Environment	50	31
Landscaping	50	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	26
Litter Control	50	30
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	31
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	257

Overall Development Approach:

Raheny is welcome to the 2009 National TidyTowns competition. Thank you for your comprehensive submission with support material and photographs which facilitated adjudication. Your plan outlining your short and long term goals was very informative. The number of meetings and consultations held between your group and other stakeholders in the development of Raheny was impressive and is an effective way to ensure a rounded approach to the future development of your village. In particular the interaction with the schools and sports groups was to be applauded. Well done in enlisting the young GAA players for your cleaning 'Blitz'. Encouraging regular interaction with youth groups is an effective way to educate and involve the younger members of your community in your activities. Thank you for the map provided, however the northern boundary of your area was missing off the map. So next year a map outlining the full extent of your area should be provided.

The Built Environment:

Raheny is a lovely urban village in the midst of the city and manages to retain a real village feel with a central commercial area and surrounding streets, many containing historical buildings and sites which illustrate the history of the area. We were very interested in the proposal for the redevelopment of the St Assams site. The successful redevelopment of such a key historic landmark in the centre of the village will be such an asset for you all. It is great to see an old building given a secure future and the images provided of the new interventions show a sensitive approach to its redevelopment. As part of the redevelopment maybe thought should be given to a community notice board or dedicated sign location to regularize the array of community notices attached to the church railings at present? These are an important element of informing the community of events in the area but thought could be given to maintaining a more ordered approach as to where the notices are displayed? Maintaining a tidy site in the centre of the village during the redevelopment work will also be a challenge.

The works on the Our Lady Mother of Divine Grace church and tower were in progress at the time of adjudication and the results of these works will add to the quality of the village presentation for next years adjudication. The temporary Credit Union facility in the church car park can be softened with temporary planters and the grass areas surrounding it and the adjacent car parking should be tidied up.

The range of historic building in the village were admired many with their discreet blue heritage signs. In particular the premises along Main Street stood out for mention with the newly painted and well maintained restaurant in the old Charity School and the neatly clipped planting to the front of the gym building adding greatly to the sense of a well looked after street. The grounds of the Health Centre at the junction of Watermill Road needs to be kept clear of weeds as this detracts somewhat of the impression of the street as it is approached from the east.

Your 'schools zone' along Watermill Road and All Saints Drive was well maintained and well done on all your schools on their continued involvement in the Green Schools Project.

We note with interest the planned Hilltop development as the site is in such a prominent position that it can be developed and planted in such a way as to become a real landmark with perhaps a suitable mature specimen tree planted in the landscape area to the road front.

Landscaping:

The floral displays around the village were well presented from the shops to the sports clubs. The display at the AIB building suffered somewhat from comparison with the adjoining colourful display in the Raheny Shopping Centre. Perhaps a co-ordinated approach to planting styles and colours could be considered for next seasons display.

The proximity to St Annes Park is a real asset for your community and the mature trees create a wonderful backdrop for the area. The ongoing consultation between your group and the Parks Department is a great way to keep contribute to the development of the park. Some of the street trees on the Howth Road and in some of the surrounding residential areas showed signs of suckering. This is growth from the base of the tree and suckers should be removed as in time they will sap the energy away from the healthier and more desirable branches on top.

The groups of mature trees at the entrance to the car park at the junction of the Howth Road and the Waterville Road are a real asset for your village setting. Ensure that adequate tree protection is in place before any redevelopment work to the village centre commences. In the short term as these works seem to have been stalled the ground beneath the trees was somewhat untidy in comparison to the neatly painted estate railing surrounding it. Perhaps the ground could be sown with wildflower seeds to create a real wildlife refuge or alternatively the canopies of the trees could be raised to allow light to a properly mown lawn area beneath.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Well done on your work in this area. The Biodiversity plan mentioned in your submission is a great basis to develop a thought out strategy to improve and enhance the variety of habitat types that you are lucky enough to have on your doorstep. You are fortunate to have a member of Birdwatch Ireland as part of your group and the information provided on the numbers of bird species in your area can provide a valuable record as to how your environs are being developed to maintain and encourage wildlife. It would be useful to record on a map where sightings of birds and mammals have been made during the year, especially of rare and endangered species such as the red squirrel. This can be used as a basis to both protect and enhance known habitat locations. The redevelopment of the river will be an opportunity to enhance another significant habitat. Your contact with the professional personnel at Dublin City Council as well as groups such as Birdwatch Ireland should ensure all development is carried out for maximum protection and enhancement. In particular invasive species such as hogweed which was noted along the river bank needs to be controlled to allow native species establish for maximum diversity.

Litter Control:

Overall litter control was quite good in Raheny on the day of adjudication. The Bring Centre to the rear of the library was free of general litter however a number of bags with clothing had been placed at the base of the clothing bin. The bin was full so perhaps this collection service needs to be increased in frequency to prevent this happening? Some litter was noticed around the shops at Raheny Shopping Centre. And a wind trap at the garage premise at the Howth Road row of shops needs to be monitored as litter was accumulating here.

The area around the bookmakers and pizza restaurant at Main Street was suffering from an accumulation of

cigarette butts. As this was the only visible litter in an otherwise clean street maybe you should look to target this specific problem. An ash tray was attached to the wall of the Bookmakers but perhaps one should also be fitted to the restaurant area. Or perhaps the shop owners could be encouraged to regularly sweep the curtilage of their premises to ensure the butts do not accumulate.

There was some litter in the river which can be seen from the delightful viewing areas on the bridge. You note in your development plan that the cleaning and upgrading of the Santry River is part of your short term objectives. Hopefully as the development of your riverside walk proposal advances, one of your longer term objectives, the river can become a real asset to the Village. The forecourt of the Dart station and bridge were litter free and the litter noticed in this area last year was absent however litter was a problem in the laneway leading to Lough Derg Road to the north of the station, with litter and drinks cans accumulating in the drainage channel along the lane. These back lanes can offer their own challenges as they are not overlooked and may need additional monitoring.

The adjoining residential areas and roads were generally free of litter, well maintained and well presented.

Waste Minimisation:

The recycling centres are an important element of the communities waste minimisation efforts and the centres in Raheny were well used on the day of adjudication. As noted previously there were some bags dumped by the clothes bank by the library and it might be worth noting how often bins are being emptied. If there are any particular bins which are becoming fuller than others a change in the frequency of collection may be considered. This in itself can be a clear indication that waste in the community is being recycled at a faster pace and your waste minimisation strategies are bearing fruit.

In addition to recycling, consideration should be given to reducing waste generated and reusing items. This is where composting can be encouraged and the establishing of a composting bin and its education in schools is a good start. Have you considered the setting up of bring sales to promote the re use of goods. It can be a useful way for groups to raise money as well as passing unused goods on to new owners. This may be already happening in your community and should be noted and included in your submission for next year. Talk to your local business to see if they are members of Repak and how they tackle their waste and if any new initiatives can be encouraged. This can all be included in your submission and will add to marks in this category.

Tidiness:

Unfortunately as the Main Street and village centre project has been postponed you may need to wait a little longer to get the cables in the main street underground. However for an Urban Village of its size it is remarkable tidy.

Well done on the Graffiti project run with local businesses and the City Council. Small amounts of graffiti were noticed on the stone cladding to the dart bridge which detracted from the beautiful stone work and the splash of colour provided by the planters on the bridge. Some graffiti was also noticed on the gable wall of the CARA Hall on All Saints Road and on the seating area by the river opposite the AIB. It is important to try to clean up graffiti as soon as it appears as this is shown to be the most effective way to prevent further accumulation.

The surrounding roads and residential areas were very tidy. Indeed on the day of adjudication two of your members were busy removing weeds along the Howth Road and at the entrance to the Avondale Park/Maywood residential areas. In their Raheny Tidy Village high visibility vests they were a great promotion for your works and well done to them and all your volunteers and residents who contribute to the overall positive presentation of Raheny

Residential Areas:

Generally the residential areas were well maintained and well done on your efforts to ensure all proposed landscape work to new developments is carried out as per their planning permissions and completed satisfactorily. The hoarding to the development at the Shieling Hotel grounds was well maintained and should continue to be maintained for as long as the site is awaiting completion.

The co-ordinated approach to signage at the entrances to the various residential areas works well. One area that would benefit from a new sign is the entrance to the Foxfield and Greendale areas at the junction with the Howth Road and the Greendale Road. The existing signs here are poor in comparison to other estate entry points.

Thank you for your photographs of the impressive display of spring bulbs at the tree lined approach to

Maywood. This enmasse planting style gives a really bold impact and where space allows is much more effective than piecemeal floral displays.

We look forward to the long term aim of upgrading the forecourt of the crescent cottages in the village centre and hope a sensitive approach is planned to enhance this residential set piece.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road and footpaths were generally in good condition and congratulations for maintaining your standards in this category. The disruption due to the refurbishment of the Church and the temporary Credit Union cabin within the church car park will mean these areas will be a state of flux for a time. The temporary condition needs to be well maintained until a final scheme for the area can be implemented.

General Impression:

Raheny is a very attractive urban village with an obvious pride in how it's residents and businesses present themselves. While many of the categories are receiving high marks there are areas where even higher marks can be achieved such as in your waste minimisation strategies. While larger interventions such as the upgrading of the Main Street / Howth Road may have been postponed you have outlined a number of projects such as the redevelopment of St Assams Church which will continue to add to and improve your village and its setting. Other underutilised elements in the village such as the Santry River need to be focused on to add yet more value and variety to your area. Well done on all your efforts to date and we look forward to the future works of your group bearing fruition.