

# Tidy Towns Competition 2011

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Aughrim** Ref: **257**  
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **303**  
Category: **C** Date(s): **07/06/2011**  
**28/07/2011**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2010</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2011</b>
Overall Development Approach	50	45	45
The Built Environment	50	39	39
Landscaping	50	40	40
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30	30
Litter Control	50	37	37
Waste Minimisation	20	10	11
Tidiness	30	24	24
Residential Areas	40	31	31
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	37	37
General Impression	10	9	9
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>303</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the 2011 TidyTowns competition. Your participation is important to the TidyTowns movement. Thank you for the filled out entry form and three year plan 2011 to 2013 period, and thanks also for provision of a map this year. With respect the map could be more explicit to enable the adjudicator to find the different places of interest. The photos "tell the story" of the positioning of the bat boxes, and the shredding for composting – a positive initiative. You have a good sized committee of 23, and the monthly meetings ensure continuity of schemes. Good progress is assured by your contacts with Wicklow County Council, Fás, County Wicklow Partnerships and Aughrim Business Association. The people of Aughrim are well aware of your plans and activities through your website, posters, local newspapers and public meetings. Schools play a vital role in the community, and your work with them will pay dividends in the long run. We are pleased to learn that you find participation in the competition to be a very positive experience. Festivals play an active role in getting the people of a locality to meet and get to know each other, and good luck with your events in the last week of July and first week of August. All of above means you have a great approach to the competition.

### The Built Environment:

All the local businesses are maintained in great condition, and the business people are certainly at one with your committee to present Aughrim at its best. In a tour of the town I was most impressed with the two churches which are maintained in supreme condition. These cut stone structures are notable features in the town and all concerned with their upkeep are heartily congratulated. The school was equally impressive in its own way, with nice rowan trees, shrubs and lawns. The 1798 memorial has its own distinctive flavour, and is a testament to a bygone day. A lot of the buildings hosts some fine architectural qualities, and make Aughrim a pleasant place to visit.

**Landscaping:**

There are splendid displays of landscaping all over Aughrim, and this gives a distinctive flavour, and shows what can be achieved with energy and leadership qualities. The landscaping and general appearance of the park and lake are supreme and the splendour of which would rival most similar amenities in Ireland. I admired the new small children's playground, a fine facility. The long wall outside the GAA pitch is well festooned with climbing plants bolstered by some attractive young trees. The landscaping at all the bridges makes them picturesque places. It is a great effort to maintain the grass areas in the park and indeed all over the town in such fine condition. I admired some good shrubs outside Woodside timber. There were a number of planters and tubs for flowers left empty in some locations, but some nice bedding plants were on display at Cappagh nurseries. The traditional water pump near the funeral home is nicely preserved, and other water pumps were admired. Great stretches of beech hedging are eye-catching.

**Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

Fishing is very well catered for in Aughrim, and the notice board "Angling for All" is appropriate, and here we find good information on the sponsors of the TidyTowns activities. It great to see the trees planted in this area complimenting the fine stock of mature trees, and this gives wonderful cover for the wildlife as well as providing food for them. I saw the pictures of the bird boxes being transferred across to the opposite side of the lake. The walk through the trees and beside the river is a truly great facility for locals and tourists alike and such walks are becoming very important amenities.

**Litter Control:**

The litter patrols are keeping you well on top of this ongoing problem in Ireland, I saw a number of Fás workers keeping the town in good shape. I note you plan to promote litter awareness by having an art competition in the school. Do you participate in the National Spring clean-up?

**Waste Minimisation:**

The thrift shop is a good way of recycling material. The provision of the shredder is an excellent means of recycling in the area, well done. I saw the recycled material – very good. You have a good approach to the waste issue with the motto of reduce, reuse and recycle. With the children up to date on best practice in regard to the local environment through their participation in the green flag programme your community attitude to waste will be more focussed.

**Tidiness:**

Generally speaking Aughrim was presented in good condition, and streets and footpaths were tidy. The splendid stone walls looked clean and fresh. On the Arklow road coming into the town there is a disused petrol station, with the windows broken in the small office, and it could be tidied up, but I realise this is private property. I notice you are keeping a close watch on dereliction and you have made great progress in this in recent years. Some isolated pockets of cigarette ends were to be seen on the main street, and around the recycling depot near the school was a bit untidy and could benefit from a good sweeping. A rusted galvanised roof in this area is noticeable.

**Residential Areas:**

There is a splendid mix of private houses all around the town of various sizes and shapes, and all are very well maintained, with a distinct pride of place attitude. Some are quite spectacular with impressive stone work and large gardens and lawns. There are also some attractive town houses and good examples of this are the ones across the road from the park. The housing estates are very well maintained with arrays of neat green spaces where the grass is manicured nicely.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Some of the verges contained splashes of wildflowers that have their own particular beauty with varying colours. The traffic calming measures (ramps) are controlling the speed of the motorists around the town. The road surfaces are excellent. I admired the bridges and they are nice features, and I saw the work done at Tinakilly bridge. All the signposts were clean and distinct.

**General Impression:**

It was a delight to visit this special town, which continues to be kept at a very high standard. I congratulate you on your past achievements and wish you lots of success in the future. A great effort

**Second Round Adjudication:**

Your 2nd Round adjudicator had not visited Aughrim for a few years and was very pleased to have the opportunity of revisiting your attractive village. On the main road approach from Arklow / Carnew the well presented grass verge areas set up great expectations of the village itself. To a great extent these expectations were met in full during a careful examination of Aughrim. However it was quite disappointing to see that there was a litter issue in a few areas. Quite a lot of litter by Aughrim standards was seen at the three garages with the roller shutters on the back lane. Again littering was evident along the grass verge area by the GAA property. On this road a quite untidy small laneway area behind locked black gates was a little surprising given the high standards that you constantly pursue. Many buildings in Aughrim stand out for different reasons. The many buildings that appeared to have been repainted recently caught the eye as did the Granite Church of Ireland Church. This beautiful building is a little unusual in that it does not have a traditional bell tower. Wicklow Granite plays a large role in Tidy Towns in Aughrim. The unusual Granite posts for the wire fencing on the Macredin road caught the eye as did the excellent use of Granite stone troughs for colourful landscaping purposes. Landscaping is one of your very strong areas in Aughrim and your high mark this year is well deserved. Do however make however sure that artificial landscaping does not tend to overpower the village. The old garage remains a problem area and it is suggested that this is screened if possible from public view. Some corrugated iron rooves near the Church of Ireland and at the river bridge would be improved if painted. Do watch out for advertising signage on the pavement that was note on the Main Street. This can cause problems for the disabled. Signage clutter in the centre of the village needs some rationalisation if possible and the timber flower containers here needed to be treated. The old Forge area is just one of the really well presented areas in Aughrim and the needs of wildlife here have been well accommodated. The Park and lake area is a joy to visit and was being well used on the morning of the visit. Two steel lids (?) were noted lying against the wall on the right inside the entrance. The map provided for adjudication seemed to be a little distorted and it is suggested that the Tidy Towns Plan uses the ten adjudication categories as a template. The issues raised at 2nd Round adjudication are not in any way raised in a critical way. The points detailed above have been pointed out so that they can perhaps be incorporated in the next review of your Tidy Towns Plan. It was a great pleasure to revisit Aughrim.