

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Garryowen** Ref: **2113**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **196**
Category: **D** Date(s): **26/06/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	0	23
The Built Environment	50	0	27
Landscaping	50	0	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	0	15
Litter Control	50	0	29
Tidiness	30	0	19
Waste Minimisation	20	0	5
Residential Areas	40	0	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	0	20
General Impression	10	0	5
TOTAL MARK	400	0	196

Overall Development Approach:

Garryowen is most welcome to the SuperValu National 2012 TidyTowns competition. We are delighted that you have taken this step and hope that it will help to galvanise community spirit. Yours is an old neighbourhood of Limerick city and unfortunately you did not include a map in your application. This was unfortunate as the adjudicator does not know the boundary of your area or the location of projects upon which you have been working. Please include a hand drawn map showing the main landmarks of Garryowen and the areas you have been working on next year.

You have 12 on your committee and this is a good start. You will need to build up general awareness of your group and so communication is vital. You have been using a range of tools but you do not mention e-mail or Facebook. This can cut down on paper waste. Facebook is especially useful for advertising events, uploading photos and attracting new members. Nothing can beat face-to-face human contact however so you should arrange door-to-door meetings as well. You have started a liaison with Limerick city council and this has already borne fruit. What about contacting local businesses, sporting clubs and social groups? Is not Garryowen well known for its rugby team? It is wonderful that you have also made contact with your local school. Are they involved in the green flag program? This is a most important initiative so please do let us know.

You have made a good start in the contest but tidy towns is a marathon, as opposed to a sprint, and one that has no finish line! To bring your activities together you should prepare a three-year plan. Details of how to do this can be found in the tidytowns Handbook and you are urged to refer to this. It is full of useful information on how to progress under each of the headings.

The Built Environment:

Well done for sandblasting statues and restoring shrines. Your emphasis on the older generation shows a level of inclusiveness that goes to the heart of what tidy towns is all about - well done! Scoil Eoin is a

sensitively designed modern building that nicely complements the roof of the nearby Cathedral. The Greyhound dog stadium creates an imposing, grey exterior that is rather unpleasant. Is it still in use? A derelict building and site on East Singland road requires attention.

Landscaping:

The vast open green areas of Garryowen were well-kept but are lacking in terms of visual quality. The use of only one or two types of non-native tree (e.g. Sycamore) lends a monotonous dark shade of green to these areas, although definitely better than no trees at all! More trees, with different species, would provide a range of shades and colours that would ultimately be more attractive to the eye. New landscaping beds at the entrance to the estate were noted however the plants used here are really too small to have any real effect. Try using larger, perennial shrubs, e.g. look at the effect of the nearby (native) Elder which provides an effective screening this location.

The Marian shrine is tidy but grass and shrubs need to be trimmed back while the metal boundary would benefit from a coat of paint.

Planting at the base of pylons was noticed but again something much bigger is needed to screen these unsightly towers and ideally they would be removed altogether. There does not seem to be any playground for the children, surely a spot could be identified within the open space, for what is a standard feature in Ireland these days.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

This category is designed to encourage communities to greater appreciate their natural heritage. Urban areas can be home to a range of habitats, especially in parks and gardens, that can attract a range of plants and animals. These can be encouraged given the right level of shelter and food. Why not set aside some of the large green areas in Garryowen for a wildlife reserve? This can be done by planting native trees e.g. Rowan, Birch, Alder, cherry, whitebeam, and shrubs, Blackthorn, gorse, hawthorn, and avoiding the use of sprays. When they are higher than the grass you can just leave them be. Encourage the school by surveying the area during the summer and teach students the names of our native trees. This would be a simple project with minimal costs and maintenance required.

Litter Control:

Do give full details of the anti-litter projects that were run with the local youth groups. Do you take part in the national spring clean? This is a great event, run by An Taisce in April, and can be a focal point for getting new people out. Do you carry out regular litter patrols? Do try to get high viz vests for your volunteers and wear them when doing work. This provides good promotion for your group. Litter control was generally quite good on adjudication day. Some bottles, wrappers etc had gathered along the earth mound bordering the playing pitches. Your efforts to control dog fouling in association with the Limerick City Council campaign are noted and applauded.

Tidiness:

You removed some historic dumping and list removal of graffiti on your projects. This is excellent work! The estate is generally tidy with well-trimmed verges and graffiti under control. The pylons going through the middle are quite ugly, could you approach the ESB to see if they would put these underground? Signage is in good order but a headless lamp pole near the Marian shrine should be taken down. Some graffiti on ESB substations needs attention. Generally however the estate is kept very neat and tidy.

Waste Minimisation:

Your skip hire day clearly addressed one problem but perhaps was not ideal given the requirements of the category. Bulky items in working condition can find new owners using the freetradeireland.ie website. Your group could help those without computer access arrange this. Scrap metal could be sold for reuse to raise funds for your group. Waste wood could be made into bird boxes or raised beds for landscaping features. Collecting half used tins of paint could provide enough to paint a wall or mural. White goods and hazardous waste can be disposed of for free through your local municipal recycling facility.

If your school has a green flag they will have addressed waste minimisation in a comprehensive way. You could learn much from the projects they have undertaken. If they don't have a green flag they should be encouraged to take part.

Residential Areas:

Well done to your local paint shop for offering a discount for residents wanting to paint their homes. Did many people take up the offer? Within the residential areas attractive bilingual street nameplates were admired and these are of conservation value.

Homes throughout Garryowen are generally maintained to a high standard and a number of attractive gardens where admired. The cottages along Fairview Terrace are beautiful features that add real character to this part of the city.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Deciding where Garryowen begins and ends can be challenging. Why not put up some welcome signs on approach roads? This would help confer a sense of neighbourhood identity. Garryowen Stores is really the only identifying sign for visitors. Signs should be bilingual and could be distinctive in a way that shows how Garryowen is different from everywhere else. The entrance to the main estate, across from the Greyhound Stadium, has no name plaque and is therefore somehow without identity.

General Impression:

We are delighted that Garryowen has chosen to take part in the tidy towns and you have made a fantastic first entry, well done! It is hoped you can build on this with a range of projects under all headings for 2013. We look forward to visiting again to admire the progress best of luck!