

# Tidy Towns Competition 2013

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Gorthaganny** Ref: **316**  
County: **Roscommon** Mark: **237**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **03/06/2013**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2012</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2013</b>
Overall Development Approach	50	35	36
The Built Environment	50	32	32
Landscaping	50	28	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	31	32
Litter Control	50	28	30
Sustainable Waste And Resource Management	20	7	6
Tidiness	30	16	17
Residential Areas	40	21	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	27	28
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>237</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

Your adjudicator would like to thank you for the good weather you arranged at the time of your adjudicator's visit which was a great improvement apparently in the weather experienced by Minister Ring when he visited exactly a year earlier!

Firstly we would like to congratulate Gorthaganny National School on gaining its first green flag. Liaison between the TidyTowns committee and the school's green flag committee is recommended to allow for input into the strategic planning of the committee. Your sustained effort to tell your community of your activities through your website and newsletter is to be highly commended. Also well done on your sustained work in applying for grants for work and even completing the TidyTowns entry form. A lot of work has gone into this and the provision of the hand drawn map so your efforts should be applauded. Often the fact that committees are volunteers is overlooked!

You have provided a three year plan and normally these would build on the actions of the previous year. Whilst they do not have to be prepared professionally it is recommended that you review this especially in line with the 10 judging categories of the competition. (Eg. You could carry out a litter survey which will highlight where and when and the type of litter found – the green schools committee could do this for the community possibly?).

### The Built Environment:

The Errit Lake and clubhouse was open and busy with swimmers and kayakers which was great to see that such a great facility was busy. What is the long-term landscaping plan for this area as the car park and countless bollards? This natural setting would really lend itself to enhancement here. The School, Community Centre and Church all were very well presented though your adjudicator felt that all of these structures could be enhanced through softening of the boundary walls with growing of plants eg. honeysuckle (see landscaping and wildlife sections). Perhaps a willow sculpture could be planted along the edge of the school playing field as this would suit the damp conditions here as well as adding some greenery to the area? Buildings near to the school had been freshly whitewashed and shone on the day of adjudication!

It was good to see you have your very own Coney Island Inn in Roscommon! This was well presented but some planters or raised kerb beds may help break-up the large expanse of car park.

Thank you for removing any distractions from the Dermot Earley monument as the quality of the stone and metal

here paid a fitting tribute for an honourable man who only had 10 days of retirement. The house on the approach road to Errit lodge badly needs to be boarded up or equivalent. This is an eye sore on the road down to a lovely amenity.

### **Landscaping:**

Minimal landscaping is pertinent in the rural setting of Gorthaganny as is the use of native hedging and trees. The national direction of tidy towns is towards sustainable planting and provision of year-round structure in landscaping. It was felt that the road to the church was very bare despite the number of planted beds here. But in pockets through Gorthaganny there are large mature native trees that enhance the area greatly. Perhaps thus some trees could be planted behind the safety barriers on this road, or behind the field fencing on the other side of the Church? The shrubs planted to the edge of the cemetery were nice to see. It would be worth considering where else in the community you could plant more such as honeysuckle on the south facing walls of the new clubhouse or ivy and other climbing plants could be trained along the concrete fencing at the side of the clubhouse.

The name signs at the cross roads are lovely and were admired. The plastic planter here though does not add anything here. Perhaps some daffodils bulbs or other could be planted here in the ground by the name sign that would provide a more natural enhancement to the sign? You say in your entry form that flowers are to be planted here, so hopefully this will be in the ground rather than in the container here.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The bog walk information sign provided some good information. How long is this walk and is a circular or linear? This may help eg. Families decide on whether or not to enjoy this route. Your adjudicator would recommend you organise a number of guided walks (or bog safaris), especially during Heritage Week, to provide raise awareness of the wildlife here. The provision of a turning circle may also benefit here as mentioned by last year's adjudicator.

Your 3-year plan talks of introducing biodiversity. It is recommended you enhance the current natural areas with appropriate planting of native species, and erection of eg. Bird boxes to provide habitats. As there used to be a bat colony here it is assumed that the large white structure at the back of the car park is a manmade bat roost? Perhaps you can organise some evening Summer bat walks or erect some pictures of bats here? Or at least provide some explanation here as to the reasons for this structure. You could run a series of bat walks in and around the Errit Lodge. One of the most common bat species in Ireland is the pipistrelle bat and each of these mammals will eat 3000 midges per night! Actions to raise awareness of the natural heritage and enhance it through planting of native hedges would naturally increase the biodiversity of Gorthaganny.

### **Litter Control:**

It was good to see that you are working closely with Roscommon County Council on initiatives eg the 'anti-litter road project'. Perhaps the provision of segregated litter bins at the Lough shore would benefit here or even signs encouraging users to bring their litter home? You talk of the problems with antisocial behaviour here – perhaps there is a youth club or group with whom you could work with on certain policies here?

### **Sustainable Waste And Resource Management:**

You simply refer here to litter picks – is the litter segregated? Do you run any workshops on recycling and waste management? An allotment area was noticed – do you have a gardening club as all of these are examples of activities and event that would gain you points in this aspect of the competition, and could be detailed in your strategic plan.

### **Tidiness:**

The community looked very tidy so your hard work in removing temporary signs and cleaning signs etc was noted. Your proposal to have all community groups not erect flyers should work well for your community as you have a website and newsletter already.

### **Residential Areas:**

Homes were well cared for, in particular all the homes along the pump-house road.

### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Main roads signs appeared clean but the older 'gorthaganny' sign on the bog road is battered and needs replacing. The wire fencing at the cross roads looks very bleak and it is recommended that a native hedge be considered as part of the long-term planting for the community. Further out the road towards the pump house, the roads were very attractive with cow parsley and ferns along the verges.

### **General Impression:**

Gorthaganny has an active progressive committee that gets local funding for schemes and initiatives such as the great facilities at Errit Lake Shore and organises a range of activities and events such as The Gathering initiatives. You have provided some lovely amenities for your community – and continue to do so, well done!

