

# Tidy Towns Competition 2013

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Coolaney** Ref: **680**  
County: **Sligo** Mark: **296**  
Category: **C** Date(s): **22/06/2013**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2012</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2013</b>
Overall Development Approach	50	42	43
The Built Environment	50	35	35
Landscaping	50	40	40
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	31	32
Litter Control	50	39	39
Sustainable Waste And Resource Management	20	12	14
Tidiness	30	20	21
Residential Areas	40	28	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	35	35
General Impression	10	8	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>296</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

Welcome Coolaney - Rockfield TidyTowns to the Supervalu TidyTowns Competition 2013. Thank you for your application, it was very comprehensive yet easy to follow and succinctly outlined your work programmes. Your map was excellent and useful on adjudication day. Your approach to this competition is very professional, we particularly like your Newsletter and new website, and how you are apt at communicating and liaising with the local community and other stakeholders. We really like that you have TidyTowns suggestion boxes in local shops and also ask for feedback via the Newsletters. It comes as no surprise that you have an active committee and large group of volunteers supporting your work programmes and initiatives. Communication with the School is excellent via the School Liaison Officer and the Junior TidyTowns Group. In summary, your group are doing great work, creating obvious pride of place and a real sense of community spirit in the village of Coolaney/Rockfield. Keep up the excellent work.

### The Built Environment:

You are to be commended for the presentation of the key community buildings in the town. Congratulations on the recent renovations of Coolaney Community Centre, we were pleased to see the bilingual sign and the wonderful fresh appearance of this traditional building. It is evident that the building at the Community Park has a fresh coat of paint and looks bright and clean. The same comments apply for the Primary Care Centre. Little Haven Community Childcare Centre is yet another example of fine presentation in your town. At Rockfield, we visited Scoil Criost Ri and noted the new school extension here and the school's biodiversity garden. The Mountain Inn, Parochial House and St. Josephs Church were all well presented also. Many, if not all the premises and properties on the Main Street look very well. Thomas Keane's Cabinet and Kitchen Makers premises is a gem and we thought that PK Meats and JJ O'Grady's also deserve praise for good presentation. Only a small few premises would benefit from a fresh coat of paint, perhaps encourage the Chinese Takeaway, and the building next door to get onboard for next year. There are only a handful of derelict properties that now need tackling and you are well aware of these. Your treatment of the Health Centre building is to be commended and the white hoarding is clean and pleasing on the eye. The work to the derelict railway cottage was noted. It is a pity that the ground floor level of the Town Centre building is vacant but your hard work on this development has been noted this year.

### Landscaping:

Millennium Park is an excellent well maintained amenity. In your Wildflower Garden you need not routinely cut all of the grass, perhaps cut a strip bordering the pathway, and your bed along the perimeter along the wall, and leave the rest to mature. Wildflower meadows need routine care and maintenance. We noted that you have improved the area around the Coolaney welcome sign near Wood Stream; this will look well once the box-leaved honeysuckle mature. Planting flowers/shrubs at the base of trees near the water feature and in other areas is not to be advised. Adjudicators advise against this as the plants compete with three roots for food and water. Planting was admired on the rockery and around the vicinity of Little Haven as was the landscaped bed at the Bridge on the Colloney Road, they are very attractive. The sculpted leaves that can be used as seating on the River Walk were admired.

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

Unfortunately, we did not see the insect hotel at Community Park; you must not have got time to construct this prior to our visit. Perhaps the adjudicator next year can look out for this. It is heartening that you engage with the local youth via the treasure hunt and nature walk during the annual summer festival. This is a fun way of educating them about their environment. Please follow the sound advice given by the Biodiversity Officer and the National Parks and Wildlife in relation to Japanese Knotweed. Japanese knotweed is not an easy plant to control; the extensive underground rhizome system sustains the plant even when top growth is removed. The aim of any control programme should be to target the rhizomes. This is best achieved using a chemical treatment such as a suitable herbicide. The adjudicator has seen previous control success, which has required at least three herbicide applications per year for a duration of three years. You will need to persevere with this. The bee logs on trees along the River walk were noted. We saw that trees had been cut along the Mill Race and branches have not been removed. These should be removed as not only is it untidy looking but it is interfering with the natural eco-system and hindering the water flow of the Mill Race, but we understand that this may be private property. Commissioning a more up to date survey of the wildlife and habitats in your area will be useful for you in further progressing in this section of the competition well done.

### **Litter Control:**

We note that you carry out your litter patrol each Saturday and have extended it to Sundays also during the summer. We liked that you use the Town Centre building to promote the entrants to your poster competition. Litter control was good on adjudication day however, we did see some recently dropped litter along the River Walk.

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

You have addressed this category well and we are pleased to see that you are updating your existing plan to incorporate the recent changes to this category to include other resources such as energy and water. Disseminating information and raising greater awareness amongst the community of sustainable resource management is important. You are using your website well and Facebook page in promoting this category. All links and initiatives mentioned on your website help to raise awareness of greater resource management. Monitoring the impact of these actions or yours where possible, would be useful, perhaps you can tell how many visits your Sustainable Waste and Resources Management page gets on your website or how many likes your waste and resource management related updates on your Facebook page receives, for example. A little suggestion - Your adjudicator thought that perhaps this could be one on the main headings on your website rather than a subheading of the 'More' tab. We would also be interested to know how many of the residences are registered with Green Homes. You mention establishing contact with Sligo IT in relation to organising an event. Perhaps consider also contacting the local ICA group who may be able to help you offer a Stitch and Style type event, where people are educated on sewing/mending and fixing their clothes and perhaps even restyling. Another idea would be to contact a local hotel establishment or restaurant and speak to their chef in relation to a short cooking demonstration where commonly thrown away foods are used in different ways, combining this with a local foraging walk always works well. Another centre recently held a bicycle mending morning in conjunction with a local bike shop, combining this with a talk on the benefits of cycling to school etc could work. These are just a few ideas - you may have others you are working on.

### **Tidiness:**

Tidiness is to an extremely high standard in your village. The bottle banks were clean and tidy. Attention to roofs of buildings is required as some are getting a bit mossy. Can the unused sign be removed at the River Inn? The wooden fence beside the Old Railway Bridge is in need of repair and we also saw some bent road signs on the road toward Ard Laigne. We note that you have been working on the area to the front and back of the Town Centre building - well done.

### **Residential Areas:**

We liked the frequent use of Irish on a number of name signs throughout the town. Your inter-estate competition is also a great idea to get estates into action to assist in the presentation of their areas. We visited all the housing estates in the village on adjudication day. Wood Stream estate is well maintained and the entrance to here is well presented. No name sign for this estate is in place and we would suggest one should be erected. We note that the nameplate for Rockfield Manor is also being progressed. Cluan Aine is a nice estate with the colourful front doors and porches and well landscaped communal grass areas. At Fort Haven and Mountain Park, standards are also high. At Gort na Si we thought that perhaps some weeding at the landscaped areas is required but the presentation here is also excellent. Congratulations are also due to all the residents here who

made a good contribution last year and were awarded a picnic table for their efforts. At Radarch Na Aibhainn the communal grass area in the larger part of the estate is in need of cutting.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

We note that some damaged footpaths have recently been repaired. We seen also that the Rockfield Manor Bridge has been refaced and the area around Molly Moffat's bridge looks very well. We note that you must have done quite a bit of work here. The D-rail fencing on the right hand side on the approach from Collooney would benefit from being repaired.

**General Impression:**

Coolaney - Rockfield TidyTowns - you have raised the bar this year again and increased your marks in the competition. We have set out a number of observations and recommendations which we hope you find helpful. We hope you will be able to sustain this level of activity evident from our adjudication visit over the next few years and we wish you well with your work programme for the year ahead. Congratulations and well done to all involved!