

# Tidy Towns Competition 2014

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Abbey**  
County: **Galway**  
Category: **A**

Ref: **104**  
Mark: **306**  
Date(s): **07/07/2014**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014
Community Involvement & Planning	60	43
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	38
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	43
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	36
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	17
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	63
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	27
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	39
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>306</b>

### Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Abbey is most welcome to the 2014 SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition. It is some years since this adjudication had the pleasure of visiting and the improvements and changes are most impressive. Thanks you for the completed entry form and for the wonderful map you provided. Your 20 person committee have used their time at and between the 30 meetings to very good effect. The Bees Programme you have initiated is of national importance and will be watched with great interest. We noted the work in progress on the derelict house. There seem to be indications that you are controlling grass by chemical means; where ever possible manual treatment is to be preferred and many would claim is more effective. We welcomed the informative signage in the church car park and admired the small timber hanging signs relating to Christy's Churn and The Old Mill. It is wonderful that you have digitalised the information on the various graves in the cemetery and that it will be made available via the Galway County Council website.

Your prowess, energy and success have clearly become widely known and this is one reason why you are enjoying such support from a wide range of agencies. The scope of your activities, from work on public buildings to aiding tidiness and litter is an example of what can be achieved by a committed group of involved individuals.

### Built Environment and Streetscape / An Timpeallacht Thógtha agus Sráid-dreacha:

Without exception all the buildings in the village have been presented in an exemplary fashion. We admired particularly the Catholic Church flying 3 flags; the ancient Kilnalahan Abbey has a very fine rose display in the cemetery. We admire the gates in their alternate black and gold presentation. St. Feichin's National School 1922 looked very well. The imposing house named Lynch was admired while Smoky Joe's caught the eye. The door here would benefit from painting before next year's competition. The Community Centre was a superb presentation while the old stone shed nearby was presented pleasantly with window baskets and the filled in windows. The addition of the porch to the Abbey Community Centre was noted.

### Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

In one sense the entire village is your landscaping canvas. Flowers are to be found everywhere, ground planting, hanging baskets and window boxes. The little pump was very well presented and we admire the mural 'The Kingdom of the Celts'. The treatment of The Lady Well Abbey was particularly interesting and we admired the new project of the weighting scales at the corner. We noted the single furrow plough and looked forward to the display of the remaining antique farm machinery you have collected in due course. The seating at Finnagh's Sensory Garden and the picnic benches are a great encouragement to linger and enjoy. Your decision to focus on the availability of colour throughout the year is applauded. The availability of daffodils, bluebells, tulips and a continuing succession of

colour creating blooms throughout the year has worked with great success. In addition to the sizable set piece location you have also made excellent use of small, informal space at the entrance to the Cineal Fheichin Estate for example and around the old stone shed. Around the Chapel and the Village Green before it is a charming blaze of colour and very well presented.

### **Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fiadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádúrtha:**

You have been most creative in your approach to this element. Your work in creating the Nature Lodge for bees and ladybirds is of particular importance and well done on all this. They Bug Hotel produced by the Club Scout Group were admired. We wondered if the timber there is suitable, often older near rotten timber is secured, the objective is to produce grubs and bugs as the basis of the food chain resulting in a wider and more vibrant bird population. The extent of ground covering growth in the little stream made us wonder if it may be beneficial to remove some of this.

We admired the 'Golden Mile' sign and particularly the very fine sculpture. The Wildlife Sanctuary is an excellent initiative and thanks to the cooperation of so many land owners is an increasingly important habitat. It is important and beneficial that you have worked closely with the schools and scouts in these various projects.

### **Sustainable Waste and Resource Management / Bainistiú Acmhainní agus Dramhaíola Inbhuanaithe:**

You have rightly determined that two elements are involved here. One the creation of far greater awareness throughout the wider community of the requirements for conservation coupled with practical measures to achieve these reductions. Well done on the staging of a water conservation workshop by the Group Water Scheme management last September. The identifying of leaks and remedying them has saved approximately 50% of your daily average water consumption. Collecting rainwater along the riverbank for the watering of flowers during the summer again reduces the draw on treated water. Using the community notice board for tips on waste minimisation has also been a positive step. The staging of a waste audit was very useful as all these do focus attention on the issues.

The imaginative installation of an air extraction unit resulting in a reduced draw down of electricity to run fridges and cool dairy displays at night was a most useful exercise. Reusing grocery bags and eliminating plastic and even paper bags all serve the same purpose. The use of individual domestic composters is also a practice to be strongly recommended. Have you initiated a household food purchasing survey? These have proved most enlightening and in cases have indicated that as much as one third of food purchased is never consumed but simply becomes a disposal problem and cost. Congratulations on your win in the Galway County Council Environmental Award competition for your efforts in improving community resource management. Reusing clothing, WEEE collections and other recycling services also contribute to the beneficial mix.

### **Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:**

The related activities of litter control and tidiness have been amalgamated this year into one composite category. Litter is clearly a thing of the past in Abbey! We admire your cosmetic treatment of the abandoned cottage by the insertion of the pink door and windows. Could you explore the planting of a white hawthorn hedge along the lattice wire between the school and Lady Well? This would add to a better sense of enclosure and reduce the impact of the long lattice wire fencing at that point. There were ample numbers of litter bins at the church (which was freshly painted bright green) and other bins were noted elsewhere.

Well done to all the volunteers who have participated in the daily litter patrol. We like to think that their task has become less over the months and years following your very energetic programme of reminding individuals of their personal responsibility. We admired also the weeding of curb sides and attention to the gates and stone pillars at entrances to fields. The cleaning of all road signs was noted and you are complimented on this most worthwhile activity.

### **Residential Streets & Housing Areas / Sráideanna Cónaithe & Ceantair Tithíochta:**

Páirc Cinein Fheichin Estate was delightfully tidy and neat on the day of adjudication. We admired the grassed area and flowers at the entrance which was embellished by a fine stone name plate. A similar stone name plate also marked Eagle Hill which also had pleasant flowers surrounding it. The new houses further out that road were well presented and we look forward to the completion of the stone awaiting a name in this location.

The staging of a wildlife friendly, gardening workshop is applauded and it is a delight that so many local residences participated.

### **Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes / Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna & Lánaí:**

The various village name plates in raised, stone surrounded flowerbeds were admired on the approach roads. These give an excellent fore taste of the charming village to come. Abbey has set a headline and underscored the reality that however big or small a community is it can fittingly take its place among the elite of the Tidy Towns movement.