

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Coolboy** Ref: **1986**
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **269**
Category: **B** Date(s): **06/07/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	40	41
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	35	35
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	33	34
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	20	21
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	13	14
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	57	58
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	30	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	35	35
TOTAL MARK	450	263	269

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

You are very welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2017. Well done to Coolboy (Cúil Bhuidhe) and District Tidy Towns Committee for participating in this year's Tidy Towns Competition and for all the hard work carried out this year. You have 12 Committee Members and 5 Volunteers and between January and June you organize approx. 8 Committee Meetings and 5 subcommittee meetings which is a good level of activity for your group. You have limited resources to further your activities but you achieve a lot through voluntary effort such as organizing clean ups of the village each Thursday evenings between 7 and 8 p.m. A wide range of organisations provide you with support and guidance and you communicate with the wider community through your Community Newsletter, District News Section of the Wicklow People, Flyers, Posters, Website and AGM. You have forged strong links with the Principal of Coolafancy National School involving children in provision of Bug Hotels and litter clean ups etc. The presence of a structured Tidy Towns Committee in your village has enabled you to lobby and secure resources for ongoing improvement works in the village. You make reference in your Application Form to a 5-Year plan for the village- it would be good to get a copy of this to see exactly your future plans for the area. Your Application Form which included a recent copy of the Coolboy Coolafancy Newsletter was very informative, clear and concise and the map attached with numbered legend assisted greatly in the adjudication of your village – thank you for that.

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

The stone cottages located opposite the Coolboy Handball and Sports Centre were particularly admired for the quality of the gardens and their frontage along the road. The Post Office and shop is a gem in the village and was very well presented with floral planters on the adjoining wall. The traditional directional road signs and poles at the main junction were noted positively. Every effort should be made to retain these as an important feature in the village. The signs and poles could be painted in the short term to ensure their future protection from rust. The presentation of the Little Moon Bar and outdoor seating area was to a high standard. The large horse chestnut on the village green is really an imposing feature in the village and every effort should be made to ensure it continues to grow healthily. The two dog figures looking over the fence onto the Village Green from a nearby garden caught the eye. The School and Church at Coolafancy were visited and both buildings and their grounds were presented to a very good standard.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The village green is a very important feature in the Centre of Coolboy and clearly provides a focus for recreation by local residents and for Community Events such as the Christmas Tree Lights project. The standard of maintenance and presentation of the Village Green, open spaces, margins and plantings in Coolboy was found to be excellent on

the day of adjudication.

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

The bug hotel, nest box and the 'enchanted fairy wood' and the raised timber planters on the small open space at the entrance to the village from the Carnew side were particularly admired. You have made good strides in creating awareness amongst local residents on the value of using pollinator friendly plants, wildflowers, and the protection of wetland habitats. The Butterfly Garden and nest box at Cullroe, situated close to the Coolboy River was noted positively. The wild area at Gorse Haven was interesting and we wondered could a pedestrian route or Greenway be provided here and extended to provide a walk along the river? Perhaps it would be good in the future to provide a loop walk along the Coolboy River linking the Mill Bridge and the Coolboy Bridge, which local residents could use for recreational purposes.? It is noted that you have erected nest boxes on the gable of the Community Hall to protect the annual nesting of Swifts.

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

You have supplied water butts at the graveyard and in estates in the village and these are proving to be a great success. You make use of the bottle bank and clothes bank at Coolafancy. Household goods and garden items which are in good condition are supplied to the charity shop in Carnew Community Centre for re-sale. These are all worthy initiatives. However, your Committee might consider a range further initiatives under this category for future years such as sustainable waste, energy and transport actions e.g. composting of vegetation and leaf litter, car-pooling and extending the walk to school initiative, grow your own, cycle parking facilities for Tourists, off-road cycle routes in the area, encouraging the development of small solar farms on appropriate sites, the use of solar panels on roofs, heat exchange units to reduce energy consumption by households/businesses etc. The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland website has good information in relation to the development of Better Energy Communities.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

It was great that Coolafancy National School was involved in your Annual Clean Up day. You are fortunate that you do not have problems with Graffiti, fly-posting or inappropriate advertising in Coolboy. Overall your village was found to be very neat and tidy and completely free of litter on the day of adjudication – well done to those involved in litter patrols and all the residents of Coolboy who assist with litter control.

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

Woodview Heights was visited and we found the standard of maintenance on the estate and open spaces here to be very good. It would be appropriate to consider reserving some areas on Communal open spaces for wildflowers which would reduce the extent grass cutting needed and cost of future maintenance. Stony Batter Estate and Coolattin View estates were visited and the standard of maintenance was good in both estates. It would be great to see the beech hedging situated along the entrance road, establish further so that the green windbreak fencing here, can be fully screened from view. Croi Faoin Tuath estate was visited and we found the standard of maintenance be very good. Perhaps some climbers could be planted along the concrete wall at the end of the cul-de-sac? Coolattin Way estate was maintained to a good standard - perhaps a pedestrian link could be provided here from the open space and along the Coolboy River?

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

The presentation of approach roads into Coolboy including roadside boundaries, hedgerows, margins etc. was found to be of a high standard. Some loose capping stones on the parapet walls of the Mill Bridge were noted. It would be essential to have the necessary repair/protection works carried out to ensure this important historic structure does not further deteriorate in condition. A tree planting scheme on the road side of the boundary of the Sewage Treatment Plant would be beneficial to help screen this facility and boundary fence from public view. The road surface on the approach to the village from Coolafancy is quite uneven and would benefit from future re-surfacing and road- marking works.

Concluding Remarks:

It was a great pleasure to visit Coolboy Village for the first time this Summer. You enjoy an idyllic picturesque setting in the Wicklow Countryside and your village has a strong traditional character with the Village Green being a central focus. The hard work and commitment of Coolboy and District Tidy Towns and local residents is very evident in the very clean and tidy presentation of the village and surrounds. We hope you find the comments in the report helpful and wish you well with your future endeavours.