

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Glenealy** Ref: **903**
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **268**
Category: **B** Date(s): **29/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	37	39
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	35	36
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	37	39
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	19	20
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	13	15
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53	54
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	31	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	32	33
TOTAL MARK	450	257	268

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

You are very welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2017. Well done to your Committee for participating in this year's Tidy Towns Competition and for all the hard work carried out this year. Many thanks also for the very useful and clear map of the village with numbered key created by a secondary student for her Gaisce Award – this was very helpful to the adjudicator in finding the various features and works undertaken in the village by Glenealy Tidy Towns. The Calendar which you enclosed with the Application form is a particularly good idea displaying the many attractive scenes and old photographs which really does capture the Community Spirit in the village and at the same time helps to spread the word about Tidy Towns. That it had to be re-printed due to the high local demand, I'm sure was particularly satisfying- well done to all involved with that project. It is noted that Glenealy Tidy Towns has entered the competition on 6 previous occasions and currently has 10 Committee members supplemented by 6/8 Volunteers, with the Committee itself meeting at least 8 times per year. Your involvement in the Blessing of the Graves and Community Coffee Mornings is particularly noteworthy as it provides an opportunity to fund raise as well as engage with a wider audience and reinforce the values encompassed by the Tidy Towns volunteering model, as an integral part of the local Community infrastructure. Congratulations to Wicklow County Council, O'Hanlons Herbs, Glenealy Village Stores, Shelton Abbey, Kelly's Garden Sheds, Bus Eireann, Tús, Kings Glenealy Lodge and Glenealy Garage all of whom supported Glenealy Tidy Towns this year. It is good to see you have an active Facebook Page and that you utilise Local Newspapers and a Newsletter to communicate with stakeholders/local residents and get feedback and ideas etc. Youth involvement in Tidy Towns is very important and it is pleasing to note that you have a Junior Tidy Towns Committee and Foróige Group who assist with various works and put forward ideas.

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

Saint Joseph's National school was visited and the maintenance of the school grounds impressed. The planters attached to the wall of the shelter, the bug hotels and the interesting wooden sculpture piece were noted positively. The village car park would benefit from a more defined boundary treatment along the road -perhaps a low stone wall and planter here. Consider the re-siting of the recycling facility away from this area altogether as it detracts from the visitor experience in the village core - would the Community Centre Car Park be a more convenient and suitable location? The surfacing and landscape treatment of the car-park would also be of benefit to the village. It would be good to restore the pair of old cast iron gates and railings and remove Ivy from one of the stone piers facing the car-park. The portable steam engine and 'coach stop- pony trap' complete with planters and solar lights at the car park were admired as was the new bus stop and cycle parking facilities here. At King's Glenealy Lodge car-park, the perennial planting bed on the grassed area underneath the weeping willow tree added great colour and interest. The yellow wall at Kings pub carpark and piers would benefit from re-painting. We understand Byrne's Village Store are planning to upgrade their Shopfront this year and two new houses are being built nearby - we wish them well with

this work. The stone walls and floral displays on both sides of the Ashford Road junction and along the road leading to the Community Hall were greatly admired. The access gate to the Church of Ireland Church, as mentioned in last year's report, would benefit from painting to prevent further deterioration due to rust. The old Parochial School Building at the entrance and the Church building itself are significant Heritage properties which enhance the character of the surrounding area. The cottage garden adjacent to the old Parochial School building which was in full bloom caught the eye. The granite walls, steps and piers at the Railway over bridge were significant heritage features in this area. The Catholic Church and surrounds were presented to a very high standard and the general area here was very neat and tidy. The old Railway Cottage has sadly fallen into disrepair and would benefit from some improvement/refurbishment works. Could this charming building be re-furbished and brought back into occupation to help protect its future? - perhaps this could be further discussed with Irish rail.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Great thanks are due to the resident in Glenealy who offered to grow 800 bedding plants to create a 'Village of Flowers' in Glenealy this year- well done to all concerned with this project. The village was a riot of colour on adjudication day. It is noted that you have decided to use perennial planting to replace annuals under Welcome to Glenealy signs and at the old pump near the bridge, for year- round effect. The vertical 'drainage pipe' planters were a great colourful addition throughout the village – congratulations to whoever initiated and progressed the design of these. These planters enable you to attach floral displays very easily to vertical elements such as poles, fence posts etc. and have the added benefit of not causing an obstruction to maintenance operations. They also use recycled materials- a great idea all round! The tree planting situated on the riverside open space to the rear of the water pump at the Ashford Road Junction - particularly the Red Oak was admired. The communal open space at the development known as Chestnut Glen with its meandering stream, wetland vegetation, native tree planting and the arched road bridge was a joy to behold. The standard of maintenance on this open space was excellent although unfortunately there was some green waste discarded in the trees near the entrance to the development.

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

It is noted that a resident in the village has planted wildflowers on the bank over the railway bridge. You are also looking at the possibility of establishing a Sensory area over the next twelve months with Bug Hotels, Bat boxes etc. in the field to the left of the driveway up to the Church of Ireland Church – we wish you well with this. You have commissioned a Wildflower Survey by a Science teacher Vicky Meredith and this shows the wealth of different plant species and natural vegetation present all around the village of Glenealy. This Category of the Competition is all about creating awareness amongst local residents of the habitats, wildlife and natural amenities present in the locality. In this regard the stream, wooded area and wetland open space at Chestnut Glen is a significant wildlife asset and could be given greater attention in terms of survey work, management and conservation initiatives.

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

Under this category your School Garden and Glenealy Community project which has as its Motto 'to plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow' was greatly admired. The plantings of mainly herbs were growing vigorously and the plant beds are set at a height which makes it convenient for children and adults indeed, to work at tending and planting - congratulations on this great project. Glenealy Village Hall was visited and it was great to see solar panels placed on the roof of the building and plenty of provision for cycle parking to the front. We were greatly impressed with the range of sports facilities provided here for the residents of Glenealy. Perhaps some further attention is needed with regard to the landscaping of the site, car-parks, frontage etc. which are a little bleak and exposed – some green elements needed urgently here. The timber fencing along the frontage would also benefit from some preservative treatment. You have relocated the water butts to the grounds of Kings Glenealy Lodge for security reasons. It is noted positively that you segregate waste generated from litter picks as a matter of course. Unfortunately, the flower area in the school car-park created by younger pupils using 2 Litre plastic bottles wasn't spotted on our visit but no doubt it is an interesting feature here. To gain extra marks under this category you may need to consider further initiatives such as encouraging local people to engage in further sustainable waste, water, energy and transport actions e.g. car- pooling and walk- to-school initiatives, using low carbon vehicles, extending cycle parking facilities in the village, the development of greenways and cycle routes in the area, encouraging the development of small solar farms on appropriate sites, the greater use of solar panels on roofs, heat exchange units to reduce energy consumption by households/businesses, greater use of water butts for watering gardens, organising stop food waste seminars etc. The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland website has good information in relation to the development of Better Energy Communities. You could also speak to the Environmental Officer at the Council on possibly participating in the European Week for Waste Reduction which takes place in November each year. Visit www.ewwr.eu for more information. www.stopfoodwaste.ie is a website that you may also find helpful. The Green Home Programme may also be of interest to your Group (www.greenhome.ie). Grant funding may also be available to provide energy efficiency upgrades for community and commercial facilities. A 'Free Wee Library' project could also be considered at an appropriate central site in the village.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Your adjudicator is pleased to report that no litter was encountered during the walk around Glenealy on the day of adjudication - well done to all those involved in regular litter control operations in the village. However, it was noted some road signage on the eastern approach to Glenealy was quite dirty in places and would benefit from further cleaning, including the 'Welcome to Glenealy' sign. Congratulations to your Foróige Club who litter pick once/month in the village and have received a Garda Síochána Award for their endeavours. The hard work of the Committee and volunteers and Tús workers in the clearance of weeds from kerb edges is fully recognised – this is a major ongoing task as village is very long.

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

Ballyfree Crescent was visited and the planting containers were admired as was the standard of maintenance of the open space. The avenue of Norway Maple trees on the opposite side of the main road are a significant positive feature here. You should note that one or two of these have died and may need to be removed at an early date for public safety reasons. The name stone at Ballyfree Crescent looks a little forlorn and would benefit from cleaning and the renewal of the lettering etc. The junior GAA pitch posts on the open space also would benefit from re-painting. Carrig View estate was visited and the large linear open space along the main road with handsome trees forming the boundary here was noted. There is a small structure on this open space which looks like a concrete shed or pumphouse and it would be good to have this screened with some hedge planting. It is recommended that the concrete post and rail fence here should also be planted with the hedge, possibly Beech, to provide greater security and to screen this rather unsightly boundary from public view. Some of the front garden boundary walls facing Carrig View would benefit from re-painting. Annsbrook Estate was visited and the standard of maintenance was found to be excellent. The planting at the entrance of the estate really enhanced the approach for the visitor. Perhaps the ESB kiosk located on the open space could be screened with hedge planting? The open space and Floral displays at Gleann Chill were admired. The standard of maintenance here was also excellent.

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

It is noted that you have carried out repair works on the wall at side of St. Josephs Church up to railway line and this feature now looks very well again. The very tall well-tended purple beech hedging on the boundary of private property on the Western approach to Glenealy was greatly admired. There were three faded 'no parking' signs in the grass margin outside the Kerry Food's property – perhaps these are no longer needed and can now be removed? The timber post and rail fence here would benefit from painting or preservative treatment. The maintenance and presentation of margins, and road surfaces on the approaches to Glenealy were generally found to be of a high standard.

Concluding Remarks:

Glenealy Tidy Towns has put a great effort into the Competition this year and the amazing results on the ground are there for all to see! The report includes some recommendations which we hope you find helpful and if implemented could improve the overall presentation village and potentially increase marks gained in the competition. We wish you well with your endeavours over the coming year and the Committee can be justly proud of all your achievements this year.