

# Tidy Towns Competition 2019

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Manorhamilton - Cluainín** Ref: **1824**  
County: **Leitrim** Mark: **278**  
Category: **C** Date(s): **28/06/2019**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2018</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2019</b>
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	44	45
Streetscape & Public Places	60	34	35
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	34	35
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	25	26
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	19	20
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	50	52
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	30	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	33	34
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>278</b>

### **Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:**

Cuireann an moltoir seo faite roimh Manorhamilton (Cluainín Uí Ruairc) chuig Comortas na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu 2019.

Thank you for your excellent entry form with ancillary support material and map which was spot on for the purposes of adjudication.

As you have a lot of content in your entry form it was not possible to comment on everything included but feel assured that the adjudication was done in a fair and objective manner and in line with the guidelines of the competition.

The report will be in a much shorter narrative than last years.

Your priority project list is substantial at 65 and fairly onerous task to manage for a voluntary committee of 9 and a core of 14 people that you can call on for practical support.

It looks as if your committee numbers are down for 2019 judging by last year's report.

As a committee you have engaged with your main stakeholders in a very proactive and practical manner and this has resulted in quite a lot of additional work being done over the last year.

It's good to note that you see your local community as your greatest support – very important for the future of tidy towns in Manorhamilton.

The plan included in your entry pack was for 2015/19 and one assumes that this will be updated to reflect what is in the pipeline for next tranche of work over the coming years.

Your methods of communication are a mix of the tried and trusted combined with what social media platforms have to offer.

Your Facebook page is very current offering updates on the Wild Rose Festival to proposed road works by Leitrim County Council

Interaction with the local authority other relevant agencies as well as involvement in other tidy towns related activities nationwide has been at a premium and this has been reflected in the work that you have been involved in and that is planned for the future.

The benefits of your involvement in the competition for the last 9 years has been well documented in the entry form and there is no need to relate all this back except to say thank you for your strong endorsement of the Competition. The work that you have done over the last year in terms of planning and involvement with the local community has earned you an additional mark which in fact brings you back up to 45

### **Streetscape & Public Places / Sráid-Dreach & Áiteanna Poiblí:**

There are a number of new projects that you have an involvement in listed in this category and these were noted and visited by the adjudicator.

Yes indeed the W8 centre is at a stage of near completion one would think from observing what was happening on

adjudication day.

The unique water feature in front was admired for its design also the coffee shop/cafe was in operation. Hopefully this centre will be the hub for a mix of enterprise and leisure activities to thrive in the town and to become a focal point for locals and visitors alike.

No 6 on your list relates to the opening hours of the Castle Tea Rooms and in fairness if it is run by private operators they may have issues with costs in that it may not be in their interest to stay open if the footfall doesn't justify it.

Adjudicators have to be very careful when singling out business owners about the suitability of signage or too much of inappropriate advertising.

One noted that there wasn't an iota of change to the particular establishment mentioned in input no 9 despite the "liaison" meetings that took place.

Progressive committees such as yours are very aware of problematic and sometimes sensitive issues that may need addressing.

Well done on engaging with Heritage Officer re Artisan Houses.

The following were some of the observations made by the adjudicator on the walkabout and these are without prejudice and in line with the guidelines of the competition.

All your future plans under streetscape and public spaces were noted and one is very aware that most are of the collaborative nature and are very much dependent on funding and other parties' participation.

The public realm notice, one a few in the County, will have a huge impact for a large cross section of the town if it goes ahead as proscribed. One presumes that the Tidy Towns Committee will be part of the consultative process.

In relation to item no 12 in this category the adjudicator is slightly at odds to actually determine what your role is.

Is it one of support or is your structure such that it can take on the lead role in delivering a project of this magnitude.

One would assume that a voluntary group would not be in a position to take this on board.

The Bee Park Centre was visited and that whole area was very busy as the Feile Na Gael Girls U 14 competition was taking place and visitors from all over the country in county colours were in full flow.

The adjudicator dropped into the Grounds across the road to take in some of the action.

The Glens Theatre was presented in an acceptable manner.

Govern and Co on the corner of Sligo Road deserve mention for its fine stone building, Gilbrides Pub nice frontage, recently painted in stone grey with contrasting red signage.

The Mountain View Restaurant was undergoing a face lift with the outside being painted on the day and very well it looked indeed.

There were a few nice butcher shop fronts something that always takes this adjudicators eye.

The adjudicator popped in to Gabriels well run Barbers Shop in its new location and got some very pertinent and positive information about the town.

McManus Pharmacy had a very attractive frontage and Biddys Bar with its very unique O Mahoney's Gable end mural was presented to a very high standard.

The public and ecclesiastical buildings visited were in the main well presented as they should be.

All the schools were visited and were presented in an acceptable fashion, so well done to all those people that are responsible for their upkeep.

The streetscape skyline was not obstructed by overhead wires, road surfaces and footpaths in the main were in good condition.

A clear skyline and good road surfaces and footpaths enhance a town no end.

Quite a few street light poles needed to be painted or cleaned.

Overall the standard was very good but the adjudicator would advise the committee that less is often more.

It is involved in quite number of projects and the voluntary support to manage these could be stretched especially if numbers are down on last year.

### **Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:**

This is a category that Manorhamilton has done well over the last number years and this due in no small measure to the efforts of the Tidy Towns Committees.

The adjudicator wanted to locate a few areas that you had identified as having work done and it's amazing to note that on enquiring of a few locals none knew where these places were

It was actually a non national who was able to direct me to the Star Fort and let me say the said gentleman gave a glowing account of Manorhamilton.

Many of the planting arrangements in the town and on the outskirts were viewed by the adjudicator.

One can understand the need for providing all year round sustainable plant effectiveness by introducing more perennials to the planting programme.

When there are so many planters and permanent plant and shrub beds to maintain it's understandable that this approach should be taken.

The adjudicator witnessed so many examples of good public planting arrangements during his travails around the town.

There were a number of individual planters with colourful annuals around the centre of the town.

You do not have to agree with any adjudicator on all recommendations presented to you and if your main supporters/stakeholders want hanging baskets so be it.

Those stakeholders are critical to your further success in the competition as well as to the development of the town itself

The adjudicator was impressed with many individual well maintained gardens that mixed colour with shrubs to great effect.

It's also noticeable that in a spell of good weather such as we are having now that lawns and beds are seen at their best.

Trees are part of the fabric of rural Ireland but surprisingly many towns and villages have sparse numbers.

One feels that Manorhamilton would benefit from a revised overall landscaping plan that would include an audit on the existing tree stock and their impact on the town landscape. Consultation with the local area engineer would be the first option; maybe the proposed public realm plan has made provision for such a plan. Pollinator planting has been very much encouraged of late and you have reacted very positively and dare I say very practically to this important need. There are a few overpopulated shrub beds that need to be thinned out or just cut back. Overall the standard was very good.

### **Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality / An Dúlra agus an Bhithéagsúlacht i do cheantar:**

Just looking at the entries in the proposed action plan under this section there are many simple and achievable projects listed that could be acted upon this year and be considered for next year's competition. Again one was taken with the research that has gone into the 14 projects that you have listed. All fall within the main objective of this category namely to promote the concept of the preservation of all forms of fauna and flora under the heading of managing the biodiversity of one's area. The adjudicator has very little to add by way of advice as what was given in last year's report will tax the committee for some time and it was very positive and appropriate. To be honest this adjudicator is coming on the back of a report that offered so much advice of a positive nature that it would be impossible to improve on it for this year at least. One will add that you have reacted very enthusiastically to suggestions given for this category. Have you got a structure of responsibility in that individual committee members take ownership of different elements of the bio diversity work? The adjudicator was hugely impressed with your window awareness project, so imaginative and it crosses over a number of categories. No 27 Dog Fouling update is probably best included in the tidiness and litter category. Biodiversity Ireland [www.biodiversityireland.ie](http://www.biodiversityireland.ie) is a source for additional information and direction and the National Pollinator Plan can be accessed from this website as well as [www.pollinators.ie](http://www.pollinators.ie). The National Parks and Wildlife Service [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie) offers a myriad tips for the preservation of wildlife also. The Green Communities Project that is under the auspices of An Taisce is another source that can be tapped into for information on various biodiversity projects. Overall the input and work done under this category warrants an increase in marks.

### **Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:**

The objective in this category has moved on to some extent from one of reduce reuse and recycle to one of promoting the concept of reducing the productions of potential waste at source such as excessive packaging. "Doing more with less" is a very apt slogan that should be nationwide exposure as well as exposure to school children both primary and second level. The projects that you have listed in the entry form are very much in keeping with the ethos of the sector and are very practical and doable. One or two are new to this adjudicator but others have been replicated in other centres. Entry no 40 depicted a job that demanded back breaking work of a slightly demeaning nature for the particular sector of people involved – a personal opinion dare I say. The problem here is that after all the effort put into cleaning these weeds manually they will be back up again in a few weeks. To get more out of this sector in terms of gaining marks and creating a greater awareness of all things that contribute to a more sustainable environment consider looking at the following websites for idea generation. [www.localprevention.ie](http://www.localprevention.ie), [www.greenhomes.ie](http://www.greenhomes.ie) and [www.sustainableprocessing.ie](http://www.sustainableprocessing.ie). Also for instance there are novel way of reusing old newspapers that have very practical benefits and as a follow up its worth checking 36 uses for old newspapers at [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk). Also something that this adjudicator became aware of is the circular economy. It is a bit too long to explain the concept in detail in this report, but if you access the following [www.dccae.gov.ie](http://www.dccae.gov.ie) and [www.sustainableprocessing.ie](http://www.sustainableprocessing.ie) you will get a pretty good idea of what it's all about. Let's not forget about the younger generation in this category visit the green schools organisation [www.greenschools.org](http://www.greenschools.org). The idea of what is called a linear economy of "take, make and waste" is now being seen as not sustainable and alternatives need to be found.

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

The standard in this category of both litter control and general tidiness in such a large town was generally very good. There are few litter black spots in the town and one of them if I can recall correctly was mentioned in last year's report. In general the town centre and the immediate outskirts has good litter control measures in place. The committee has harnessed the goodwill of the local community in rowing in behind your efforts to make Manorhamilton as litter free as possible. You have put some excellent but simple and effective measures in place so there is no point in repeating these back to you in full. But one particular area did exercise this adjudicator enough to make the following comment. Rubbish was very prevalent at the Gilgunn Memorial which was very disrespectful not that it mattered to those who

used the surrounding area to dump litter.

As regards having a sign for what in effect is a private albeit for a public service organisation parking space at on the surround wall of a memorial is rather unusual to say the least.

Maybe the committee could do something to ask the authorities to consider cleaning up that area and give the memorial its rightful respect.

Overall the standard particularly in general tidiness was more than acceptable and warrants an increase in marks.

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

The adjudicator visited a large cross section of housing developments near the centre and in the extremities of the town,

The following are some that appealed for a variety of reasons

McDermott Terrace is a large expansive established housing development near the Main Street and is like a self contained community of its own.

Well done to the residents association for its proactive approach to getting things in the estate.

Clooneen Park is nice new compact development and Screeney Heights with a fine communal area, some which had provision for pollinator planting, was also admired.

The Old Orchard a development of detached dormer style house, one or two front gardens were a little overgrown.

Rockview Drive is a fine development of recently established two storey premises some of which have extremely well presented gardens.

An Ros is also a very well established cluster of detached single and two storey houses, most of which were very well presented.

There was one or two that were not up to the standard of the main body.

Old Church Street near the centre of the town had some nice private residences.

You have some task in hand to look after the communal areas in eighteen estates but it is to your credit that you have been able mobilise representatives from these estates to help you with this task.

The standard overall was very good and deserving of an increase in marks.

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

The entrance approach from Carrick on Shannon gives a very inviting first impression with nice stone wall features and trees.

The Failte sign mentioned in last year's report is now fully completed and looks very well adding to the attractiveness of this entrance.

Entrance from Kinlough is superb and the fine stone faced houses further in this road enhance the entrance even more.

Good provision for cyclists out the Rossinver Road even thou its a little narrow.

Entrance in from here is good but some overgrown areas were observed in passing.

The 60 km speed limit sign is clean and visible as it should be.

The repainted walls at the Enniskillen Roundabout were noted and this type of basic remedial work makes a great difference in appearance. This entrance has been enhanced by the planting arrangement at the newly sited Failte sign.

Overall the standard was very good and much improved from what last year's report would have indicated.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

This was the adjudicator's very first time to actually stop in Manorhamilton and the last time he passed through it was neigh on twenty years ago.

The town is much larger than one had expected as like many other sized rural towns it had expanded during the boom decade.

Like other towns that boom period has left a legacy in that there is quite a large number of unoccupied houses and former retail units.

The visit was most interesting outside of the adjudication duties.

The day culminated in a very enjoyable visit to the 17th century Manorhamilton Castle with its very interesting history.

The café is very popular judging by the number that were there at the time.

All in all a trip that needs a repeat in due course – sooner rather than later.