

# Tidy Towns Competition 2012

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Granard** Ref: **524**  
County: **Longford** Mark: **210**  
Category: **C** Date(s): **06/06/2012**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2011</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2012</b>
Overall Development Approach	50	26	27
The Built Environment	50	28	28
Landscaping	50	28	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	18	18
Litter Control	50	28	28
Tidiness	30	14	14
Waste Minimisation	20	6	6
Residential Areas	40	26	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	28	28
General Impression	10	6	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>210</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator welcomes Granard to the 2012 National TidyTowns Competition. We thank you for your application and also thank the pupils at Cnoc Mhuire for taking the time to consider the development of their town in the TidyTowns context. We are sure their work will be of use to the Committee moving forward. We also acknowledge the involvement of Ard Scoil Phadraig. You have done great work this year working with the various schools and we urge you to continue with this. Now that the local schools have been involved in the TidyTowns in 2012, would you consider establishing a Junior TidyTowns Committee to allow them to assist you with your works on a regular basis? We note your mission statement and three year plan and suggest that you incorporate the two documents produced by the local pupils into your three year plan. Following these actions will give you good focus. We are glad to see that you are establishing good links with a number of agencies in relation to resources and funding. You are communicating well with the local residents using a variety of mediums but given the ethos of waste minimisation, we suggest you reconsider leaflet distribution. TidyTowns Facebook pages are now proving very popular and this is another way to engage with the community. We also note from your development plan your intention to establish a website and we wish you well with this.

### The Built Environment:

The cultural heritage of Granard has provided for a significant number of interesting buildings of heritage importance in the main town centre. St. Mary's Roman Catholic is visually prominent sitting on the hill overlooking the town. The grotto here is well maintained and we noted that stoneworks are ongoing here to construct a path connecting the church to the grotto. The Motte was also noted sitting on the top of the hill behind the church but the adjudicator was unsure of how or where to access it. Many businesses are making an effort to present their premises at their best along the Main Street. The adjudicator thought that Blooming Buddies should be mentioned for its excellent presentation on adjudication day - well done. There are a

number of important heritage buildings and shop fronts on the Main Street including the Market House and the Greville Arms. One local resident was eager to tell me what he said was the oldest shop on the street! Care should be taken to ensure that heritage buildings and shopfronts are not lost. Furthermore maintenance of the upper stories of the buildings should also be considered. Unfortunately a large unfinished site across from the Kearney's Texaco garage on the Edgeworthstown Road is quite an eyesore; could the wooden posts that held up the auctioneering sign be removed? You are not alone in this regard as many centres throughout the country have derelict and unfinished developments. Perhaps for next year tell us if you have consulted with the local authority or the owner in relation to this site. It was mart day and the mart site was busy. Both the fire station and the Gardai station were well presented. We visited St.Marys GAA pitch and admired the gates here. The playpark was not being used at all on adjudication day; this is a great facility and well maintained but a little bit out of the town. The provision of suitable street furniture and maintenance of same is considered in this category. The adjudicator noted that the seats outside of Supervalu would benefit from varnishing and the seat outside the grotto at the school is nice but could also be freshly painted.

### **Landscaping:**

Window boxes and planters outside the Granard Area Action Group together with the planters outside the Family Resource Centre were admired. A number of blooming hanging baskets also add colour along the Main Street. There is extensive planting at the National School. A good number of scheme workers were out in force on adjudication day on the Main Street and in the vicinity of Moham Street carrying out landscaping works.

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

In relation to this category you could greatly improve your score here. There are three main things to consider when incorporating wildlife into TidyTowns; knowing what habitats and wildlife are on your doorstep; enhancing and protecting it; and promoting / raising awareness of it to both local residents and visitors. The adjudicator thought the wooded area near the church would be ideal to be developed into a wildlife area, could this area be used as a community space? There are also green areas beside the playpark at the sports ground that could be considered. Where you have pockets of existing natural habitat, try to enhance them whenever possible. Consider over the next few years establishing a wildlife area in the town. Furthermore the adjudicator noted Japanese knotweed at the old Fire Station. We suggest that you bring this to the attention of the appropriate authorities and ensure this gets treated before it spreads. Visit [www.invasivespeciesireland.com](http://www.invasivespeciesireland.com) if you would like more information on this non-native plant.

### **Litter Control:**

Litter was noted at a few locations in the town on adjudication day - Yop bottles on the Gardai Station wall, cigarette butts in the grid at the spout and occasional litter noted on the Main Street. This category is about on-going litter control measures - we note that you have bi/tri weekly litter picks. Perhaps consider an anti-litter awareness campaign with the local schools.

### **Tidiness:**

A number of points are noted here - some that can be addressed in the short term while others should be considered in the mid to long term. The Granardkille Road and Historic Scenic Walk sign is past its years and should be removed. Further cleaning of all the pavements in the town and removing the moss from same. Liaise with Longford County Council in relation to the ad-hoc parking along the Main Street. The undergrounding of overhead cables would significantly improve the streetscape in the Main Street and greatly enhance the vista from the Main Street towards the Church and Motte.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

You mention encouragement of recycling, while this is of course worthwhile this category is about waste prevention/minimisation. You have enormous potential to increase your marks in this section. The Environmental Awareness Officer of Longford County Council may be able to give you some help in this area. You could liaise with them in running a waste prevention awareness evening, for example. Furthermore, we suggest you check out [www.greenhome.ie](http://www.greenhome.ie). The Green Home programme has been developed to support and encourage all householders to reduce their environmental impact. The programme is supported by the Environmental Protection Agency, National Waste Prevention Programme. Getting involved in Green-Home programme will give you ideas and assist you in this category. Green-Home can be undertaken by an individual householder or a household can be part of a community or school hub. We suggest you register Granard TidyTowns with the programme and encourage households in the area to join your Green-Home group.

### **Residential Areas:**

Housing presentation in the town is varied, there are a lot of boarded up houses on Colmcille Terrace, we would be interested to hear if there are long term plans for this area? We noted that there was strimming and

landscaping work ongoing at Cnoc na Greine, this is what we like to see - well done to all concerned. We hope that you can get more Residents Associations on board for next year.

#### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Located on a national secondary route the traffic in the town is extremely busy. A number of footpaths throughout the town were considered to be in need of repair such as the stretch from the Gardai station to the Supervalu store. It was noted that the footpaths had been power hosed in front of the terrace houses leading up to St. Mary's chapel, this should be extended to other areas throughout the town (such as the paving at the road signs across from John Donohoe's bar), which are somewhat moss covered. The adjudicator was at a loss as to Parallel Park or to Herringbone Park – anything seems to go along the Main Street! Furthermore, we noted that people stood for quite some time at the pedestrian crossing near Supervalu before cars actually stopped; this is just an observation. The approach roads into the town are of varying quality. The adjudicator thought that Kiernan Milling on the Ballinalee approach deserves praise for its neat appearance. Encourage other large businesses located on the approach roads to try and follow the high standard set by Kiernans.

#### **General Impression:**

Granard is a bustling town and on adjudication day a lot of landscaping and maintenance works were continuing despite the changeable weather. It was clear to the adjudicator that much effort is going into enhancing the presentation of the town. We are pleased that you appear to have developed a good working relationship with the local schools. You have embarked upon your aim of increasing the appreciation of the local environs in Granard amongst the local residents. The adjudicator hopes that you find the suggestions in this report helpful and wishes you well for the year ahead.