

Tidy Towns Competition 2010

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Glounthaune** Ref: **130**
County: **Cork(South)** Mark: **237**
Category: **B** Date(s): **25/06/2010**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009	Mark Awarded 2010
Overall Development Approach	50	38	38
The Built Environment	50	27	27
Landscaping	50	27	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25	26
Litter Control	50	25	27
Waste Minimisation	20	8	9
Tidiness	30	20	21
Residential Areas	40	25	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25	25
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	400	228	237

Overall Development Approach:

From the nearby motorway the passer-by sees Glounthaune as a kind of Riviera with its grand houses and leafy gardens; on a closer view this only appears partly true for what the passer-by does not see is the neat village in two sections and on two levels, settlements of unusual charm, unexpected modesty and visual sprightliness. Thank you for your completed entry form. Please also enclose copies of the 'invisible' entries – such as your Wild Life Survey and your Village Heritage Plan – which will provide information on what we do not see; it is quite likely that you will earn additional marks from what you disclose in this way. Please enter projects under appropriate headings – for example 'Clean-up of the Pond' should not appear under 'The Built Environment'

The Built Environment:

The Gothic church is beautifully maintained. Scoil Chroí Naofa is a charming stone faced building with lawns and banked shrubberies. (Does it have a green flag? One was not seen at the time of the visit.) It is worth mentioning all the business premises by the church for they were all looking bright and cheerful – the Post Office, Flower Power and Heavenly Hair. Fitzpatrick's Shop and Junction Bar opposite the Railway Station command the precinct and The Passing Tide in the waterside village with its blue umbrellas looked most inviting. The Community Centre, a renovated National School of vintage pattern, was actually this adjudicator's favourite building but that is a personal matter and all were good. The Railway Station house was in process of being done up.

Landscaping:

In the lower village the colourful playground favourably caught the attention. Picnic tables and seating were attractively situated nearby. The Grotto was pleasantly planted. Perhaps the abundant floral tubs, baskets and

window boxes made the greatest visual impression at the time of the visit but they are seasonal and there is plenty of shrub planting (such as at the Dry Bridge) to carry the interest along. The verge trimming and landscaping at junctions in the Highlands complex is excellent. Do you plant bulbs for spring showing? That is the kind of thing the adjudicator does not see and should be mentioned.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Trees are normally considered under this heading. There is a wonderful backdrop of mature timber to Glounthaune but several young trees were seen doing well especially in housing estates. There might be suitable areas for the planting of fruit trees such as apple, crab and cherry; they have lovely blossoms in spring and even if the fruit is not harvested by the residents it will be appreciated by the birds. It was good to read of the visit to Harper's Island in connection with the setting up of a bird observatory. The estuarine environment attracts a wonderful array of bird life.

Litter Control:

Your numerous interconnecting litter programmes are obviously showing their worth. Dividing the neighbourhood into sub-sections seems to be a well worth while initiative. The pity is that people should have to give of their time to pick up the litter of others: have you identified any obvious sources? because well publicised prosecutions can have a significant effect.

Waste Minimisation:

Waste minimisation aims to eliminate waste before it is produced and reduce its quantity and toxicity. Really prevention is the objective, but recycling and treatment are important for what remains. Two Bring Banks were seen, near the Post Office and opposite the Railway Station. Both were clean and accessible.

Tidiness:

Glounthaune is a comparatively tidy village. There is very little mass-produced or plastic signage. There was also very little weed growth (where it should not be) at the time of the visit. In general, avoid post-and-wire fencing as it is short lived, tends to sag and attracts weed growth. When creating boundaries also avoid cement block walls unless they are plastered and painted or concealed with creepers and climbers. Always prefer stout wooden fencing, or hedging or walls in local stone to either of these. If the kerb were continued round the current curve of the lawn adjacent to the Rising Tide it would help to keep the grass from getting worn away. There are inevitable always jobs to be done under this heading.

Residential Areas:

Highlands is a sprucely presented neighbourhood with many superbly planted gardens. The various sections of Cois Chuain are laid out with respect to the contours; young trees and hedges were seen to be doing well. Johnstown has the benefit of its foliage; the same may be said for the estate lower down which may be part of the same settlement. The Woods is severely tidy and will soften when the trees and shrubs grow up. Lovely older houses, full of character, were seen near the Community Centre, many with flowers tumbling over their boundaries. The apartment block near the Railway Station was well kept.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Car parks at the church, school and station were well looked after. New kerbing was seen being installed at Johnstown and road improvements being made. The path along the course of the old road was clear for walkers, of whom there appeared to be quite a number. Successive byroad, main road, motorway and railway have tended to slice Glounthaune horizontally, but in an interesting and quite attractive way this has worked out well at the present time.

General Impression:

Glounthaune is a village become suburb become village-and-suburb that now seems to have found a character for itself. If there is to be further housing development it should forget about spreading estates and consider enhancing the core – which may mean apartments but apartments can be attractive if designed to suit the territory and what is existing. Whatever way it goes, all good wishes for your continuing initiatives.