

# Tidy Towns Competition 2025

## Adjudication Report

Centre: <b>Glounthaune - An Gleanntán</b>	Ref: <b>130</b>
County: <b>Cork(South)</b>	Mark: <b>387</b>
Category: <b>C</b>	Date(s): <b>19/06/2025</b>

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2024	Mark Awarded 2025
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	52	54
Streetscape & Public Places	80	49	51
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	50	52
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	46	48
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	27	28
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	68	69
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	41	42
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	41	43
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>387</b>

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

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Bhailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2025. Go raibh maith agaibh as bhur iarratas a chur isteach. Maith sibh don obair atá déanta agaibh in bhur cheantar go dtí seo - guímid gach rath oraibh i bhur dtionscadail amach anseo. Ádh mór.

This was my first visit to Glounthaune in the role of adjudicator for the Tidy Towns Competition and your letter of introduction which accompanied your entry proved very helpful in my visit to your beautiful town and environs. Your letter of introduction also claims that your committee and volunteers and all your sponsors and supporters combined in well-tuned, enthusiastic and efficient working unit in 2025. I am very happy to report that that was a very accurate reflection of my experience of your town.

The previous adjudication report also made positive reference to your 2025-2028 planning document which you have updated. This is a very clear well-structured document, easily read and concise with the scheduled activities set out clearly and most importantly responsibility and status assigned.

In addition to the the above referenced documents together with your 2025 ma, your current submission is a still very substantial piece of work at 51 pages. While your document is very well presented complete with a lot of photographs of your wide range of activities completed during the year and is cross-referenced with your map you might consider if there is some duplication and repetition in your documents and future submissions might be reduced.

Thank you to your 8 committee members and your core group of 20 volunteers who have made such a contribution to your community. It is essential that you continue to bring in new members and strengthen your committee and you have reached out to all of the new developments to ensure everybody has a voice. The meetings with the individual area representatives are to be encouraged. This is particularly relevant in a rapidly area like Glounthaune where new arrivals are made particularly welcome to make their contribution for the good of all.

Your detailed out-reach activities is a comprehensive list and you have been very active in your engagements, most importantly with the schools communities but also with Cork County Council, An Taisce, and the Community Wetlands Forum for Harpers Island (CIEEM), amongst others. It is also encouraging to see that the staff of Eli-Lilly staff have used their annual CSR corporate activity day to work with you. A particular note of appreciation for the significant contributions of the 80th Boy Scouts and Erin's Own GAA Club juvenile section together with the scout-leaders, team managers and mentors.

You have highlighted that many organisations and numerous committed individuals who have contributed to the Glounthaune 2025 submission. You are indeed extremely fortunate to have such a range of support.

Significant local input from the Glounthaune Community Association, Glounthaune Men's Shed, and the Glounthaune Sustainable Development Group amongst others is acknowledged. You have also referenced the support received from your local commercial and business supporters including Ryans SuperValu Glanmire, Bio Cel, Dornan Engineering, Fitzpatrick's Shop and the Elm Tree Restaurant.

Your engagement with the competition since the '90's (the last century!) has resulted in a very apparent sense of community spirit and pride.

Again your presentation of your methods of communication covers all possibilities and is also very well set out.

You have also identified the work of the wider community in supporting social inclusion programmes - well done.

Congratulations on your taking the sponsored Community Awards Scheme for Cork County Council for your work on the 'Upstart Festival'. Best of luck for September, 2025.

It is very apparent that all of the community continues to be invested in Glounthaune in all sorts of ways.

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

The outstanding feature of Glounthaune is that it is a ribbon development staggered along the L3004 stretching from approximately the Sensitivity Garden in Craig's Field past the Church and Parish Community Centre, past the railway station continuing down to the entrance to Harpers Island down to The Elm Tree, all complemented by the cycle-way running parallel to the main road.

You have identified the new bus-stops and the works to the railway station, including the relocation of the planters so as to allow for easier maintenance. This is a simple example of initiating an easy action that produces a better outcome.

In relation to the railway station, the eye-catching birds mural has a brilliant splash of humour with the positioning of the 2 litter-carrying gulls directly over the bin - a touch of genius, all overseen by the wood bird cut-outs on the facade. The outside of the railway station has a car-parking area that could be improved. It may have been missed but there was no bike parking facilities seen at the railway station observed.

A highlight of the Glounthaune visit was the area around the Village including the Railway Bridge, the access road down, the Glounthaune Community Centre and the Rising Tide Bar along with the New Glanmire 1810 terrace of houses all built around the car-parking areas looking out over the sea, a beautiful location all brilliantly supplemented by colourful verges and filled hanging baskets. However, the road and parking markings and the decorative fascia at the gable end of the Community Centre might benefit from some painting and decoration. Glounthaune Village Heritage board was excellent.

Crossing the road, the Sacred Heart Church building and grounds together with the much-used Parish Community Centre were in excellent condition. Following the Dry Bridge Road, the post office and shops with accommodation over are well maintained. The planters outside Flower Power Florist were full and colourful. The footpath, road and stone walls complete with trees and plants and flowers leading up to the entrance to the Highlands Estate and the Dry Bridge are also well looked after. Serious effort has also been made at the corner of Dry Bridge and the Estate with flower pots also in evidence.

Fitzpatrick's Foodstore is an obvious landmark in Glounthaune and judging by the full car park it is also very popular. The provision of car-parking across the road necessitates pedestrian crossing for customers. The extensive and attractive landscaping works and planting carried out across the road are very welcome. It was good to see some bike parking railings at the entrance to the walkway and greenway.

The Generation Education creche is also in excellent condition. Preference would not be for plastic flowers if possible. The red-heart murals together with the works to the gable and main sign over the entrance add to the quality of the building.

Mention must be made of the re-purposed public telephone boxes providing well-signposted Defibrillator facilities. The Gaelic lettering used is especially eye-catching. Congratulations to Cork County Council and Stryker in working on this initiative.

Leaving Glounthaune the Elm Tree makes a very inviting picture, a blaze of red in boxes on the railings and the flat roof corner, together with excellent topiary, and grass verge all very neatly trimmed.

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

Glounthaune has many green green spaces and landscaped that require exploration, each space having its own characteristics and charm.

Your current entry and last year's adjudicators report accurately identify the Sensory Garden as one of the jewels in the crown of Glounthaune's green space, it was amazing in terms of location and surrounds, colour, and enjoyment. Everything from the colourful entrance arcade, bridge, entrance door complete with porthole to the little fairy kingdom and decorative wildlife on the surround fence and all of this without mention of the great planting, trees, raised planters, mulching, signage, pathways, stones and tables and benches for picnics in an ideal setting.

Given the sunny day of the adjudication the Human Sundial was tested and found to be accurate. Again, the use of Gaelic lettering for the months was excellent.

The Birds Trail board and Queenstown Junction board and signage, and the playground all contributed to a very pleasant visit. The grass was mown.

As mentioned previously the verges and planting to The Village area are in excellent condition. Use of the Village Pump to allow for watering the plants has been made possible by the Mens Shed.

The landscaping on the new greenway and also the Ashbourne Walkway running separately but alongside the main road is very pleasing. It was great to see mature Scots Pines overlooking the Walkway, also complemented by the Ashbourne Lake Gardens, including the duck hotel. Newly planted trees here appear to be thriving. Some of the benches on the Walkway are showing their age, the previous very generous sponsors might be persuaded to assist with an upgrade.

The rose shrubs in the 2019 Railway Heritage Garden were also offering colour to passers-by.

You have also mentioned the sowing of bulbs, including daffodils, tulips and dahlia, and the sowing of Yellow

Rattle to the Johnstown Park wild meadow. The planting of suitable native perennials for this area will provide very suitable cover. Your current no mow policy for this area is also encouraged. The 2 planters at the entrance to Johnstown might be improved both in terms of visibility and content.

Thank you for the work in keeping all the green spaces distributed through your town so well maintained and attractive for all.

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

It would have been easier for any voluntary group to concentrate all their best efforts on the nationally known Harpers Island, in effect picking the low hanging fruit but Glounthane Tidy Towns have shown their ambition and vision by taking on a number of projects and works throughout the community that also enhance the environment of all.

Your continued maintenance of L3004 beech hedge and trees offers not only sustains the attractiveness of Glounthaune but also provides a wide range of provision and shelter for the diverse beneficiaries of the planting. Your use of the grant from the Council to augment the hedging by planting 300 saplings represents a serious investment in the future of this work - well done. The adjudicator was not certain as to the location Cuddys' Acre from the documentation but as mentioned above the use of rattle seed will assist the growth of natives other than grass.

The proposed new BioDiversity sign was not in place on the date of visit but it is another very welcome initiative - a critical part of the Tidy Town's mission is to explain and educate.

By way of contrast the newly sown pollinator flowers sown extensively on the new greenway were very visible on the date of the visit. They were probably past their past on that date but your entry photographs do the work full justice.

The practice of planting native trees is continued in 2025, with the Glounthaune National School being this year's beneficiaries. Does the school have a Green Flag yet?

In terms of nature and biodiversity, Glounthaune has the considerable advantage of having Harpers Island Nature Reserve on the doorstep. A visit to the sanctuary including stop offs at the bird hides is essential for anybody passing through - it will be rewarded by sightings of an extraordinary range of birds and wildlife, including the grazing horses. Excellent and all as your photographs are they cannot match the actual real life experience of the wetlands. The Tidy Towns have made their contribution with the planting of trees, and also assisted Bird Watch Ireland and the Mens Shed with their work. The installation of binoculars and the posters identifying the birds and gulls were particularly appreciated. The sand martins were very active on the day of the visit.

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

The new projects you have identified under the sustainability heading include the installation of solar panels at Dry Bridge to power street lighting, the rebuilding of a significant length of storm-damaged wall reusing the original stone, and the promotion and installation of solar panels to homes and commercial premises using local expertise. You have also continued the second hand book sales in the Post Office and the recycling of aluminium cans and bottles facilitated by Eli-Lilly. In addition to these being sustainable practices they provide a welcome income stream for your work.

Your plans to install 2 EV charging points at the Community Centre are well under way and will also help the promotion of sustainable driving for all.

The Planning document and the previous adjudicator made mention of your work with alternative weed control sprays and also your study of the count of the greenway users opened in 2024. It would be of interest to get an update or conclusion on these previous activities.

Review of your planning document demonstrates that you have completed many of your projects under this heading from water harvesting to using recycled coffee cups..

Your planning document identifies your liaison and assistance with the national school in pursuing a Green Flag on energy reduction. That would certainly be an achievement for the year if successfully completed.

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

In 2024 Glounthaune had an extremely high score under this critical category and you have again repeated a high score for 2025.

Congratulations and well done to the pupils, in particular the sixth year pupils, of Scoil Náisiúnta an Chroí Naofa and their teachers who have made their contribution to this high score for Glounthaune. Also congratulations to the artist who produced the winning anti-litter presentation poster, and all who entered, and also go raibh maith agat to the Art Teacher who helped out, well done to all.

Glounthaune Tidy Towns Committee and the many volunteers including the residents of the direct provision centre and other stakeholders have ensured that your town continues to have a high standard of tidiness and litter control in all of the public areas visited.

Your engagement and continued communication with Cork City Council has been very positive starting with your participation in the local authority's anti-litter awards and also the regular visit by the sweep cleaning truck.

Thank you to the staff of Eli-Lilly who carried out an extensive clean up of the inner verge in Johnstown Park. Also well done to all who took part in the An Tásice sponsored Beach Clean Up, the photographs showed an impressive number of filled bags before removal. Finally the continued work on dog fouling has yielded a very success outcome, there was no evidence of any fouling on the day of the visit.

Congratulations on your work - you have excelled again.

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

As with your previous submission you have primarily focussed on a number of significant renovations and new builds of one-off houses, all very attractive with outstanding gardens.

This report has previously noted the beautiful houses at the Village where you have succeeded in your stated aim of preserving the character of the village but the larger residential estates at The Highlands, Johnstown, and the excellent newer developments at Gort Fada and Harpers Creek were also visited.

It is recognised that the newer estates will take some time to fully establish themselves but initial impression is that they will be a major asset to the Glounthaune community. The green space to the left hand side on entering Gort Fada may offer opportunity for tree planting. It was also interesting to see that Erins Own GAA Club are pro-active in their recruitment of new players from Harpers Creek.

The residents and communities throughout Glounthaune continue to maintain and keep their homes, gardens and streets to a very high level.

At the day of adjudication the planned painting works to the Fitzpatrick's apartments at the entrance to the Ashbourne Walkway had not commenced. It is appreciated that parking for retail units is an issue but the development is not helped by the amount of signage on the boundary wall and the bollards out front.

The planned upgrade to the Old Railway Station House had not commenced on the date of adjudication.

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

As mentioned previously, the primary character of Glounthaune arises from it's position on the east-west L3004 road, which luckily does not carry the same volume of traffic as the N25. The other main road servicing Glounthaune is the Dry Bridge Road.

The roads are in good condition, well marked, speed controls and traffic lights in place, and clearly defined cycleways with good signage.

The surfaces of the cycleway are also in good condition, generally free of obstacle or impediment to smooth cycling.

Your landmark decorative miniature bridges complete with excellent landscaping provide excellent focus for notice of entry, very well supplemented by seven townland individually decorated upright stone markers sited along L3004 indicating the relevant townlands 'As Gaelge' complete with celtic decorations are well presented.

There is clearly visible car parking provided at the Fitzpatrick's Foodstore and also at the entrance to Harpers Island and the railway station.

A lot of work has been carried out at Dry Bridge, including the extensive landscaping around the Glounthane entrance sign, and works to the stone surround, all resulting in a very attractive approach under the bridge down Dry Bridge Road.

This adjudicator agrees with last year's note that the Tidy Towns Committee, along with others, are responsible for creating what must be one of the most attractive and biodiverse approach roads in the country, all the way from the Elm Tree to the R263 junction.

## **Concluding Remarks:**

You have submitted an excellent entry setting out a comprehensive review of your works completed, your work in progress and your future plans. You have completed some major projects successfully - well done. This might be the time to review your plans and consider the introduction of some new projects or programmes, possibly by looking at what other like-minded ambitious communities are doing.

It is fully appreciated that maintaining and improving communities built around a carriageway carrying a high volume of through traffic is particularly difficult.

This adjudicator was impressed with your presentation and the visit to see the outstanding work the committee and the volunteer community have carried out.

Go raibh maith agaibh go léir.