

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **PORTUMNA**
County : **GALWAY**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 28-07-2001

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2001	Mark Awarded 2000
Overall Developmental Approach	50	36	35
The Built Environment	40	31	29
Landscaping	40	31	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	17
Litter Control	40	31	30
Tidiness	20	15	14
Residential Areas	30	23	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	30	29
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	225	216

Portumna, County Galway

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Your *Portumna 2000 Strategy* is a most impressive 57 page document and you are to be congratulated on it. Due to the time constraints on adjudication perhaps you might in future submit a two page summary of the main points affecting the Tidy Towns competition only. Road works appear to be over, or at least suspended for the summer.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Pride of place must go to the Castle which is a deserved attraction for visitors. The Emerald Star Line base, the Marina and the Forest Park all contribute to the unique overall character of Portumna. Much of the cut stonework required by Duchas for the restoration of historic buildings throughout the country is carried out here. The Shannon Oaks Hotel with its well tended grounds impresses as do both churches. The Credit Union building, if new, sets a headline for future developments. The present Language School and former Convent still convey an air of solemnity with religious statues in the grounds.

LANDSCAPING

Again, the formal gardens and the kitchen garden at the Castle lead the way. Castle Avenue provides a restful introduction to the Castle entrance. Landscaping at the Shannon Oaks Hotel makes maximum use of the large space available.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Lovers of nature will relish the tree-lined paths and vistas of the Forest Park. Few towns are so fortunate in having such a park on its doorstep. With its very accessible and open building and information on the wildlife to be seen in the marked walks, this is an amenity worth travelling to see.

LITTER CONTROL

The large numbers of boats using the Marina seem to overwhelm the capacity the skip to cope with the resultant refuse. This is an obvious location to place recycling bins, but they are not to be seen. The message at the Forest Park, "Please bring your litter home" seems to have the desired effect as the area seems to have neither bins nor litter. Street bins were adequate for the demand.

TIDINESS

A Tool Hire Company in Dominic Street used the footpath to store some materials. The usual Saturday business was taking place through the town and no undue untidiness was discernible.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Abbey Street was nicely painted and litter free. Obviously, the road surfaces await their final cover. New residential areas will take time to settle. Castle Park was cheerful and alive with children's activities.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Adjacent to the Emerald Star property there is a stretch of land and a long factory-like building, all of which appears to be in decay. Perhaps something could be done to make the site more presentable. Approach roads and back areas gave the impression that someone cared for their appearance; most likely the residents themselves.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

There is little doubt that the road works, when completed, will be a milestone rather than a millstone in the progress of Portumna. Your committee has played a significant part in driving Portumna forward, maximising its strong points and harnessing the community effort to improve the environment.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (28/07/01)

Do remember to discourage advertising hoardings and fly posting as these can give a rather cluttered appearance to approach roads and create a bad impression on the visitor. Quite a few were noted on approach roads and at the main junctions in the town. In terms of signage, the junction sign on the Ballinasloe side of the town was quite grubby. Do try to encourage the restoration of traditional sash windows along the shop and houses of the main streets. The adjudicator noted that there was quite a lot of new development taking place along both the approach roads and the main streets. Do ensure that these are in keeping with Portumna's unique charm and character. The wrought iron entrance area on Main Street leading to laneway to the church was quite charming – indeed this wrought ironwork is quite unique to the town and is evident elsewhere. Portumna looked well on a warm second adjudication day.