

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Portarlinton**

Ref: **292**

County: **Laois**

Mark: **183**

Category: **D**

Date: **18/06/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	28	28
The Built Environment	40	24	23
Landscaping	40	25	25
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17	17
Litter Control	40	20	20
Tidiness	20	10	10
Residential Areas	30	25	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28	28
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	183	181

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for your completed entry form and the informative notes regarding developments which have been completed during the past year. The Tidy Town's Committee is to be congratulated on increasing its membership to 13. The more representative the committee is the better. Due to its age, Portarlinton is a difficult project particularly in the inner town area. Your success promoting solutions to the development and up grading of 'sub urban' areas is commended and indeed in a number of areas, impressive. Perhaps in the years ahead you may be able to bring the business community along with you to address the improvement of the town centre

The Built Environment:

The Church grounds to left of Tullamore Road are nicely maintained with lawn,grotto, mature trees, flower beds and tarmac car park. Construction work ongoing at Kilmalogue development brings its own disruption and the entrance to Mount St. Josephs is very poor. The new housing along Link Road with its developing trees and shrubs looks well. Swimming pool is attractively presented with a well maintained car park with row of trees to front. The back of the swimming pool should be screened. The new frontage to the Community Hall improves the visual aspect of the building. The Library and Court House look well. The refurbished Railway Station looks extremely well, hopefully the adjoining building will receive similar attention. St. Brigids Square is nicely presented with its green area and plantations. The French church is nicely presented with trimmed grave yard and lawns. The Georgian and Huguenot architecture of many of the town's buildings is very attractive.

Unfortunately, Arlington House is in a very bad state of repair.

Landscaping:

Riverside Walk is a very attractive feature and despite the ever present threat from vandals represents a very positive aspect to the future of Portarlinton. Its connection to the well restored Spa Bridge and proposed linkage to your wildlife park makes for an important and visually attractive corridor. The Link Road offers a convenient connection between the town and its major amenity, the Peoples Park and Swimming pool. It suffers from unsightly views of the back end of main street commercial premises and Fletchers yard. It has damage to the verges and the remains of vandalised trees. Fletchers Builders yard is an eyesore and generally untidy. The yard opposite with stacks of pallets is also unsatisfactory. While some tree planting has taken place to screen these areas, much has yet to be done.

On the Tullamore Road the rockery at the children's crossing sign could be weeded. The nearby school is cleanly presented with its tarmac frontage. Ross Court and Ross Court Lawns are fine Wilton Lawns has development work taking place.

The open area at the access road to Supervalu needs to be cleaned up and planted. The GAA park is not well presented and displays considerable weed along its railing frontage. Truck parking is also a problem in this area. Opposite the GAA sports field is an excellently presented commercial office building screened with trees and well kept lawns

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Peoples Park was well presented. An excellent Laois interpretative map for the Laois Heritage trail is well displayed. The trees, both old and new provide a glimpse of the future wealth of this amenity. There are number of sculptures distributed throughout the park which adds interest to the amenity value as a whole. The shrubberies are maturing and are becoming a feature interest in their own right.

Litter Control:

There was an unfortunate show of litter at the Hartpole effigy in the People's Park. In addition the litter bins were full to overflowing and some litter (Garda crime scene tape) was blowing in the wind. Otherwise litter appears to be well managed.

Tidiness:

Supervalu car park looks fine but a little attention to weeds in the kerb on the car park side is required. Good to see the recycling facility at back end of car park.

Old Centra sign lying up against the ditch at the ESB sub station should be removed. The central square is not helped by the garage and its associated untidiness.

The Costcutter car park which has had kerb stone and weed removal work is still unsightly. The adjoining public car park is fine although there was some litter around the recycling units and lawn could be trimmed. From the Monasterevin side the wall to front of Siac-Butler has a lot of weed etc. Along Canal Road there is a variety of trees and shrubs but no maintenance resulting in wild grasses taking over. Verge is dug up at GAA Park. There is some dereliction opposite McMahons.

Residential Areas:

Marian Hills Estate looks well although the green area to front of houses requires some attention. A new housing estate to the left of Spa Bridge also looks well. Colour planned and screening hedges are in place to hide Siac-Butler link fence.

The frontage to Avondale estate looked very well. The new housing estate adjacent to the SIAC Butler property was very well presented with open plan lawns and a nice selection of trees in the open areas. The houses have colour coordinated colour scheme. There is no wirescape. The Pine

Villa estate of bungalows is well maintained, and its green areas being trimmed during the visit.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

On the approach into Portarlington from Tullamore the entrance to Gracefield Park GAA grounds is under maintenance, and the grass verge to the left needs relaying and seeding. To the right there is a mixture of new and old housing with intermittent maintenance of verge. The built area of the approach is a bit stark with the absence of trees along its footpaths

The bridge railings in Patrick Street require repainting. It is nice to see the improvements along Bracklone Street. The new footpaths and lamp posts which will lead to the removal of wirescape are very welcome.

Many of the town's footpaths require restoration. Main street is fairly narrow and the introduction of trees would help its presentation. The Square suffers from the central siting of a garage somewhat untidily surrounded by cars and tyres.

General Impression:

Portarlington is a town with much potential. The past year has seen a number of developments come to fruition, for example the Railway station and a number of housing estates. The value of its amenities cannot be over emphasized. Their considered exploitation should correspond to the rapid growth of the community