

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Portlaw**

Ref: **635**

County: **Waterford**

Mark: **178**

Category: **C**

Date: **09/06/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	23	
The Built Environment	40	29	
Landscaping	40	28	
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16	
Litter Control	40	16	
Tidiness	20	13	
Residential Areas	30	21	
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	26	
General Impression	10	6	
TOTAL MARK	300	178	

Overall Developmental Approach:

We welcome Portlaw back into the competition and wish them every success in it. For a town of its size your Committee is, indeed, small. It is recommended under this heading that a 3/5 year development plan be used and part of this could be the identification of ways and means of increasing the size of your Committee to be representative of residential, commercial and Statutory Bodies. Initially perhaps you might consult with your Regional Tourism Authority based in Waterford City and your Local Authority who would be glad to give advice on the matter. In the event of producing this plan you should try to set out on a 3/5 year basis specific projects which you can realistically achieve within your physical and financial resources. In order to do this, and, as has been done in other centres, you may need to carry out a survey of the town identifying possible areas for development under the various headings of the competition.

The Built Environment:

Your major buildings i.e., Churches, School, Credit Union, Post Office, Library etc are being well maintained and looked well on adjudication day. The amount of terraced houses in Portlaw is unique for a town of its size. Perhaps, as part of your planning, it might be possible to use the services of a colour consultant who could advise the owners of these houses on individual or collective colour schemes which would greatly enhance the overall appearance of the town. The Grotto is very attractive but unfortunately the run down gate lodge type house in its vicinity detracts from it. It should be possible with the goodwill of the owners to restore this. It would make an ideal small

museum. There are also a number of other derelict sites in the town. In this connection you could consult with your Local Authority who have powers under the Derelict Sites Act to approach the owners regarding maintenance etc. The Old School is also becoming somewhat of an eyesore. Business premises in general look well and, if you have not already done so, and as mentioned above, a representative from the business community should be invited on to your Committee.

Landscaping:

The Grotto is excellent. Unfortunately the area opposite it is somewhat overgrown and needs attention. The roundabout in the main area is being reasonably well maintained but could be improved perhaps with the planting of some flowers. As part of your planning and in terms of general overall landscaping you should consult with your Local Authority who could advise you on this subject. In the event try to plant trees and shrubs which will give you some colour on an all year round basis.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your comments under this heading are noted. However centres are encouraged to develop a specific wildlife project and here again advice can be had either from your Local Authority or Duchas or perhaps you may be fortunate in having someone in your locality who is knowledgeable and interested in this type of development. In the meantime you will receive a nominal mark under this heading.

Litter Control:

For a town of its size Portlaw was, comparatively speaking, practically litter free on adjudication day. Congratulations to all concerned. This is an important part of the competition and needs constant monitoring. The area however around the recycling centre was somewhat untidy. Many centres have run anti-litter competitions for their residents and schools which have been very successful in highlighting the litter problem.

Tidiness:

The town was presented in a reasonably tidy manner with just the odd unkempt spot here and there. In most cases this calls for the individual effort and again, this can be highlighted through competition, local publicity and example.

Residential Areas:

Individual houses looked well and many had lovely gardens in full bloom on adjudication day. Terraced houses are being well maintained and new housing developments were noted. The latter will be disruptive for a while but this will pass. The appearance of residential areas is an important part of the competition and, in many cases, calls for individual effort. You cannot succeed without it.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads are in reasonable condition. It is recommended however that grass verges should be strimmed bearing in mind that adjudication starts from the town nameplate signs or speed limit signs, whichever you opt for. In this connection consult the Tidy Towns Handbook which has some advice on how this cutting should take place in relation to the propagation of wild flowers. Road surfaces throughout the town are somewhat indifferent. Some are very good, some are badly in need of attention. Footpaths in general are well surfaced. Public seating is being reasonably well maintained.

General Impression:

Portlaw has a tremendous potential for achieving success in this competition. There is a wonderful mix of buildings and architecture and open spaces which can be planted and landscaped to greatly enhance the overall appearance of the town. Your comments regarding "lack of awareness" would seem to suggest that, with a view to next year, you should initially call a public meeting and invite to it representatives from your Regional Tourism Authority, Local Authorities, residents, commercial premises, local development association (if one exists) schools and inform them of what your proposals are for next year assuming that you would have a plan prepared by then. You should set your sights on, as a minimum, achieving a county award in three or four year's time. You have the potential to do it.