

# Tidy Towns Competition 2004

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Banagher**

Ref: **265**

County: **Offaly**

Mark: **231**

Category: **C**

Date: **04/06/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	34	34
The Built Environment	40	34	34
Landscaping	40	33	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	21
Litter Control	40	34	34
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	23	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	30	29
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>229</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for an excellent submission and illustrated town map outlining areas of development. Your form suggested you are getting great support from the community and this is heartening. A committee membership of 18 is above the average and is commendable. The partnership relationship referred last year seems to be strong and your ability to work with so many agencies within the town is a good formula for Tidy Towns promotion. The town is large relevant to its population and the availability of a litter warden should be of great value to you in your endeavours to progress.

### The Built Environment:

Banagher is endowed with great buildings, old and new, a splendid expanse of water and water activity and poignant reminders of great milling days. The distinctive period buildings of Crank House and the Royal Shannon are interesting and have distinctive features. Public buildings were well presented and new developments seem to blend well with the character of the town. Of course, all will hinge on the community's attitude to making Banagher a place of excellence and your formula to liaise with other agencies will help to achieve this. The church is well presented with attractive areas of landscaping. Schools were well presented and some have landscaping of great quality. Eye catching were Brosna Lodge, Bank of Ireland, The Old Forge, Lyons and Quigley's. The renowned J.J. Hough's has gone shabby and needs refurbishment in the traditional form. The town can still boast of a good number of traditional shopfronts.

## **Landscaping:**

The square is your strong point and the sculpture is interesting and attractive. The weakness here is signposting and the traffic control is off-putting. Longterm you should create more space for pedestrians and fight back from the influence of cars and congested traffic. Many towns are now reducing car parking in the core areas and giving more space to pedestrians, enabling more tree planting and seating for the community. The recently completed works at the marina area are superb and of high quality. We commend the presentations of Carrig Craft and Silverline Cruising Company and the allied landscaping. However, there is a problem with dumping and poor quality signs. The Shannon Bank Park is good and complements the above mentioned developments. We look forward to its completion with flood lighting of Cromwell's Castle. These unique buildings are of immense importance and precious exponents of our heritage.

## **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

More than most towns, you have great scope for the promotion of wildlife and you should, with ease raise your marks in this category. Indeed it would be difficult to avoid an involvement in wildlife in view of the towns adjacency to the Shannon. Surprisingly, you left this section blank in your submission, but it is assumed the promotion of wildlife forms part of your comprehensive programme.

## **Litter Control:**

Litter control was good and Main Street in particular was well presented. This is very much a community requirement to cooperate with you and any efforts made by your committee to improve the litter control is praiseworthy. We acknowledge your efforts in harnessing the interest of the several organisations in creating a litter free town. The Barnes and Mc Cormac monument should be given a clean up for next year.

## **Tidiness:**

You have serious dereliction problems that are keeping your marks down in this section. Derelict buildings are in all areas of the town and the area near the Vine House is particularly poor in presentation. On the other hand many of these buildings are of great historic interest and reflect a busy 19th century Banagher. Some would be suitable for restoration and could be put to good commercial use. Perhaps a survey of such buildings could be carried out by those interested in local history. The area behind Crank House is extensive and very derelict. Other areas of untidiness relate to unattended open spaces: e.g., the site opposite the new Cor na Cille housing development.

## **Residential Areas:**

You have scored well in this section again this year and housing estates were well presented. Many individuals have superb gardens and bring great colour to the town's environs. The houses to the entrance of Portavolla Self Catering units are in need of fresh painting. This is an important site and could with little effort be improved. Cuba cottages and Cuba Avenue were well presented with some excellent individual effort.

## **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

The approach from the Birr side is most imposing with a splendid vista of the Church of Ireland spire. It sets the scene for a favourable image of the town. In general, approach roads were well presented. It is noticed that ribbon development is very prevalent: would it not be better to concentrate on rural infill in view of the numerous spaces available in the town area itself? Back and side areas are now an integral part of the competition and valuable marks are allotted to this category. Well presented side and back areas, especially those visible from the roadside can be of

great interest to visitors and often feature buildings of great interest.

**General Impression:**

In common with other towns of its size Banagher is undergoing significant developments as we leave the 20th century behind us. Tidy Towns committees have an important part to play in the town's development. Their commitment down through the years has been immense and their ability to work with local authorities and other relevant agencies can lead to fruitful progress. We commend you on your work to date and look forward to continued progress.