

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Mountshannon**

Ref: **385**

County: **Clare**

Mark: **269**

Category: **A**

Date: **11/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	49	49
The Built Environment	40	37	37
Landscaping	40	38	38
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	26	25
Litter Control	40	36	35
Tidiness	20	16	18
Residential Areas	30	27	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	32	30
General Impression	10	8	9
TOTAL MARK	300	269	268

Overall Developmental Approach:

Mountshannon Community Council is welcome to the National Tidy Towns Competition 2005. Thank you for your entry form and detailed submission, including the 2005 Work Plan; Map; photograph, etc. Your committee of thirteen has undertaken quite a schedule of work for year, but much of the work had yet to be completed on inspection day and the village seemed less well maintained than other years. We note that you work with many local groups - Clare County Council; FAS; RRD; Coillte; Waterways Ireland; Shannon Developments, and The Arts Council in the development of the village. Mountshannon's inclusion in the East Clare Tourism and Iniscealtha Festival of Arts websites should help to attract more visitors to Mountshannon. And well done on your fund raising efforts.

The Built Environment:

The village boasts many fine properties, and some were admired including both Churches, School, Mountshannon Hotel, An Cupán Caifé and Noel's Restaurant. The Pottery could be improved by the removal/painting, as mentioned, year after year, of the old petrol pump. The Arched Shelter on the road down the Lake Shore was also admired. Oak House and environs are in a very poor state, as is the stone building (with fine sash windows) beside the Hotel, and the old forge building. And the corrugated-roofed building beside the Church of Ireland Church is turning into a black spot. It is to be hoped that the developer will soon complete the two unfinished properties on the main street.

Landscaping:

There were many lovely flower beds/planters in the village, but the flower beds with the maritime theme were much admired. Tree planting throughout the village was good, but the trees inside the dry stone wall opposite the housing development need attention, and the chain-link fencing needs to be screened/replaced. On the road down to the harbour the shrubs - Senecio; Hydrangia; Roses; Buddlea; Hypericum, to name but a few - were in full bloom. The shrubberies in the raised/fenced green areas on the Whitegate end of the village need weeding, and the old broken seat should be removed. Aistear Park, with its impressive entrance; Labyrinth and the finest of broad leafed trees and shrubs (Birch; Rowan; Ash; Willow; Hawthorn; Oak/Winter flowering heather and roses), is a wonderful amenity for locals and visitors to enjoy. Because of the many planted areas, this requires a massive amount of maintenance - and work had just seemed to commence on the weeding and trimming on inspection day. Perhaps mulching between the shrubs might alleviate this problem.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Woodpark Forest Park, with its nature trail, presents a wonderful opportunity for the promotion of wildlife in the area, as is the area around lake shore. You might consider erecting some wildlife display boards here.

Litter Control:

Litter control on the day was good with just a little sprinkling by the kerb in the hotel area. There is, however, a litter-trap opposite the Pottery. The Bring Bank area at the Harbour was well presented, as was the refuse collection area for boat users.

Tidiness:

There are number of old properties in very poor condition, almost derelict, keeping your marks down in this category; the roof in the Parish Hall needs cleaning and some weeds removed from the Garda Station gutters. And there is a lot of debris in the field beside the Top Garage, and the unattended open space beside Noel's is very untidy. The WC's at the harbour were very well presented inside and outside.

Residential Areas:

Mountshannon has many very well presented private dwellings with lovely mature gardens, and the colour scheme on the new terrace on the approach from Scariff is most pleasing. The painting of the houses in the Sandycove Estate varies in standard, and it is hoped that the new housing development beside Sandycove will be well finished and landscaped appropriately. The village has very many holiday retreats, and these again vary in standards of painting and landscaping. We commend developers on retaining some specimen mature trees as part of additional developments.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

All the signs to the village were in good order. The road surfaces were also in good repair. The East Clare Route Map in the village is very well presented, and visitors were noted making full use of it. The pavement/tree stump in front of the two unfinished buildings, already mentioned, should be removed as it is damaging the footpath.

General Impression:

Mountshannon, on the shores of the Majestic River Shannon, is a lovely village with an attractive

streetscape, and a haven for visitors with walking, angling and interests in all type of water sports. We commend you on your consistent high mark since winning the National Competition way back in 1981. We wish you well in the future.

Second Round Adjudication:

The first adjudicator noticed a slight falling-back this year, though this is not reflected in a reduction of marks. Certainly the handsome neo-classical Market House was in need of cleaning up at the date of the second adjudication in mid-August. The Holy Island Ferry ticketing caravan and the waterside tea shop both had a somewhat dishevelled air, recalling the honky-tonk type of tourism facilities which one hoped were a vanishing feature of our holiday and leisure resorts. These are small matters. The landscaping, and the disposition of shrubs, flowerbeds and incidental floral decorations, were nothing short of superb. It was very encouraging to see new houses being built with stone facings and stone boundary walls. New houses on the east side of the Portumna road were new to this adjudicator, who wondered how popular they can be when directly fronting the road; they are of handsome urban design and make a pleasant introduction to the village when approaching from that side. Litter control, and the condition of the recycling area, were equally good on second adjudication day. Mountshannon is one of the most attractive inland waterside villages known to this adjudicator, but nature is not the only cause: there is every evidence of very firm human minds and hands behind its first class development and maintenance.