

# Tidy Towns Competition 2005

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Shannon**

Ref: **33**

County: **Clare**

Mark: **233**

Category: **E**

Date: **11/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	44	44
The Built Environment	40	31	31
Landscaping	40	35	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	21
Litter Control	40	25	26
Tidiness	20	16	16
Residential Areas	30	25	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	29	29
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>233</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Shannon is welcome to the 2005 National Tidy Towns Competition. The Committee of nine is thanked for the detailed submission, including 2002-2005 Action Plan; minutes of meeting/letter; County Council draft plan for the refurbishment of the Corrib Drive/Drumgeely area; Tidy Towns flyers, and the detailed map which was most useful. Well done on your fund-raising efforts. We note that you are now working closely with Clare County Council and Shannon Town Council, and hope that you are now in the process of producing a development plan for the next three years. A tremendous amount of work has been done - the Town Centre/Sky Count area can only be described as work in progress - and there is much more to be done, including, where possible, influencing developers in the type of buildings appropriate to Shannon Town.

### The Built Environment:

The Town has some fine buildings and many were admired, including both Churches; Garda Station with the mature silver birch trees; Town Hall; Fire Station; Oakwood Arms and gardens; and the Shannon Community Hall, but the area surrounding the hall was poorly presented. There are many schools in the Town and all looked well, but St. Caimin's Community School presented very well. The fencing around Gael Scoil does needs some form of screening. The Tir na nÓg children's playground is most attractive and the customers were really having fun. Wolfe Tones na Sionna Clubhouse and playing area looked very well, but the De Beer's Social Club area is looking neglected. As mentioned, the town centre area is under reconstruction, but some other buildings in the area - The

Library and Lidl - looked well, but The Shannon Business Centre needs painting and Kincora Hall is in dreadful condition. Supermac's need to clean up the outflow by their fire escape and remove the weeds from the gutters. The Ballycasey Craft Centre, with some lovely floral displays, looked well, but the garbage collection area is very visible as one arrives, and could perhaps be screened, and the fencing on the driveway needs attention.

### **Landscaping:**

The tree planting on the approach from the Ballycasey roundabout to the town centre, by Ballycasey Grove and along Corrib Drive was admired. As were many of the floral displays throughout, but particularly on the old main road, by the Drumgeely shopping area; The Library, and the wooden tiered planters looked very attractive. Well done to all concerned. The Town has many green areas, but they did not seem as well maintained this year and weeds were left to grow too high before spraying with weed killer. Both shrubberies on the Ballycasey and Town Centre roundabouts need attention. The Rose of Sharon hedging, particularly around Tullyglass Hill was in full bloom. Noted that the Town Park was closed for refurbishment.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

It is noted that in your development programme there are plans to extend the River Walk - a wonderful amenity for locals and visitors alike, but in the meantime the paths are overgrown and need resurfacing, the entrance by Drumgeely is very neglected with bags of rubbish dumped there, and residents should be discouraged from dumping garden refuse. Your plan to improve the signage/awareness for this amenity is admirable, as is the organisation of talks in the schools on the County Council's Habitat Survey.

### **Litter Control:**

The Town did not fare well again under this heading. Litter was noted all around, but specifically under the trees on the Ballycasey approach; by the Shell Garage; around many of the Housing Estates; overflowing from the garbage bin by Murphy's Cottage Restaurant; large water containers and other rubbish dumped in the parking area by Tir na nÓg; around Town Court and at the back of the Leisure Centre. There are many litter bins, of varying standards, located throughout the town, but, unfortunately, your appeal for cooperation through your flyers seemed to go unnoticed. It is hoped that with the schools' achievement in receiving Green Flags, this will have a positive influence in the future.

### **Tidiness:**

The Town presented quite well in many areas under this heading. However, the delivery area behind Tesco's needs attention and the garbage point in the Town Court was very untidy. Supermarket proprietors need to take responsibility for collecting their trollies from Cronan Lawn, Finian Park, Rossbracken, to name but a few. The bring bank and surrounding yard at the Leisure Centre was very untidy.

### **Residential Areas:**

Many of the private dwellings throughout the Town are very well presented. In the housing estates the dwellings looked well but some of the outside walls needed painting and weeds removed from their base. Again this year there are new estates under construction, and it is hoped they will be finished to a high standard, like the new estate opposite St. Caimin's, with its stone wall, railings and children's play area (perhaps the planting of broad leaf trees, e.g. Silver Birch, Rowan would be more suitable than Cordylines). Many of the housing estates' old place names are in need of refurbishment/replacement, but the stone Frog sign/artwork at Ballycaseymore was much admired, and should be replicated throughout the Town. The private dwellings in the Drumgeely area are well presented, some of the apartment blocks need painting, as do the lamp posts, the abandoned car

removed, and the old hall is a turning into a black spot.

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

Noted the new signs on the N19 approach. There are many advertising signs on the Ballycasey approach and the placement of a new Shannon Town sign located close to the roundabout would be beneficial. The road surfaces were good, but the road down to the Flying Club is poor and building debris had been dumped there. The entrance area (by the RFC) to the Cemetery should be upgraded. The old all weather pitch and surrounding area at the back of Inis Mhara need attention. The old pavements on both Tullyvarraga and Tullyglass Hill need upgrading.

### **General Impression:**

Shannon, Ireland's first new town in some two hundred years, is having a major make over around its core area; new housing developments are under construction in many areas, and we look forward to chronicling their progress. You have achieved much, but there is much to do, and we wish you well for the future.

### **Second Round Adjudication:**

Shannon has now entered the uppermost section of the competition, and is therefore accorded a second adjudication. Congratulations to all those on the committee and in the community in general on this achievement. You will find that increases in marking will now be harder to come by. The remarks of the second adjudicator are usually of a less detailed and more general nature than those of the first; in your case this is appropriate, as your documentation shows that you have entered a period of reassessment. The town is remarkable for its extensive and well kept open spaces; even in the five or six years since this adjudicator last visited Shannon the trees have grown up wonderfully well and this has removed the rather bleak appearance of the more distant past. In spite of the large and busy Town Centre, Shannon retains the feeling of a large suburb rather than of a genuine town, principally because of the inward-looking nature of the shopping area; the fact that the usual town-centre features such as the churches, parochial house, and schools are scattered around rather than clustered with the shops does give the impression that a town centre should be purely commercial. Because we first see the backs of the principal supermarkets, there is an unwelcome feeling – the first adjudicator noted this in relation to the untidy rear of Tesco's. As an immense suburb, the town looked remarkably well in spite of a number of fenced-off areas where there were ongoing works in mid-August. You drew attention in your documentation to your dissatisfaction with signage: certainly to the visitor it is a most confusing place to find one's way around – there are plenty of directional signs (eg To Tullyglass) but there seemed to be very few street names at the start of each separate street and at street intersections. The roundabout, which you say has been much debated, was looking much better than the one outside the immediate area of the town. Under the heading of Tidiness, Shannon was looking remarkably tidy on second adjudication day, save for the locations referred to by the first adjudicator in early July – indeed the over-indulgent commercial signage at Ballycasey was a blot on this otherwise tidy area. However, in August there was a considerable amount of very tall weed growth, mainly dock, nettles and the illegal ragwort, along the margins of several main roads. Landscaping received a very high mark in July, and this is endorsed. The mature timber embracing the delightful approach to the Craft Centre at Ballycasey should be referred to here. Litter was certainly a problem: have fines been imposed? – there is nothing like a number of well-publicised prosecutions to reduce that scourge. This adjudicator found Shannon to be a most interesting place to visit, and was much taken by the thoughtful documentation which you provided. Every good wish for your future endeavours.