

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Clonbur**

Ref: **321**

County: **Galway**

Mark: **232**

Category: **B**

Date: **10/08/2005**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2005 | Mark Awarded 2004 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Overall Developmental Approach | 50 | 37 | 34 |
| The Built Environment | 40 | 35 | 35 |
| Landscaping | 40 | 31 | 28 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 30 | 22 | 21 |
| Litter Control | 40 | 29 | 32 |
| Tidiness | 20 | 13 | 13 |
| Residential Areas | 30 | 25 | 25 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 40 | 31 | 30 |
| General Impression | 10 | 9 | 9 |
| TOTAL MARK | 300 | 232 | 227 |

Overall Developmental Approach:

Your additional marks under this heading are well justified. Having read your interesting documentation and admired its innovative nature, this was a most pleasant and instructive visit, with several admirable initiatives noted and only one (temporary) disappointment.

The Built Environment:

Saint Patrick's Church and the Health Centre complement each other in their shared pleasant grounds - both were beautifully painted. The Victorian Gothic All Saints' Church is the most architecturally distinguished building in the neighbourhood of the village; it is hoped that it can be saved for the purposes you specify - it would be well worth your while to visit the recently reinstated church at Castleblakeney which was in worse condition than this one and is now a successful community centre and library - the people there might advise on how to obtain funding. The unique stone structure at the main junction was handsomely maintained. The Community Centre was bright and clean. The frontage of the Hotel was well presented - from a distance its flat roof does not fit well among the traditional pitched roofs of the village. Among the very smart business premises Kyne's, Burke's Mount Gable, Lynch's Centra, An Post and An Seisceim were outstanding.

Landscaping:

The lovely grassy mound rising to the Calvary immediately caught the eye. So did the remarkable waterfall which is so well landscaped it does not look artificial. The atmospheric cemetery was reasonably well maintained. Colourful plantings, window-boxes and tubs here and there continue the feeling of care.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The entrance to the Mount Gable and Lough Coolin walk was favourably noted, and the Forrest Walk that starts near the church was followed for about a mile. These amenities are of inestimable value from the points of view of the appreciation of nature and also for tourism. Please continue to provide information under this heading on your entry form so that we can keep abreast with developments.

Litter Control:

This was not as good as usual. There was disposable litter in the the waterfall garden and more on the road below. There was much rubbish inside the entrance to Clonbur Wood, including oil drums, small pieces of machinery, motor tyres and plastic bags containing refuse. It is appreciated that this is an unusual occurrence but one has to judge what one sees on the date of the visit. The recycling area was perfectly clean.

Tidiness:

You are all too aware of the unsightly building opposite the school so it will not be emphasised. The house next to it was in need of painting. Weed growth was seen here and there - for example, at the entrance to the cemetery: the answer might be not to weed some spaces at all but to encourage grassing. However insignificant these details, they can add up. In general, however, Clonbur has the appearance of a really tidy village.

Residential Areas:

The traditional street houses are the chief element which gives Clonbur its real charm, and they are presented with pride. The estates leading up from the waterfall garden seemed to be nearing completion - almost all the houses now have well tended gardens. Meadows with wild flowers were seen on both sides of the hill - this is an imaginative touch and preferable to mown public lawns - ugly larger 'weeds' such as dock are easily pulled if desired. The sheltered housing at Dun Mhuire impressed; the tarmac is clearly more practical than gravel though it does have a rather bleak look. There was quite an amount of ribbon development - some fine homes, but the feeling of community is inevitably lost.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Street surfacing was good. Very neat parking spaces opposite the church were seen. The new entrance to the proposed Heritage Centre was well under way with excellent stone walls - stonework is a traditional feature and it is very encouraging to see this tradition being continued in so many places. The street furniture - particularly the public lighting - has been praised before but should be reiterated: the absence of poles and overhead wires in the village centre is a real visual blessing.

General Impression:

This is a most delightful village. The Community Council is making very successful efforts not only to keep it so, but also to make improvements where these are seen to be needed.

Second Round Adjudication:

The verges on the approach from Maam were rather overgrown on Second Adjudication Day and

weed control was a problem to some kerbs. There are a number of new houses under construction in the vicinity of the village and you should try to ensure that these are finished to the highest qualities in terms of materials and landscaping in order to blend in with Clonbur's unique charm. The Community Centre looked well, as did Burke's which (along with a number of other premises) sported some colourful hanging baskets. The church was very fresh in its presentation. The freshly whitewashed wall near the village centre, set, as it is, beside a stone one created an attractive contrast. The standard of litter control could have been better, with a number of outbreaks of papers blowing along streets and inside the monument at the crossroads. Building materials should be removed once work is complete – concrete copings or kerbs appeared to have been abandoned in the vicinity of the recycling bins. The adjacent building appeared quite neglected, with grubby walls and rusty tin roof. The plans for a Cultural and Design Centre in the old Church of Ireland are a fine aspiration, and the adjudicator looks forward to seeing its progress. Do ensure that untidy yard areas such as that at Centra are screened from public view, as much as possible. Beer barrels appeared to be being stored beside the pub at the crossroads.