

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Eyrecourt**

Ref: **448**

County: **Galway**

Mark: **193**

Category: **B**

Date: **07/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	30	30
The Built Environment	40	23	22
Landscaping	40	28	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	17
Litter Control	40	29	28
Tidiness	20	13	14
Residential Areas	30	21	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	24	22
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	193	186

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for your documentation, and especially for the extract from the Integrated Area Plan for Eyrecourt. The proposals are all admirable, and as they become implemented there should be a very significant rise in your marking. In the meantime, you have done very well this year under Landscaping and quite well under a number of other headings. Your map did not have many features which should be examined marked on it, but it is hoped that nothing of importance has been missed as a result.

The Built Environment:

Eyrecourt was one of the outstanding estate villages in Ireland, and there are remarkable vestiges of this remaining, some of them treated with rare discernment, others not so, due to the effects of social and demographic change. One of the former is the handsome house (identified by a display of flags on the date of adjudication) which is maintained to a high standard. One of the latter is the superb Court House, now derelict yet with the essentials awaiting a sympathetic rehabilitation. The Roman Catholic church was excellently presented behind its beautifully painted railings and surrounded by pleasant planting. The charming Church of St John the Baptist also looked well in its neat churchyard; some repairs to the roof will soon be needed. The Library may have been a school - whatever its former use, it had been sensitively adapted. The pineapple gateway to the long-vanished Castle was well looked after. St Brendan's national school was well kept, adorned with pretty window boxes. Several business premisses were attractive, though none had the unique

qualities required for nomination for an award.

Landscaping:

The grass boulevard down the centre of the Square is a real success. (Some of the young trees needed restaking at the date of adjudication.) Rose beds were particularly admired. Grand initiatives like these are very much in the spirit of the old village, while small beds of annuals are less in keeping. This is not to say that the fine hanging baskets, tubs and window-boxes do not contribute to the whole scheme in a pleasant way - they certainly do. The provision of historical informational boards did much to make up for the absence of a map of the present Tidy Towns entry, though two panels were empty.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

More information on your activities would be welcome, as you may be denying yourselves significant additional marks. It was good to read of the observation of the heronry by school children (the location of the heronry was not indicated). The results of your audit on the ecology will be eagerly looked forward to. Your tree planting programme - also noted under Landscaping, above - is a contributory factor to your rise in marks under this heading.

Litter Control:

The recycling centre was clean. Litter bins were not seen to be unemptied and overflowing this year. There was little litter in the streets.

Tidiness:

Dereliction has a significant bearing under this heading; the difficulties are well understood. The addition of a painted false window on a vacant house was a well executed if temporary solution in one case. It is a pity that there was so much weed growth at the attractive area by the Castle gates. The unattractive site opposite the national school at least has excellent wooden gates. There were far too many examples of unattractive and mass-produced signs on business premises. The presentation of the Square and of the main public buildings as well as the way in which individual householders look after their properties has had a very positive effect that gives a generally tidy air in spite of the above. .

Residential Areas:

Most private homes were maintained with pride on the date of adjudication. Weeds on the chimney stacks should have been cleared from the superb street house next to the Catholic church. The house named Inisfail - perhaps it is two houses - was really excellently looked after and should be taken as an exemplar of how a spectacularly fine period home should be presented: it was picturesque as well as dignified, two elements that do not always go together. It was good to see four new street houses with porches fronting the street - this kind of infill, which is in keeping with the original housing stock, should be preferred to ribbon development or estates in remote quarters.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

New surfacing and footpaths, and the parking bays with tree planting in the interces, have had a very positive effect on the main streets. Some good old and new stone walls were favourably noted.

General Impression:

The degree of neglect seen in Eyrecourt only five or six years ago has been largely obliterated due to

the work of the Tidy Towns Group and associated bodies. There is still a great deal to be done, as your environmental study shows, but there is now a real sense of a village on an upward path of development. Every good wish for continued success.