

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Mountshannon** Ref: **81**
County: **Clare** Mark: **280**
Category: **A** Date(s): **15/06/2006**
07/08/2006

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	49
The Built Environment	50	37
Landscaping	50	38
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	27
Litter Control	50	36
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	16
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	280

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the National Tidy Towns competition of 2006 and thank you for the comprehensive application form, community council project development plan and map of the village and its greater area. Mountshannon has been at the top echelon of the Competition for many years and it is obvious that this doesn't occur by faith.

The committee has fostered excellent relationships with the local authority, other relevant agencies and most importantly other community organisations.

This type of cooperation has paid dividends for the Village as many positive developments have occurred as a result.

The promotion of the cultural activities of the village is also an integral part of any community development. Your comment re having the judging date has been noted, this is probably the earliest that the Village has been adjudicated in the last few years.

The Built Environment:

The Streetscape in the Village is made all the more attractive by the old established trees that line the street. It is a pity that the old Market House at the junction of main street and harbour road cannot be restored somewhat simply because of its historical significance to the Village.

The gates into the well-preserved Anglican Church are eaten with rust and need to be re forged.

The following buildings were noted for their high standard of presentation.

The aforementioned Anglican Church, RC Church, Garda Station and the exceptionally well kept National School and grounds.

The Cupan Caife, noted that it is up for sale, Cois Na hAbhna Bar, and the Mountshannon Hotel.

Given the nature of the village as a holiday destination it is inevitable that it would become a haven for

developers with a few additional planning notices to be seen for new developments. It is hoped that these type of holiday accommodation units will not over populate the Village and spoil its attractiveness. What is in place to date has been complementary to the existing village architecture and that this will be the case with what is being planned for the future.

Landscaping:

There are some beds that need attending to and these are probably earmarked for attention by the Committee as it quite early in the season.

The large bed on the Whitegate exit is overgrown and some hardy shrubs are in danger of being choked. The additional landscaping at the Harbour was in progress and when completed will add to the overall high standard that the Village has attained in this category.

There were many fine examples of Roses, Hypericum, Hydrangea, London Pride as well as the traditional annuals such as Alyssum and Petunias both in public areas and in some very delightful private gardens. The Aistear Park is a remarkable amenity for a Village the size of Mountshannon and the identification and mapping of plants in the maze alone is huge undertaking.

There were a number of visitors on adjudication day and it was obvious that they were hugely impressed with Late Stone Age depictions in the Maze.

Just one issue to note-the perimeter fence needs to be treated to keep it fresh looking

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The natural havens for wildlife conservation and promotion in Mountshannon are many and varied and the envy of other similar sized villages.

It is good to note that a strategy has been put in place to encourage wildlife to the Aistear Park area.

The Woodpark Forest Park with its exciting nature trail is also an area that could be further exploited. It is certainly worthwhile considering the suggestion in last year's report of erecting wildlife display boards. It might be also worthwhile if the Committee could involve local schoolchildren in this exercise, as they would embrace it with enthusiasm.

Litter Control:

Litter Control on the day was good and there were sufficient bins in place both in the Village Core area and around the Harbour.

Locals and short-term visitors have taken the message of good litter control on board.

The area specifically mentioned in last years report as being a litter trap has seemingly not improved. Can the Committee broach this with the owners?

Waste Minimisation:

This new category encourages the promotion of best practices such as compost management and it is good to observe that you as Committee has reacted by getting local residents to actively use the system installed near Aistear.

The Race against Waste publication forwarded with the application form offers many pointers and suggestions that support good waste management.

Tidiness:

For a place that has maintained such high standards in the competition over the years the condition of some of the directional signs was poor, especially at the junction in the middle of the village. Can the Committee impress upon the local representatives the importance of getting those signs changed by Clare County Council?

There was a little too much weed growth and some cigarette butts to be seen at the base of a number of premises and indeed at kerbsides.

The Harbour Notice Board has been vandalised and one would wish that people would desist from defacing the Cross the depicts the formation of the First Holy Island Monastery.

A number of gate areas were not up to the high standards set by other residents.

A need to be vigilant that untidiness does not get a hold in an otherwise very well maintained village.

Residential Areas:

The Village has a number of what could be described as residential areas albeit some are only occupied on a seasonal basis.

The standard of maintenance of properties was for the most part very good but some needed the annual

painting job done soon before the summer disappears.

The couple of new holiday complexes including the Lakeside Close are nearing completion and it is hoped that the surrounding areas will be practically landscaped.

It was good to see that area adjoining Mounshannon House, a little derelict to say the least, has been designated for a selective scheme of houses for the elderly. Reiteration of last years comment re the retention of mature trees to blend in with new holiday developments.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach roads were very good complemented by well and properly maintained hedgerows, some nice private properties, and established trees.

Village name signs were visible and clean in contrast to the directional signs in the village proper (alluded to in another section).

The road surfaces were in top class condition and there are a number of neighbouring places that would be very envious.

The standard overall was very good.

General Impression:

It is always a pleasure to come to Mount Shannon especially on a nice June afternoon.

The Village core area is very inviting and of course holidaymakers love the rural attractions that it affords them.

You are to be complimented on the high standards to date and wished well in the future.

Second Round Adjudication:

It was a pleasure for the 2nd Round Adjudicator to visit the beautiful village of Mountshannon on a sunny August afternoon. It was encouraging to note that the Market house appeared to be for sale and hopefully the architectural quality and importance of this building will be reflected in any redevelopment plans in the future. The Church of Ireland gates had been beautifully restored and painted since the first adjudication. The Park was an exciting discovery and has a sophistication and maintenance standard worthy of a much larger centre. It is a most beautiful development of imagination. A little litter was noted at the entrance to the Maize area. Some weed growth was noted at walls and roadside kerbing on the Scarriff approach road that needs attention. The landscaping in the village was well presented and especially that along the roadside outside the Park. The new Holiday Cottages appear to have been fitted in quite well to allow preservation of the most beautiful trees. At the Harbour area some litter was noted and the six disposal bins were overflowing. Can this area not be screened from public view? The vandalised display map unit here needs to be replaced. The ferry ticket office at the Harbour would benefit from redevelopment using a stone faced building. The nearby public toilets were well presented. Good luck with your 2007 Tidy Towns plans.