

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Cloghan** Ref: **617**
County: **Offaly** Mark: **213**
Category: **B** Date(s): **07/07/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	33
The Built Environment	50	25
Landscaping	50	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	28
Litter Control	50	26
Waste Minimisation	20	3
Tidiness	30	9
Residential Areas	40	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	213

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the completed application and sketch map, which was very useful in identifying relative parts of the village and its environs.

It is good to note that you are involved with both Offaly County Council and other relevant agencies including FAS.

This is the type of partnership that will benefit the village of Cloghan in the long-term.

Cloghan has become a very busy village on the main Birr to Athlone Road and with a myriad of link roads into the core.

There was no update as a benchmark of the five-year plan reviewed in last years report,so the adjudicator had to judge on what was put forward this year.

The Built Environment:

There are many positives to note under this heading; overall the majority of buildings both commercial and private were well-maintained and many with a nice mix of colour.

Cloghan has retained a number of old shop fronts that reflect the old street architecture.

A number of properties, which looked very neglected when this adjudicator last visited the village some years back, have been improved.

Unfortunately like most places of its size it still does suffer from some dereliction and this is an issue that the Committee may have to address. One appreciates your position as it is a very sensitive issue in a close-knit community.

The improvement in road surfaces in and around the village has made a big difference to the overall look and the roundabout has been nicely adorned with colourful busy lizzies and alyssum.

The nice new street lighting in the centre of the village is both practical and appealing as are the new

boundary wall on the Ferbane Road and new foot paths on the Birr Road. These make a major difference to the overall look of Cloghan.

Both business and private residents have made efforts to present premises to a good standard. Daly's Butchers have a simple but effective name sign with the front area clear of any free standing signs. The Gables B&B was also admired but it was noted that it's up for sale.

A number of very fine private residences were much admired and credit to the owners for presenting them in such a fine fashion.

The public buildings, with the exception of the Garda Station, did not evoke the same sentiments as the above, The School was acceptable but the boundary wall needs painting, the RC Church, which is tucked away, looked a little drab and St Marys Hall could do with re painting.

Landscaping:

There were many examples of colourful and well attended to beds and hanging baskets around the centre of the village, particularly the display of buzz lizzies and other annuals at the roundabout and in the stone beds nearby.

Excellent stone surrounds, water feature and village clock complemented the planting at the new amenity area. Most shrubs are of the low maintenance variety which means less toil for whoever is responsible for their maintenance.

An excellent shrub bed was observed outside a fine private residence on the Ballinasloe Road.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Cloghan has a number of exceptional wildlife habitats and it is important that these be exploited as best as possible.

The artificial lake, is very much part of the Cloghan Landscape and the informative signage provides excellent information on the fauna and flora of the area.

It should be possible to involve the school in one or two additional mini projects, this might be a good way for the Committee to become involved in a very practical manner.

For instance if you intend to do any further work on the peat lands area on the Ferbane road would it not be worthwhile to invite the school children via the principal be part of this.

Litter Control:

The committee is doing its part in promoting the message of proper litter control in the village.

On the day in question, apart from one area near the school, there was no litter evident.

It is important to be aware of potential litter traps and the new amenity, where many young people meet, should have an extra bin provided.

Waste Minimisation:

There was no comment in your application under this new category and no re cycling arrangements viewed.

The Race Against Waste Booklet supplied with the original application package should be consulted to give ideas on how to develop an initiative that fits within the better waste management concept.

Will look forward to seeing an input in next year's application.

Tidiness:

There are a number of black spots in this category and efforts should be made to ask proprietors of untidy properties and surrounding areas to make a better effort.

The area around C&M Farm Supply premises is in a poor state of tidiness.

Some decayed weed growth was evident at the base of the new boundary wall on the Ferbane Road and also on the Belmont Road and it would take very little community effort to clean this up.

The GAA Grounds is in the process of being tidied up and this is welcome as it is otherwise a fine facility.

Residential Areas:

The presentation and level of maintenance of both estate and private village houses was quite good.

Some exceptional older and re renovated private residences to be seen in the village and its surrounds and these will be complemented by newer residences being constructed on the outskirts.

The new housing estate on the Belmont Road was good but the boundary wall should have a stone nameplate implanted in it for identification purposes.

The housing area on the Tullamore road was a little mixed and maybe it is the right time to have a residents

association formed that would feed into the main committee .

The proposed new development on the Banagher road looks like a well designed scheme and the name is very appropriate Cluain Na Spideoga.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The main entrances into the village had good road surfaces easily accessible and the signage was clear and visible.

The Ballinasloe Road has the additional benefit of an extended footpath out for some distance that alleviates the problems associated with walking on a very busy road.

So a big improvement in this category since my last visit.

General Impression:

It is a pity that the update of the plan was not included as it was commented upon very favourably in last years report.

Overall the village has made good progress in the last few years, and while the traffic has increased it is managed better by virtue of having major road improvements and additional features such as upgraded roundabout system put in place.

Keep up the momentum and do include plan update for next year.