

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Elphin** Ref: **718**
County: **Roscommon** Mark: **161**
Category: **C** Date(s): **01/07/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	26
The Built Environment	50	20
Landscaping	50	20
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	14
Litter Control	50	25
Waste Minimisation	20	0
Tidiness	30	11
Residential Areas	40	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	22
General Impression	10	5
TOTAL MARK	400	161

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the tidy towns competition. It is good to see new entrants. This competition is very much about striving to improve the town or village and all comments are made that they will be helpful towards the improvement of the town or village. Over a number of years entries continue to deal with the challenges they meet and significant changes can be effected. To start with, it would be wise to assess all the aspects of the town of Elphin that need attention. Consultation with all interested parties is important for this process. The business communities, the residents, schools, the Gardai, the public services, senior citizens – all have an important part to play in this development. List out what needs to be done, what resources will be needed. Who to approach about items, when and what can be done. A list of priorities can be drawn up, delegation of functions, and lobbying public bodies to achieve results will also be needed. The three to five year plan is ideal with revisions and assessments year by year.

The Built Environment:

There are a number of attractive buildings in the town – for example the Bank, a number of well painted and presented streetside business premises, the church, the credit union to name a few. There are also a number of premises that need attention in the main street –attention to paint and general décor. There is some dereliction also. On the Strokestown Road the old Elphin engineering works and adjoining buildings are in bad repair. The Livestock marts area is unattractive along with the nearby derelict houses. Fearna Home looks well and the large house on the corner entering the town from this side looks well. The school buildings are well tended as is the health building. The fire station looks a little neglected with the weedy grasses growing to the front. The Elphin windmill is a lovely feature. A good idea would be to make an inventory of buildings street by street classifying all the buildings according to their general state of appearance and set about encouraging people to make the necessary improvement.

Landscaping:

Some tree planting has been done in the street which is useful. The old Elphin Cathedral entrance was landscaped at some stage. This has the elements of a good situation but needs careful maintenance to show it off best, the Church car park is very attractively landscaped with good trees and shrub planting in a much organised way. The housing area out by Castle Street with a grassy bank to the road frontage is also attractive. Some containerised summer bedding plants through the town are providing summer colour. The entrances to the new estates and the open spaces within are important places for landscape development and it is important that all of these new estates are well finished with sustainable landscaping – a watchful eye should be kept on this by the committee. Individual gardens with road frontage can also contribute to the overall appearance of the town and surrounds and many people can cooperate in this regard. The planted flowers and tubs at the car park look well and this is a good project. The work at the grotto was also noted.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It would be a good idea to develop ways of offering people a chance to appreciate their natural environment. There are many ways this could be done – often by adopting a local walkway; riverside or woodland path nearby this aim could be achieved. Interest can be created by illustrating the range of wildlife that can be observed and drawing attention to this along walkways. Consult the tidy towns handbook for suggestions as to how you might get started in this aspect.

Litter Control:

There is a reasonably good approach to litter control, in the town although some litter was noted in places. The work of meeting every Saturday morning to pick litter, clean verges, and empty overflowing bins is very useful. The question is why are they overflowing? Is this an issue that should be addressed to the council?

Waste Minimisation:

It is noted that the committee arranged a well attended meeting with the new litter warden to progress the litter situation in the town. This aspect of the competition is about concentrating both on the need to choose materials and methods that avoid producing waste and to consider environmentally friendly ways of dealing with the waste that is generated. A campaign of awareness with both homeowners and business people needs to be started to give an understanding of the importance of waste management and recycling. Compost heaps can be made for green materials, avoidance of using materials that do not degrade easily and separation of the various materials so that they can be recycled.

Tidiness:

The weed growth at kerbs is a particular problem at various places around the town. These can either be cleared by physical means or by using chemicals. Perhaps this too is an issue to take up with the council. Frequently people do clear such growth outside their own and surrounding houses. The state of the timber storage at Castle street could be improved and the premises at Elphin Engineering works similarly. The surrounds of the Livestock marts and Roschem Products are unattractive. The lovely lamp standards with underground cables are a very positive asset. There are still a considerable number of cables overhead.

Residential Areas:

There is a vast range of residential areas both new and old in the town and surrounds. The standards of upkeep and care varies – even on one road – Windmill road for instance, there are some beautifully kept houses and others have roadside walls that need attention to cleaning and painting. There are a number of residences through the streets which adds great life to the centre of the town and this is very welcome. The newer estates look well but as stated above special care is needed to get proper finish of new estates. The Orchard grove estate is progressing well and yet the outside area looks very raw. Hazelwood park looks well and the footpath outside has been laid with pavements but this stops abruptly and there is no continuity from the council paths towards the town which is a not a good idea for children who have to cross the street to the path on the other side.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road surfaces are in a poor condition in places with much broken surfaces and bumpiness. For example the road above the church is very rough and has not been reinstated properly from roadworks. Again the work of

the committee in lobbying to have such work completed is all important

General Impression:

The committee is to be encouraged for establishing an entry to this competition. It is noted from the entry form that the committee is aware of the many challenges that they face and that cooperation from owners of derelict buildings, cooperation with the council and the local business and residents is all important in advancing the improvements that are needed in the town.