

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Portarlinton** Ref: **312**
County: **Laois** Mark: **197**
Category: **E** Date(s): **08/08/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	28
The Built Environment	50	25
Landscaping	50	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	18
Litter Control	50	22
Waste Minimisation	20	7
Tidiness	30	8
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	28
General Impression	10	6
TOTAL MARK	400	197

Overall Development Approach:

Many thanks for your submission, which was helpful on the day. Do you have a work programme? This was also mentioned in last year's report. It is important at this stage in the competition that you formulate one, especially given the town's size. The document need only be a few pages long, outlining your plans for the town and setting a timeframe against their achievement. You could use the contents of this and previous Tidy Towns reports as a starting point. It would appear from your application that you have a positive attitude to the competition and a good level of support from the local community. This latter issue seems strange given the comments contained in last year's report?

The Built Environment:

The commercial properties of the town looked generally reasonably well cared for on the day. Of note were: the Anvil Inn, Paddy Powers, Mario's Trattoria on the Square, and Centra. There is a huge heritage of fine Georgian properties and wonderfully historical buildings and spaces such as the Huguenot church. Unfortunately a number of these buildings are in a sad state of repair and need to be restored to their former glory. The old cinema on the square has been boarded up and this is a pity as it is an attractive and unusual building of its era. The various schools looked quite fresh and the church looked imposing in stone. The Colaiste Iosagan was quite fresh, adjacent to the church.

Landscaping:

The landscaping of the People's Park is to your credit. It looked well on the day but unfortunately was marred by some appalling litter! Tree planting in this location and at the Railway Station and the Square will pay dividends for future generations. The tubs throughout the town looked most cheerful and effective. Many individual properties-both private and commercial had contributed well to this category of the competition, with attractive floral displays and gardens. The picnic area on the Emo road with the old defunct stone bridge was

well maintained and admired.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your plans in regard to Derrylounce Lake are commendable, in particular the walk incorporating both the lake and local bog. The walk by the riverside is an attractive one to have so close to the town centre.

Litter Control:

The standard of litter control on the day was appalling throughout – on the streets of the town, along approach roads and in particular at the People's Park, where litter was strewn across the grass, and in the car park! This was the worst outbreak this adjudicator has seen in a long time and is a serious problem that needs to be tackled head on!

Waste Minimisation:

This category of the competition relates to waste management, segregation, recycling and composting issues. Do read your Tidy Towns Handbook for ideas for furthering this aspect of the competition. The Race Against Waste Brochure also contains some good ideas. Are the local schools participating in the Green Flags initiative? If so, they could be of great assistance to you in relation to these issues.

Tidiness:

As previously mentioned, there are a lot of derelict properties in the town which look most unfortunate, particularly due to the fact that they are, by and large, attractive and architecturally significant buildings. Weed control was a problem on the Mountmellick Road at new footpaths, and on the Emo road at new kerbsides.

Residential Areas:

Many individual houses and gardens on the Mountmellick Road were admired, as were the street houses leading out this road with attractive window boxes and hanging baskets. Many estates seemed a little forlorn on the day. Avondale was admired with its attractive green space and mature overhanging trees. You mention an Inter Estates competition – could this incorporate a best garden competition? A charming cottage with hydrangeas displayed in the front garden was admired on the Emo road.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approaches to the town were inconsistent in appearance on the day. Verges were quite overgrown on the Mountmellick approach, although the hedgerows had been trimmed. The retention of the old milestone and traditional nameplate on this approach is applauded. The relocation of the garage on the Square is correct and appropriate and perhaps a more fitting use can be found for the old Market House? The stone nameplates were admired on approach roads.

General Impression:

This was the first time the adjudicator had the pleasure of visiting Portarlinton. It has a rich and interesting past. It also has the potential to perform well in the competition with the right level of interest and commitment. It looked a little neglected on the day.