

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Clifden** Ref: **793**
County: **Galway** Mark: **226**
Category: **C** Date(s): **16/06/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	26
The Built Environment	50	29
Landscaping	50	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	22
Litter Control	50	26
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	25
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	26
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	226

Overall Development Approach:

Firstly, thank you for filling out the application form and giving details of work done and future work planned. Your application form states that you communicate with your community via email, meetings and a notice board. It was noticed on the way to the public toilets the use of the notice board in Supervalue to promote the competition and highlight issues of importance to others in the town – well done! For a regional town such as Clifden have you considered using a notes section in your local newspaper, or the local radio station to target more residents and inform them of the good work that is on-going? We would have welcomed a more detailed explanatory map with your application, however we found one ourselves in the Tourist Office. For next year remember to include this with you application as it enables the adjudicators to do justice to your work programme and gives them a helping hand! Your application does not mention a development plan, and we wonder has one been developed for the town?

The Built Environment:

It was noted that the grain store at the Quay is up for sale. This has prime development potential to further enhance the Quay area. The Town Hall and the building at the entrance to the Beach Road are both fairly dilapidated. A number of buildings are excellently presented and contribute extremely positively to the town, these include; the Garda Station, Fogartys, Joyce and Associates, Derval Joyce, Lowrys, Hehirs, Vaughans, Connelly Butchers, Supervalue, Mannion's Bar, Guy's Bar, EJ Kings, and Foyles Hotel. Mitchells Restaurant was looking exceptional and the adjudicator took the liberty of entering it into the Special Award Shopfront category of the competition. Clifden Station House and the various platform areas and associated shops, the nearby leisure centre and the Station House Hotel are extremely well maintained and fit in well with the town. St Josephs Church enjoys a prominent location in the town and was looking magnificent and the flower beds at the church door were well tended. A number of buildings were noted to be vacant including the previous Supervalue premises and the building beside John O'Brien Auctioneers with paper covering the windows. A

number of buildings were also dilapidated including the building between D'arcy and the Video Vault. At the least it should be painted, the wooden canopy abolished and the weeds from the chimney removed. We note from your application that a new committee has been recently established and you feel it will be 2008 before you get to commence your work. We suggest that you focus your efforts on maintaining projects already started, refurbishment, and retaining the traditional character of the town in the face of continued development.

Landscaping:

Tree planting was evident and flower beds, window boxes and hanging baskets are all visible through out the town and well maintained. It has to be said that the flower beds and hanging baskets at Browns Restaurant are very attractive and we admired them from the Market Square. The presence of the potted trees outside the Supervalu store contributes positively to the landscape from the Market Square.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your submission in relation to this section was poor. More than most centres you have the potential to greatly increase your marks in this section, especially considering the river on your doorstep and your proximity to Clifden Bay. There is a Sli na Slainte from the town to the Clifden Boat Club, have you considered erecting wildlife display signs along this? The display board erected at the Quay informing of shore angling and detailing fish species, assumed to be erected by the Western Regional Fisheries Board, is informative. Similar boards would be welcomed.

Litter Control:

The adjudicator noticed evidence of burning rubbish in a dilapidated car park area beside the children's play area on the Beach Road. A substantial amount of cigarette butts were evident on the cobbled area in front of EJ Kings, Tom Kings, the Derryclare and the AIB Bank and you have lost marks because of this. The profuse presence of cigarette butts detracts immensely from the amenity of the Market Square which is otherwise well maintained. The problem with cigarette butts outside public houses is not uncommon but it is suggested that a targeted education programme is commenced in partnership with public houses in this area to highlight the proper disposal of cigarette butts especially when litter bins are available.

Waste Minimisation:

Waste Minimisation is a new section of the competition that was introduced in 2006. You mention a number of clean ups involving the GAA, rugby, retirement home and school etc under this section in your application; unfortunately this does not fall under the concepts of preventing and minimising waste unless you are segregating materials for recycling during these clean ups. It may be helpful for you to consult the guidance document produced by the Department entitled "How to win the Race against Waste in your Community" to allow you to gain more marks in this section next year. The Waste Awareness Officer of Galway County Council may also be a good starting point. Consider engaging with the local schools and businesses. For example, efforts undertaking to minimise and prevent the problem of cigarette butts would fall under this category. Other tidy towns committees have held a waste awareness day or given talks to the local schools on reducing their waste. The Green Flag at the Clifden Community School was noted.

Tidiness:

The town was looking very well on adjudication day and praise should be given to the business and premises owners whose buildings are among those well maintained and mentioned in the Built Environment section above. Over head cables are prevalent on Bridge Street.

Residential Areas:

In general housing estates and residential area in and around the town were well presented and maintained. We noted many recently developed housing developments and apartments; this gives the potential to recruit more volunteers from these developments.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach roads to the town are generally good, with the approach road from Ballyconnelly was well maintained. The road surfacing on Church Street road is quite poor. The litter problem of cigarette butts was also noted on the back lane off the Main Street beside Paddy Powers Bookmakers. We noticed that the public seating along the Sli na Slainte on Beach Road to the Clifden Boat Club is in need of some refurbishment.

General Impression:

We thoroughly enjoyed our adjudication of Clifden. We were very impressed with the area at Clifden Station House which has been developed since our last visit to the town a number of years ago. For next year we

would be grateful if you could please bear in mind that the more information supplied with your application the easier it is for the adjudicators to award marks. It is possible that you might be doing yourselves out of additional marks in some sections because of the paucity of information supplied. As there was no mention of a development plan for the town in your application, we urge you to formulate a plan in association with Galway County Council, local business people, local residents, and other interested bodies. The plan will enable you to chart the way forward and ensure the character of the town is maintained while also allowing you to focus your work programme. You have raised your marks this year in some categories of the competition however you have dropped marks in others, namely wildlife and natural amenities and litter control. Overall you should be pleased with your efforts – congratulations.