

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Shannonbridge** Ref: **850**
County: **Offaly** Mark: **241**
Category: **B** Date(s): **27/06/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	31
The Built Environment	50	36
Landscaping	50	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	22
Litter Control	50	31
Waste Minimisation	20	5
Tidiness	30	16
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	32
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	241

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for your completed entry form. It would be good to see an updated plan, setting out priorities and works for the 3-5 years ahead. There is a lot of potential in Shannonbridge but much work to be done. It is good that there are links with some relevant agencies and that there is some involvement from young people. Work on strengthening these links and more people will come on board. Investigate partnerships with businesses for sponsoring tools and creative ventures for fundraisers which have worked well for committees in other areas. There's no doubt that the work required in Shannonbridge will need resources so good luck with your endeavours to gain support from the County Council and other parties.

The Built Environment:

Very interesting, historic town with the old fort and the beautiful bridge, and the building that the visitor centre is in is interesting – obvious heritage value there. This end of the town with the bridge is great. Around the rest some nice old style lamps. Some things to be cleared up around the old fort though, some pallets and metal piece of farm machinery. Couple of flag poles here very well placed – when flags flying will be seen from other side of river which is nice.

They've discreetly hidden their old tank and waste management area behind some fencing and nice painted doors and window boxes and tables outside and to see boats on river is wonderful

Catholic church is a very handsome building looking pristine at the moment. Gorgeous coloured flowers at grotto. Wall of church probably due for a paint in next year or so but very neat and clean and orderly

The lockkeepers house is a beautiful building

There's a lovely thatch cottage at corner of road from clonmacnoise, but the buildings at the back of it could do with a paint and a tidying up. Some planting there would be appealing to pretty up the entrance to town from that side

Killeens bar and grocery is lovely, friendly, really brightly painted and consistent planting outside. Morans gala shop opposite. 2 lovely premises to have on the street. Very colourful. No litter outside. Building works going on opposite shop. Looks like a building with old bar is being renovated inside. All corrugated roofs, so be interesting to see whats going to become of that. Even for a building under works it looks quite tidy as its just wooden boards up and they've left nice gaps where they've feature lights and no graffiti so is a credit to whoever organised that cover up

Iron works at entrance to public toilets are great – remains of swivel bridge – good facilities. Unfortunately quite a lot of litter around. Probably blowing from the overflowing waste bins that have been provided. Whoever's organised this and paying the private company would want to get on to them to empty more frequently. 8 bins and that's not even sufficient capacity.

Luchars bar is gorgeous – big mural welcoming people into town

Huge difference between both sides of bridges. There 2 counties, offaly and Roscommon, maybe offaly side hasn't much say over entrance from other side. Perhaps councils could work together on that

This end by the bridge is neatly painted and bright and clean. In particular, the white and blue painted private residence is lovely

Landscaping:

The little park opposite the church is nice. There is some bunting on the pedestrian crossing and old tape to be removed. The edges to the park are quite untidy and as some of the higher ground is breaking away, it would look better with the sides built up and some steps down? This area has potential to be improved with some creativity and more regular care.

The new jetty going for riverside award looks well. Bollards, railings, benches, lanterns, green area with picnic tables, in use. Excellent hard landscaping here in a beautiful setting.

Another approach was from Ballinasloe, old fort side and again it needs some attention. Some weeding needed to tidy up the verges. It's a pity that this approach is not tended too and is totally overgrown. There may be plans to better maintain the green areas as they are a positive feature. These features with old heritage buildings could be so much more enhanced on this side without the old broken fencing, broken wall, cattle grazing in the fort, old gate, barbed wire. There's an area there for parking so that should be landscaped. This could be a very beautiful area with views over the Shannon and the fort. Perhaps this is not in control of the committee as its on the Roscommon side, but there can surely be an arrangement made with the council for its upkeep.

Closer to the bridge, the treatment of heritage buildings again is questionable as there is a ball or squash court seemingly made out of the fort wall, alongside archway in old stone, which is in private property, with unattractive wire fencing.

Signage in front of fort could be improved.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Shannonbridge is fortunate to have a corncrake habitat and its good to see there is partnership with Birdwatch Ireland for this. It would be good to have an information panel for educating us on the importance of protection of the habitat.

Litter Control:

Unfortunately there was a lot of litter down the side of the river which can be seen by boats passing by. It was filthy around picnic tables, looks like it was scattered by crows from bins, or it maybe that visit is taking place just after a festival the previous weekend? Litter bins aren't full, however the waste receptacles by the jetty are overflowing.

Lovely hard landscaping in a beautiful setting

Waste Minimisation:

It is good to promote waste management through flyers in the post office. Liaise with the County

Environmental Awareness Officer about further promotion through info sessions and projects that could be undertaken in the town. There is potential to gain many points in this section. Refer to the Race Against Waste guide for ways to reduce, reuse and recycle

Tidiness:

The sign clutter coming in from clonmac side is confusing as theres so much. Some of these signs are in duplicate. Could the council review this and remove those not required? Wall behind it as entry point could do with a lick of paint. Could plant trees maybe inside wall to shield farm buildings from view – maybe something could be done in conjunction with owner. The path along this wall is also untidy and could be greatly improved by sweeping and weeding.

Some gorgeous gardens going into town

National school could be much improved by sweeping up the leaves that have accumulated in the yard . Could something be done about the railing opposite the thatch cottage as well at derelict house?

Derelict site across the road if its going to be there for some time better fencing would improve the appearance, depending on plans of course and agreement of owner.

On approach from clonmacnoise the large tower is really imposing – looks dreadful

Loads of cracks and broken bits on footpaths and some trees where at base something nicer could be done. Some trees have plantings at bottom so that should be done on all of them. Quite a few buildings in town are in need of a paint job. Look unoccupied. Efforts made to brighten up some areas. Then new buildings for sale. Kerbings all broken. Council could do with fixing them up.

Residential Areas:

Just on prices lane and some backstreets so far good – few bits of litter, nothing major. That lane which was probably a litter black spot in the past, looks well. Then into the little residential area – called new road – some lovely shrubs planted at the entrance at the left. Different foliage for year round interest. All along the kerb on left there's a few creepers growing on the walls – a few more of them would be nice. In behind that an overgrown area – probably good for wildlife. Footpaths a bit cracked. Little bit of litter . some houses newly painted by the looks of it, quite well presented, trees, more creepers, pleasant little residential area. Some houses have warm bright colours. Some have not the best fencing which is a little intimidating. In the laneway, some graffiti can be seen down the back and quite a lot of litter accumulating in the lane.

Residential area St Kierans park very neat and tidy, looks lovely, nice big beech tree at the entrance and litter bins. Path in front on left hand side is full of lots of moss – to be tidied up, and paths opposite that also quite unsightly. Some individual gardens in st kierans park are lovely and there's an abundance of bird life evident. All the shared areas are spotlessly neat and tidy. It's a very peaceful little close.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

As you approach the town the most visible thing is the big power station and its seen in the town from wherever you are. The approach from clonmacnoise could be improved. It was very overgrown. The verges need to be tidied and if something could be done about the broken wire fence with concrete poles it would enhance the approach from that particular side. The welcome to shannonbridge sign was clear but very plain – opportunities for some planting around it to make this a more welcoming approach.

Not sure if the road up by the church is considered an approach road or not, as it may just go to power plant. Its in a poor state – all the kerbs to be weeded. On one side of road there's no kerbing. Very overgrown, untidy and probably quite a few visitors do go up that way thinking it does lead somewhere so if it can't be tidied up maybe a sign saying no through road would be useful

Boranna lane – litter free, no dumping whereas I'd say it was a problem in the past. Just loads of weeds and overgrown. Someones sprayed them so its being tackled and it looks fine.

Childrens crossing sign on the cloghan road is in bad shape.

General Impression:

Shannonbridge is a fascinating town set on the banks of the Shannon with the bridge and old fort making for a beautiful setting. There is a lot of work to be done and best wishes to all involved.

