

# Tidy Towns Competition 2007

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Portarlinton** Ref: **312**  
County: **Laois** Mark: **197**  
Category: **E** Date(s): **28/06/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
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
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>197</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the filled out Entry Form. I read your note at the back of the entry form, and I agree that it is difficult for the Tidy Towns Committee to complete any task at present because of the amount of development that is taking place. Up to recently your committee certainly have done a lot to improve Portarlinton, and the splendid Peoples Park is obviously enjoyed by all, young and old. The children's playground is a great amenity. The new graveyard is also a credit to the people of Portarlinton. I note your committee has reduced in size to 4, and this is simply too small in numbers. We find in some towns that they encourage the estates to enter a competition for the best kept estate, this works well for them, and you could maybe get some local firm to sponsor the competition. They also encourage the establishment of residents estates from the start and this ensures that estates are finished properly. I note the remarks of last year's adjudicator in relation to the lack of a plan for the future, I agree that this is an important approach, and I would encourage you to plan ahead.

### The Built Environment:

The Catholic Church is a fine imposing building and was tastily decorated with flowers and shrubs, and the shrine set into stone in the corner was immaculate with nice flowers. The Convent alongside the church is a very well maintained building and looked fresh. The School, near the church, looked to be spotlessly clean and smart. Mullany's Pharmacy is a beautifully decorated three-storey building. Dunne's "after dark" restaurant is an interesting premises and was nicely decorated. I admired the Georgian houses, the Anvil Inn and Paddy Powers shop. The premises of JV Brady is building of fine character and very well maintained. The Church of Ireland Church is a fine traditional building with interesting architectural qualities. Something could be done with the old cinema as it lowers the tone of that area, and the garage nearby looks a bit unfortunate.

### Landscaping:

As there is such a vast amount of disruption in Portarlinton now it is understandable that you cannot get a

look in at some of the places that you could want to landscape. There were fine arrays of flowering hanging baskets, and other pots, all over the centre of the town, and they blended tastefully with the surroundings. The grass was trimmed nicely in most locations, and the shrubberies looked quite good. Saint Michael's cemetery looked splendid, with the grass cut to perfection, and some great flowers and shrubs, and I particularly liked the surround of fine appropriate trees. The visual impact from the passing travellers is certainly noticeable. The visitors get a noticeably pleasant landscape as the outer wall and commanding gates, under the arched iron nameplate, catch the eye, and really one could not miss admiring the scene. I admired some fine young trees near the railway station.

#### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

I liked the riverside walk and I note your plans to further develop this area. You could encourage the school children to pay a bit more attention to the wildlife and natural amenities, by starting off with the identification of the various migrant birds that visit Portarlinton in summer and the different ones that arrive in the winter. There is a great cover of fine established trees around your area that provide lots of food for the wildlife.

#### **Litter Control:**

There was a good bit of litter in various places in particular just off the main street. There were plenty litter bins everywhere and they were emptied on a regular basis. Along the main street there was spots of chewing gum residue, and a serious amount of cigarette ends, but unfortunately the smoking ban has thrown up this cigarette remains dirt, in most main streets around the country. There was some litter in St Bridget's square I noted the remarks of last year's adjudicator, but I must say that the problem is not as serious as it was then, but it needs ongoing attention.

#### **Waste Minimisation:**

This is now a very serious assignment, and there is an awareness, at last, that we as a race cannot continue to send everything to landfill dumps. Reduce, recycle and reuse says it all, and this is the best practice. You could encourage the schools to try and attain the green flag status, as this makes the children more aware of the race against waste, and most of them will continue with the best practice after leaving school. The provision of a bring bank is a good idea as waste is segregated in these bays.

#### **Tidiness:**

With the extraordinary amount of major development taking place in Portarlinton it will take a long time before the town reaches an acceptable level of tidiness. There was some weeds at different locations, in particular on the Monasterevin road, near the church of Ireland, and around the old cinema building. Some walls were disfigured by graffiti near the Whitefield estate.

#### **Residential Areas:**

It is difficult to access the residential areas, as lots of them are new, others are expanding and others again in the middle of the construction process. I admired Whitefields, Barrow View, Railway Mews, Na Cluainte and Kilnacourt Woods. There are many other private residences around the town, that certainly display a pride of place attitude, with superb lawns, shrubs, trees and floral arrangements.

#### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

I must again refer to the amount of developments that are defacing the roads around Portarlinton, and consequently there is some inconsistency in the quality of the approach roads. I liked the stone nameplates. Some County Council signposting were very dirty. I would defer judgement on the back streets until the building expansion abates.

#### **General Impression:**

This was the first time I ever visited Portarlinton. You can be justly proud of this fine town, that now has become a kind of suburb of Dublin, with so many people travelling to Dublin by train each day. I look forward to revisiting your town.