

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ennistymon** Ref: **69**
County: **Clare** Mark: **236**
Category: **B** Date(s): **21/07/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	45
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	24
Litter Control	50	23
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	24
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	236

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you Ennistymon TidyTowns Group for your entry on behalf of Ennistymon village to the 2008 TidyTowns Competition. Welcome.

Thanks to your Committee of seven people involved in TidyTowns activities in Ennistymon. You are all obviously dedicated community people who make the time and effort to attend your meetings in addition to other TidyTowns activities. Your Committee and your partner organisation, Clare County Council, are doing very worthwhile work for Ennistymon, a village with a population of less than 1,000 people. Thanks also for the detailed submission including; Aims and Objectives and Long Term Plans and Projects of the Committee; the 2007-2008 Work Programme with the fourteen projects listed; and the Street Map.

Well done on the ongoing contact with the schools.

The work of local people, residents, business people, schoolchildren and others is to be praised. Well done on your energy and commitment. A recommendation is for the Committee to prepare a new short three-year plan on TidyTowns activities to say 2011. As part of this plan and to help the town compare its performance in TidyTowns competitions a recommendation to consider is a visit to other towns that are high performers in the 2007 and 2008 national competition. A further recommendation is to attempt to increase the number of people willing to serve on the TidyTowns Committee. Your present Committee of seven would benefit by the introduction of new members to help spread the workload and take on additional duties.

I wish you all the best with your Tidy Town activities into the future.

The Built Environment:

One of the biggest challenges facing small villages like Ennistymon is to manage change for the benefit of the residents and visitors alike. This change involves many organisations including the statutory and voluntary bodies. This is not an easy task and to date the village seems to be coping well. Ennistymon welcomes the visitor with the sign Ennistymon-The Market Town; as such the unique features of the village as a traditional marketplace with appropriate commercial shopfronts need to be preserved and upgraded only as appropriate. The decision taken to construct the bypass will present opportunities for conservation of appropriate buildings throughout Ennistymon. A specific recommendation as a longer-term project is to examine the feasibility of removing the many overhead wires and cables on the main streets and transferring these underground.

Preserving the Past for the Future as per the sign of the Old Courthouse of 1790 is a positive slogan and something to debate for many TidyTowns projects.

The Inagh River is a wonderful natural resource for Ennistymon and every effort should be made to maximise the benefits and take advantage of the beauty of the River and the Falls. The water quality of the river needs to be monitored and corrective action taken if necessary.

Due to ongoing change there is a wide variety in the quality of the built environment in the village. Those buildings that impressed included: The Falls Hotel complex; The Courthouse Studio and Gallery dating back to 1790; the old Church /Teach Ceoil; the Sculpture of Brian Merriman 1747-1805; the Catholic Church; the Community Centre; the Fire Station; the Grotto; Fitzpatrick's Supervalu new premises; Hair Design; Noinin; Café Vienna Flamenco; Garda Station; Crosbie; An Teach Bia; Cullinan's Bar; TJ Moloney 's; Tigin na mBlath, and Chloe. Well done to all.

A number of other commercial buildings would benefit from a coat of paint. In addition the issue of what to do with derelict buildings arises in Ennistymon as indeed it does in other small towns and villages. There are two such buildings, derelict and closed, in Parliament Street which distract the observer from the overall positive effect.

There are some excellent individual houses and residential estates in the village. Many of the townhouses look well with bright colours on the front walls. Well done.

Landscaping:

Well done on the landscaping at the individual houses on the outskirts of and in the town and at the residential estates, this is of a high standard. In general the residential housing estates are nicely landscaped and well maintained.

The gardens and the landscaping at the Falls Hotel are a very positive feature of the overall complex; some really attractive gardens are set against the background of the wonderful vista of the falls and cascades.

While there are many premises with nice displays of flowers outside their premises it is the opinion of this adjudicator that there is room for much improvement in the overall display of appropriate flowers and shrubs in the village.

The memorial stone, outside the Teach Ceoil, for the poet Brian Merriman is a nice feature with some good planting.

Well done to all involved in the various locations for good landscaping in their individual elements that help to make Ennistymon look well.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

There was an absence of Wildlife Interpretative Signs and Display Panels in the village. Perhaps I missed them. A suggestion might be to contact the Heritage Council and the Wildlife Ranger to assist in the establishment of further appropriate wildlife project for Ennistymon.

As stated above, the Inagh River is a wonderful natural resource for Ennistymon and every effort should be made to maximise the benefits and take advantage of the beauty of the River and the Falls. Congratulations to the transition year pupils of the Vocational School on their project on pollution in the river.

The efforts of the Falls Hotel to promote birdlife and some retain some farm animals is to be applauded.

Litter Control:

Ennistymon town centre was mainly clear of litter on the day of my visit. Well done on the involvement with the Schools on anti -litter campaigns.

The Recycling bank outside the Area Offices of Clare County Council portrays a very negative image as the

visitor enters town. This area is generally unkempt and requires some remedial action as a matter of urgency.

Waste Minimisation:

The purpose of this category is to encourage TidyTowns Committees and the local community to get involved in projects that will reduce waste and encourage recycling. Projects could include community guidance on methods of reducing waste such as segregating litter during clean-up events.

The further involvement of the school in these waste minimisation activities could be a priority. Congratulations to the Ceard Scoil for the Green Flag on display.

The Rehab Recycling Partnership depot at the Area Offices of the Clare County Council is in a very poor state. The operation of this depot needs to be reviewed. Despite the many notices regarding fines etc, there was litter and dumping on the ground. The eleven bins themselves needed a good clean up.

Tidiness:

In general, Ennistymon looked reasonably tidy on the day of my visit. The residential areas deserve credit for their own areas of responsibility and for maintaining a tidy image for Ennistymon. However some buildings would benefit from painting their front of premises, including the Library. The front of derelict premises should be disguised or camouflaged to create a more positive image. The gravelled area outside the County Council Area Offices was untidy on the day of my visit. Gravel, as a landscape method is difficult to maintain due to its very nature, it tends to spread away from where it is meant to be.

The road surface on the Ennis Road at the entrance to the village is in a poor state.

Residential Areas:

The older townhouses help retain the small town character and rural charm of Ennistymon and some of these are well maintained. Others require painting. The residential estate Ard Donagh-new estate of detached houses, nice stone walls looked very well.

Some individual houses on the outskirts of the village are top quality with some lovely gardens. Congratulations to all concerned on the upkeep of their residential areas.

Well done to all residents for the great effort.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The town was in general clean and tidy with some nice grassed landscaping which could be improved by further planted hanging baskets. The approach roads from Ennis and Lahinch are in good condition and welcome the visitor. There are also nice grassed areas with trees and appropriate landscaping.

One suggested area of improvement for discussion and consideration in the medium to longer term is the removal of overhead wires from streets.

The views of the Ennistymon signs on the approach roads are hindered by the growth of grass and weeds on the roadside. These areas should be maintained to a higher standard.

General Impression:

Congratulations to Ennistymon on your 2008 entry to TidyTowns. Credit to your Committee and your partner organisation for your efforts on behalf of the village. Much excellent work is ongoing in the village.

I look forward to further visits to your busy village.