

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Fermoy** Ref: **588**
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **245**
Category: **D** Date(s): **19/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	26
The Built Environment	50	39
Landscaping	50	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	28
Litter Control	50	37
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	20
Residential Areas	40	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	26
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	245

Overall Development Approach:

Congratulations to Fermoy Town Council for participating in the TidyTowns Competition 2008. Thank you for your informative Entry Form and for the town map. That map would be a further help to the adjudicator if you highlighted the works done during the year and highlighted the places that must be visited. One supposes from your submission that the driving force behind your entry is the sub committee of the Town Council, namely 'Fermoy Becoming a Tidier Town' and that your committee of 12 members are members of the Town Council. It would be of interest to know what role the additional 50 members play in the attempts to make Fermoy a tidy town, how these members are recruited and what role they play. Your engagement with the various agencies is noteworthy and of special interest is your engagement with the various Residents Associations. It would be interesting to know what form that latter interaction takes. Your connection with the schools appears to be confined to activities related to litter although you later mention in your submission that the Green Flag Initiative is being promoted throughout the schools. It would help your submission if you were to itemise these promotions. Do you find that entering the competition as a Town Council is more effective than having a group outside of the Council promoting the TidyTowns Competition? No plan of action was submitted and as there was no mention of planned projects in some of the sections of the competition, one is left wondering what your immediate priorities are.

The Built Environment:

Fermoy has inherited a rich building heritage from successive generations. Very few towns can boast of having a seven arch bridge. Very few towns are lucky enough to need one. Very few towns have steep declines sweeping into town with the footpaths fortified by retaining materials. Very few towns can be proud of multi coloured terraces of houses step toeing gently towards the river from which the life of the town radiates. The sculpture of three wise monks oversee the good behaviour of the citizens from one side of the river and the Virgin guards the other side. Portals from another era guard the treasures of the towns at the entrances to

ying sporting parks. What a pity that the endless line of traffic does not take time to stop and stare. What a pity the endless line of traffic does not use the by pass. The motorists are so preoccupied that they miss out on Ard Abhainn. Do the passers by notice the old walls at Marion Square and St Bernards Place? One is impressed by railings and hand rails throughout. The entrance to the town park is stunning. But the ghost of decay threatens this idyllic picture. How many 'for sale' signs are there on main street? One wishes a coat of paint for many buildings along this street. Pharmacists must be excluded from this barb. Soft landscaping could brighten some of the buildings on this mainstreet. So often the traditional is complimented by the modern as with the Anderson Centre and the building occupied by the florists as well as the Fire Station. It is wonderful that the Mill and some of the barracks retain their character and are now put to viable usage. And then there is the Louvain of Fermoy, all of the schools exuding a pride in their past by maintaining their built heritage and exuding a pride in their present by being well maintained or well painted but always by being litter free and graffiti free. Finally one wonders how John Wesley would feel about the advertisements on the windows of his Church.

Landscaping:

There are some beautiful examples of landscaping as at the Quinn Health complex and more low key planting at the entrance to the caravan park. The swirling curving walls of the landscaping near the entrance to Barnane Walk catch the eye and draw one in to read the memorial to the drowned soldiers. The area around the Super Valu complex is also striking. But there are many lost opportunities for landscaping and there are, sadly, occasions when the landscaping achievements of previous committees and councils have fallen into neglect as with the tubs at Pearse Square and the unfinished works at the Church of Ireland island. Mac Curtain and Patrick streets would benefit from a review of landscaping policy

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Barnane Walk has evidently been improved and is being enjoyed by the people. It opens up the river for the enjoyment of all. The seats are most appropriate and the many lifebuoys a reminder of the potential dangers. Wonderful. Various information boards show that much research had been made available to the public. It is a pity that you have no plans for immediate projects. It would benefit your entry into the competition if you were to enlist the assistance of someone with an interest in promoting wildlife habitats by a river and in an area rich with trees. Progress in this section requires a Management Plan with immediate, definable tasks and objectives. The standards in the Town Park are worthy of mention. The numbers using the Park are a credit to the input of your Council.

Litter Control:

In your submission you tell of your involvement with the schools. There was very little child/teenage litter to be seen so maybe this involvement is paying off. You are involved in three anti-litter competitions, also praiseworthy and a pity that you did not include the results. There appears to be a good supply of bins throughout the town and they appear to be well stationed. A word with the dog fowlers may not be received with a welcome but might produce welcome results. As litter is an ever present problem one would be interested in your long term strategies and one would wish that you would declare what your targets are.

Waste Minimisation:

One presumes that Grange School has maintained its Green Flag Status. The importance of this was stressed in last year's adjudication. The essay competitions are also a help. Your Bring Bank is well maintained and being used. But this adjudicator feels from that more needs to be done to make the community, private and public, focus more on reducing waste. The booklet 'Race Against Waste' would help stimulate new projects. Your submission shows that you have no plans for future work under this heading, a pity. Segregating waste during clean ups would be a venture in this section.

Tidiness:

The centre of town has a tidy sense. The landscaped areas and the grassy areas have a less tidy sense. If the grass in public areas, such as along verges is not regularly cut, it develops a scruffy appearance. You will know where this happens. Greater care also needs to be taken of weeds. Graffiti is sneaking back into some areas. Care needs to be taken of signs to ensure that they are clean and are not hidden by hedges. Your

submission suggests that there is little planning happening in this area. Traffic management is an important element in this section. Despite the constant traffic through town there is an order to the flow and there are many accessible car parking areas.

Residential Areas:

Most of the estates visited expressed the pride of the dwellers in their area. At times the grass cutting in the public areas did not appear to be frequent enough to create a tidy feel. Where there were weeds they led to a sense of neglect. It appears that there are a number of estates with no name. Where there are names the name signs are most attractive, as for instance along Richmond Hill. Well done on the renewal work at St Mary's Crescent. Individual houses as those on College Road looked superb, fronts, painting, gardens and walls are maintained, not because of the TidyTowns Competition but because the owners have pride in their property. Ard Parnell terrace caught the eye. Areas mentioned in last year's adjudication still exude pride.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Well done on work done. It was a pity that Barry's Boreen was not highlighted on the map so that the work there could be assessed. On the way from Killarney fabulous stone walls lead one into the C of I area and these walls are a hallmark of Fermoy. On the Cork road the griselinia looks magnificent and offers great privacy and colour. The R639 is not as attractive as the others, dereliction being a problem. Back streets, for example Connelly Street, are so quiet by comparison with main street. The library building, which appealed to the adjudicator, leads one into the various areas of activity around there. A neglected piece of hard landscaping is a pity. If the area which is home to the schools is a back area, then well done. The car park before the mill is very well maintained.

General Impression:

Forget about the traffic. Remember the Barnane Walk, the heron patiently waiting to pounce, the ducklings struggling in single file across the river, the men fishing quietly at the bridge, the kids in the Park, the stroll into town down Richmond Hill, the sound of the water trickling through Quinn Health Care or the walk around the vast education campus. Fermoy has so much heritage from other generations to make one linger and enjoy. At times one felt that there is so much to savour from the past that the present finds it difficult to maintain the pace set by your forefathers.