

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Clifden** Ref: **793**
County: **Galway** Mark: **227**
Category: **C** Date(s): **20/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	26
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	22
Litter Control	50	27
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	24
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	227

Overall Development Approach:

Your adjudicator would like to welcome Clifden to the 2008 TidyTowns Competition and thank you for the large map of the area. With 16 people on your TidyTowns Committee you obviously have a good level of community support for your work. With 21 meetings between November and April the committee is indeed working very hard. Clifden TidyTowns also seems to have the support of the relevant agencies and organisations that are essential to your work. Your community communications seems to use all the relevant media. The adjudicator noted that you did not include a copy of your 3 Year TidyTowns Plan. If you do not have one in place it is recommended that you give this consideration. You will find a Plan of great help in organising your work programme from year to year. Clifden is a beautiful area nestling down surrounded on most sides by hills and mountains. Do remember that the TidyTowns Handbook gives great information and suggestions. Both new Committees and those who have been involved in the competition for some time will find this booklet really useful.

The Built Environment:

The new Graveyard and walking signs are important developments. With the growth in visitors coming to the west to walk Clifden is perfectly located to benefit even more from this tourism traffic. You did not identify other projects that come under this adjudication category. There is a lot of new development completed or underway in Clifden and the town had a vibrant atmosphere on adjudication day. Some of the new developments are of three stories in height and these fit well with the older developments of similar scale. The Dun Gibbons development is of beautiful design with major curved elements on the front façade that are echoed along the roof lines. At the Church of Ireland Church the grass and nettles need to be removed from the open church gates. The stone road boundary walls at the Garda Station were admired as was the sculpture on the front wall. There are a number of buildings in Clifden that stand out for all the right reasons for this adjudicator. The three colour scheme at E.J. King's and the attractive hanging sign and no other

projecting signs make this an attractive building. The detailing on the yellow and white Millar's building is effective and the John Mannion Cycles building has excellent lettering. An Bhean Feasta uses lettering that is excellently in scale with the rest of the building and the colour scheme here works well. However in the view of this adjudicator at the Atlantic Hotel the lettering on the front façade is somewhat out of scale with the rest of this façade. Some poor plastic signage still survives in Clifden and efforts could be made to see if changes can be achieved.

Landscaping:

You have identified four garden areas on the map on which your committee has worked during the year and these add to the built environment in a positive way. The many hanging baskets and window boxes around Clifden were very colourful and really added to the overall presentation of the town. At the Main Street / Bridge Street junction the triangular cobbles area looked rather dull and would have been improved with some landscaping. Similar potential exists at the Market Street / Bridge Street junction. At Ben View House the window boxes were extremely colourful and caught the eye. The hard and soft landscaping at the central monument work well together. Again this year the street side landscaping at Brown's Restaurant was really eye catching.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

You advised that three walking routes are to be signed but the adjudicator did not find these signs and perhaps the project is to happen later in the year. This is an adjudication category where Clifden has major potential to do well but little work is evident in that regard on the ground. It is suggested that with the help of the schools and others that you carry out a simple wildlife survey of the Clifden area to establish what wildlife is present. That will then lead on to other associated projects.

Litter Control:

The adjudicator understands that you are seeking more litter bins but is agreement in place about the emptying schedule? The Recycling Centre was closed at 12.05 pm on a Friday and this seemed a little strange. The internal grass areas needed to be cut and the damaged stone wall at the entrance off the road repaired. Litter was present on Low Road and in the Playground / Harbour area. Considering the number of people in Clifden on adjudication day the level of litter control was quite good.

Waste Minimisation:

The recycling of rubbish on clean up days is an important project under this adjudication category but there are many others that your committee might consider. It is unclear whether the advice given in last year's Report was acted upon. If not then do talk to Galway County Council and get a copy of the appropriate literature suggested last year.

Tidiness:

The April and the Shore clean ups are important annual projects. The large open area by the roadside opposite the Garda Station looked quite untidy and screening might be a possibility here. On the Beach Road very bad weed growth was noted and also at the safety barrier by the Playground. The area just beyond the Playground was also quite untidy. The Quay area has major potential but the present situation leaves many upgrading possibilities. Along the roadside the large white conical structures look quite ugly and perhaps they could be replaced by something else that will keep traffic off the grass. The chains here were rusty. A rusty fish trap (?) was noted on the verge at the Quay area with long grass growing up through it – could be removed by the owner so that the verge can be cut properly. Signage clutter was noted at road junctions in the town centre with 18 signs on 5 poles in one instance. Could there be some signage coordination through the County Council?

Residential Areas:

There is a great diversity of housing styles in Clifden from the older terraced or stand alone house to modern multi storey apartment developments and they all add to the character of Clifden. It is difficult to make a single statement that covers all the residential areas in the town and area but the adjudicator was of the view that standards here were reasonably good but with great variations.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road surfaces in Clifden are a problem in some areas and Church Hill again this year needs resurfacing urgently. Why does two way traffic operate on this road with so much car parking? The road surface at Low Road was also extremely poor and that to St. Anne's Nursing Unit quite appalling. Good road surfaces are not a luxury and for a visitor town like Clifden good surfacing of all significant roads should be a priority. On the Galway road a very untidy area was noted on the left back from the 60 KPH sign. Along the Sky Road the roadside Ferns and plants were much admired.

General Impression:

It was a pleasure for your adjudicator to visit Clifden. Good luck with your TidyTowns projects for 2009 when we look forward to visiting you again.