

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Gort** Ref: **1039**
County: **Galway** Mark: **170**
Category: **D** Date(s): **28/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	24
The Built Environment	50	23
Landscaping	50	25
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	15
Litter Control	50	20
Waste Minimisation	20	4
Tidiness	30	13
Residential Areas	40	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	20
General Impression	10	5
TOTAL MARK	400	170

Overall Development Approach:

Your adjudicator would like to welcome Gort to the 2008 TidyTowns Competition. It is really great for the Competition to have you back since your last entry in 1999. Gort is an important town visited by many visitors each year and we wish you every possible success in the years ahead. Thank you for the file of photographs that supported your entry, together with the excellent map. Your new Committee appears to be a very active one with many TidyTowns meetings held throughout the past year. It is recommended that your Committee prepares a 3 Year TidyTowns Action Plan for Gort that will guide your work over the next three years. When you are drawing up this Plan it is a good idea to consult with your Local Authority contacts to get their input. Your local communications also appear to be very good. The regular meetings with the County Council and FAS are another ingredient for future progress in the TidyTowns Competition. 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 photograph of the SuperValu Notice Board was really interesting and gave great community TidyTowns information.

The Built Environment:

The general building pattern from the past in Gort is of three storey properties many of which were faced in Limestone and it is great to see that some of the original facades still survive. It was encouraging to see that some of the older properties in Gort are now being restored. The adjudicator really likes your idea of restoring the old Weigh House and this could be a central feature in the town. The nearby corner area of the Square seems to have great potential as a community focal point in Gort. However the removing of car parking in this area would transform this part of the overall Square. The small retail area at the Gort Furniture location is modern and fits in here rather well and the Limestone cladding was admired. Another building that caught the eye was the stone Heritage Centre and the architectural details here are interesting as they are on the Garda Barracks in Barrack Street. The Market Hall development that houses SuperValu and other outlets was rather

well presented and busy on the day of adjudication. Quite a number of buildings would be improved if painted for next year and this included the Bank of Ireland and AIB buildings. However the adjudicator acknowledges the great effort that some people had taken to repaint for this year. On the Bank of Ireland premises the window and door detailing was much admired. Are there any plans for the redevelopment of the old Technical School at the top of George's Street?

Landscaping:

The Canon Quin Park is a very attractive most relaxing area and your recent work here including the colourful planting stood out as did the shrub planting on the Ennis / Galway road. Presumably this is the same planting that the adjudicator admired at the Gort town Limestone sign on the left. A long landscaped area to the front of Lydl looked well and provided an attractive road boundary division. In the centre of Gort the raised landscaped area at the Statue had been very well maintained and the colour of the planting worked well with the colour of the stone. This does not always happen in Ireland!

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Park potentially can become an important area for wildlife and it is recommended that you have a look at the TidyTowns Handbook and this will give you lots of ideas for consideration under this adjudication category. It is a pity however that so much graffiti was present in the Park area at the steel unit in the corner and on the wall running from here along one side.

Litter Control:

Your regular contact with the Litter Warden is most important and the clean ups on Sundays are a great way of trying to keep good litter control. The adjudicator was delighted to read that new residents in Gort are being encouraged to help out on the clean ups. Unfortunately a lot of litter was noted on the Loughrea approach road and at the Bring Centre at The Market Hall. Some litter was also present in George's Street.

Waste Minimisation:

Some of the projects mentioned in your Entry Form under this category are not in fact included under this section. The TidyTowns Handbook will be helpful in suggestions projects for consideration by your Committee. Basically this category is about seeing how the amount of waste generation in Gort can be reduced. Then the task is to see how much of that waste can go into recycling.

Tidiness:

Barrack Street needed serious attention in regard to tidiness but it is appreciated that there is only so much that any Committee can take on in their first years. Some poor retail signage was noted in Gort and poor graphics and signage size were two issues that caught the adjudicator's attention. Projecting signs are an associated issue and weed growth in some high up guttering needed attention. It was really great to see that the under grounding of cables had taken place in the Square and it makes such a real visual difference. Some of the old timber poles needed to be removed. Are there any plans to continue the under grounding cabling programme down George's Street?

Residential Areas:

The Estate Awards Scheme sounds really interesting and you might provide more details for 2009. A few derelict properties were noted that needed attention. You could talk to the owners if possible and the County Council might be able to help using the powers available to them. Some litter was seen at Boland's Court but the overall presentation at Ballyhugh was excellent. The beautiful raised landscaped areas here have been carefully planted. The adjudicator appreciated the different colours and textures here that worked so well together. The design mix at River Walk was interesting and this was enhanced by some good landscaping. An Cluain Aodha the unusual layout was admired. At the estates visited the overall standard of presentation including associated landscaping was quite high.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Work was needed on all the approach roads in terms of grass cutting at verges and the removal of weed growth from the base of stone walls or other road boundary walls. Do remember that hedges should not be cut between March and August to allow for the needs of wildlife.

General Impression:

It was a pleasure for your adjudicator to visit your area for the first time. Your first entry after so many years has been a creditable one. Good luck with your TidyTowns projects for 2009 when we look forward to visiting you again.

