

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Oughterard** Ref: **318**
County: **Galway** Mark: **234**
Category: **C** Date(s): **07/07/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	38
The Built Environment	50	31
Landscaping	50	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25
Litter Control	50	32
Waste Minimisation	20	2
Tidiness	30	14
Residential Areas	40	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	234

Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator would like to welcome Oughterard to the 2008 Tidy Towns Competition. This is a very pleasant but busy village where tourism is of key importance. Oughterard Tidy Towns appears to enjoy good agency support and your communications strategy to the Oughterard community is comprehensive. You seem to have good numbers of your Committee based on national standards. Thank you for the very good map that was most useful on adjudication day. Do remember that the Tidy Towns 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:

Hopefully the grant application for the Court House will be successful and we look forward to seeing developments on the ground next year. What will this building be used for following restoration? The unoccupied building on the Main Street is certainly a problem area – have you discussed this with Galway County Council as they may have powers that would be useful. The Library building looked a little dull and would be improved by power washing and / or painting. At the Credit Union building the adjudicator admired the good colour choice used here. In terms of the Schools the presentation of Scoil Naomh Pol was a little disappointing. The building looked a little drab and would be improved by the provision of some window boxes and hanging baskets. The gates would also be improved if painted a bright colour. Some buildings needed to be repainted and some road boundary walls were over due repainting also. The Anglers Bar was admired apart from the projecting sign but the lettering here is good. At the Spar premises the large overhead canopy needed to be painted while nearby the Faherty's premises was much admired. The lack of projecting signs here and the beautiful stonework is effective. The relatively new retail area that has the Michael O'Toole premises is effective with a simple approach to shop front design complimented by good lettering on all units. At the Roger Finnerty & Sons premises the plinth needed to be painted. Here the frontage was admired

especially the good lettering. Oughterard has a number of stone buildings some of which have been highlighted above. They add character to the village. The new seating at the Health Centre was admired but the trees here need to be trimmed to increase head height for pedestrians.

Landscaping:

At the car park the landscaped areas needed to be weeded and elsewhere the hanging baskets and some window boxes brought added colour to the village. The half barrels however needed to be painted as they looked a little drab. Other planted areas in the village were well presented. Good landscaping was noted on the Galway approach road. The railway sleepers at the raised landscaped area at The Boat Inn needed to be treated.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Congratulations on your work with the Golden Mile Committee. The adjudicator noted part of this along Station Road. The river and especially The Shrubbery area has major wildlife potential. Good suggestions were made in last year's report and perhaps some of these can be actioned for 2009. Basically this adjudication category is about discovering what wildlife your area has – fish, birds, plants, insects etc – and taking steps to make the area more wildlife friendly. From that the provision of public information about the local wildlife naturally follows. This may be a good opportunity for getting the Schools further involved in your work for Oughterard. The upgrading of the Riverwalk as a future project will enhance what is already a most attractive peaceful area. The main Pier area is quite attractive though the small car park looked a little untidy.

Litter Control:

Litter control was quite good on adjudication day and your regular clean ups seem to be having the desired result. The presentation of the Bring Centre in the car park was a little disappointing. The signage needed to be repaired and a quantity of litter was noted here. Along the Main Street litter was present in a few places.

Waste Minimisation:

Congratulations to the two Primary Schools on their Green Flag success. This category is about reducing the amount of waste generated in Oughterard and getting as much as possible into recycling. It is suggested that you take on just one or two new projects each year and continue with those from previous years.

Tidiness:

The introduction of various competitions in the future is an excellent idea and perhaps you can get a local sponsor to help with the prizes. The advertising signage on the Galway approach road detracted from this introduction to Oughterard. How many of these signs have Planning Permission? This is an issue that you could discuss with Galway County Council. The presence of retail goods on the pavement and 'A' shaped signage detracted in a significant way from the overall presentation of the streetscape. In the view of this adjudicator all this does is to cheapen the atmosphere of Oughterard and this is such a pity. At the Pier car park the small building with the steel door needed to be painted. Why is there no litter bin there? On the approach to the village along the Glann Road some corrugated iron roofing on the left needed to be painted. At the Station Road junction quite a lot of signage clutter was noted and perhaps the signs here can be rationalised. In the Catholic Church car park the notice board looked a little faded and perhaps a new board is required here. Near the Health Centre the larger of the two information panels would be improved if the frame and the two legs were painted matt black while across the road at Welby's the green railings would be improved if painted.

Residential Areas:

The Estates Competitions that you run are an excellent way of getting more of the community in Oughterard involved in TidyTowns. At the estate at the end of Camp Street the large green at the end has excellent landscaping while very good private landscaping featured along Glann Road. Varied housing designs at Cregg na Coillte were admired but a few properties here needed to be painted. In the Carrowmanagh area some road boundary walls needed attention.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Weed and grass growth was noted in some of the narrow lanes off the Main Street. Work on road surfaces and pathways was noted but the beginning of the road to the Pier needed urgent resurfacing. On the Galway approach some of the verges had not been cut recently.

General Impression:

It was a great pleasure for your adjudicator to visit Oughterard and we wish you well with your projects for next year. This is an attractive village but do try and see how the display of retail goods and signs on the

pavements can be discouraged.