

# Tidy Towns Competition 2008

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Shannonbridge** Ref: **850**  
County: **Offaly** Mark: **258**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **14/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	35
The Built Environment	50	38
Landscaping	50	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	24
Litter Control	50	31
Waste Minimisation	20	7
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>258</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Shannonbridge Tidy Towns Committee is welcome to the 2008 competition. Many thanks for your completed application form and map which were most useful on the day. Have you put together a work programme? This was mentioned in last year's report. This document need only be a few pages long, outlining your plans and objectives for the village and putting a time scale against their implementation. This document will prove invaluable to you as the years go by, as you can monitor your progress, which is always satisfying. It will also give the adjudicators a clearer idea of your work. You would appear to have a good working relationship with FAS. From your comments you would appear to be a relatively new committee. Have you established links with other groups and organisations such as local schools, businesses and Offaly County Council? We note your comments regarding being overlooked due to your geographical location. Some towns and villages find this can be to their advantage as they can benefit from the attention of two County Councils! Would this be possible in your situation, do you think?

### **The Built Environment:**

Buildings along the wide main street generally looked very well on the day and were smartly presented. Don't forget gable walls as the buildings step up and down along the street – most were good but one or two were a little neglected. The adjudicator was delighted to see the unique heritage of the town was being well utilised in relation to the (Harbour Master's?) house as the Heritage Centre and the Old Fort as a restaurant – is the derelict building beside it due for restoration in the future? There are a number of fine traditional shopfronts such as Luker's which should be restored. The Garda Station was well presented. Shops and businesses were generally very fresh – of note being Supermacs, Kileens, Morans, and Quinns. Do ensure that you don't remove the render from buildings that were intended to be plastered as this can lead to problems with water penetration and is also incorrect from a conservation point of view. The School and Catholic Church looked well and were quite small and discreet and perhaps some additional landscaping could be considered in these

areas. Rachra House B&B looked well. The narrow bridge looked magnificent with its unusual triangular stone projections. We were pleased to note the tubs of flowers and window boxes at the Tourist Office and the maintenance of the school grounds.

### **Landscaping:**

The marvellous picnic area over the bridge on the Roscommon side beyond the old fort on its raised bank looked very well. The riverside area is well presented and subtly developed. The attractive welcome sign and planting on the Cloghan Road was greatly admired. More planting was noted to an open space/site in the centre of the village which was simply presented. The ongoing maintenance at the riverside and the replanting of the bed at the green area are all to the good, and we look forward to your proposed future work in this area. The planting at the embankment on the Clonmacnoise road is also looked forward to.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

We were delighted to hear of the corncrake habitat in Callows and hope that this indicates a resurgence of this lovely bird. The new fencing at the wildlife garden was noted.

### **Litter Control:**

There were one or two items of litter on the main street, at the harbour area and on the Ballinasloe Road but besides this the village was quite good from a litter point of view. The litter bins were generally in good condition and the recycling area by the waterside area was well maintained and clean. The planned involvement of the local youth club in regard to litter control is an excellent idea and we were pleased to hear of the presence of litter wardens in the area.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

Are your National Schools participating in the Green Flag initiative? We were pleased to note the recycling area at the riverside area is being used. The participation of the youth club in your work will be well worthwhile.

### **Tidiness:**

The town was generally neat and ordered. A wall in the vicinity of the fort should be painted up before next year's competition. There were a couple of weeds to kerbsides on the Cloghan Road and in the vicinity of the Heritage Centre and Lukers, but generally the town was good from this point of view. We note your work in regard to weed control. Are your methods environmentally friendly? The new footpaths will make a world of difference to the appearance of streets. Try to ensure that the materials chosen are suitable for an Irish country town.

### **Residential Areas:**

Well maintained houses and gardens were admired on the Cloghan Road. Ely House was a well presented B&B as was Rachra House B&B. Some attractive cottages as you enter the town on the Cloghan side were greatly admired. We look forward to the painting of boundary walls of houses. New signage for estates is an excellent idea. An attractive house and planting were noted beside the open site in the village. The retaining wall constructed of stone gabions to a housing estate on the Cloghan road was admired, as a modern touch!

### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Generally the standard in this category of the competition was good. The nice wide Main Street was well presented. Have you considered traffic calming in regard to this area? Many trucks seem to trundle through at quite a fast speed. The Cloghan Road was attractive with its welcome sign and planting. The children crossing sign was a little bit grubby on this side and its post was slightly rusty. Perhaps the signage at the crossroads could be rationalised as there are quite a few of them. High stonewalls were well maintained on the Ballinasloe side of the bridge where concrete kerbs were also noted ready to go in. The sowing of heather on the Roscommon road is a lovely and unusual idea. We look forward to the new road signage at Rachra Park.

### **General Impression:**

It was a pleasure for the adjudicator to revisit Shannonbridge after many years absence. It is good to see it still retains its unique charm and that any development has been suitably restrained and respects the town's unique character and charm.

