

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Shinrone** Ref: **293**
County: **Offaly** Mark: **256**
Category: **B** Date(s): **26/07/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	43
The Built Environment	50	33
Landscaping	50	37
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25
Litter Control	50	31
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	29
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	256

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to this years competition and thank you for the entry form inclusive of map with comprehensive supporting documentation all of which were very useful on the day of adjudication. The background notes on this historic village were both interesting and useful. Thank you. In a year that may well bring world attention to Shinrone due to events elsewhere your entry and the intentions as set out in your plan are laudable and timely. Your involvement with and degree of co-operation with other agencies in the village and area are important especially with FAS, West Offaly Partnership and Offaly County Council. Most civic agencies are able to respond best to TT committees with a clear cut programme and a reputation for carrying through on their objectives. So the availability of your structured and realistic programme of works is doubly necessary and advantageous to Shinrone.

The Built Environment:

Shinrone has a number of well sited buildings which are important to the overall presentation of the village. The Catholic Church closes the view on arrival from Brosna. It is very well painted in white over a pale blue base setting it off delightfully. The high, well constructed stone wall to the rear of the Centra market and filling station is very attractive; the small scale but visually important R. Spain caught the eye. The large GAA community hall in the village centre was very well presented. Saint Mary's Church of Ireland (1820) grounds were most suitably set out. The most interesting house opposite seemed quite historic, looked intriguing and must have an interesting story to tell. The somewhat stark appearance of the hall frontage opposite the school would benefit from painting and please treat the gap around the extractor fan and remove or repair the remains of the light fitting over the door. The Deanery Furniture shop was well set out as was Peter Ormonde premises. The Castle Bar was suitably embellished by both window boxes and hanging baskets. The white house with red brick chimneys has weeds growing at roof level which need attention. The Village Inn should

be painted before next year's competition. Work is well advanced on the school extension. The presentation of Cloughmoyle School building (1874-1971) was commendable as was the small, neat, well painted Garda Station. The attractive Lamp standard here would benefit from being painted before next years competition. Clover Lodge Nursing home was most attractively set out and its well tended grounds set off the buildings to best effect.

Landscaping:

The amenity scheme at the little river is maturing well helped in no small way by the splendid private garden behind it. The trees planted by the river and the selection of low maintenance, ground covering shrubs were both appropriate. The fine grotto and Doyle memorial are both excellently maintained. The GAA sports grounds themselves were neat and attractive. The tree planted and flower baskets on top of the front wall pillars were welcomed. The timber planters on the Birr Road in the area behind the Church added a flash of colour here. The general level of maintenance of amenity areas and flower beds throughout the village was continued to a high order and as the number of such sites continues to increase this in itself is quite a task being completed with aplomb. The agreement reached with Coillte to provide trees to grow in the estate area is one likely to prove most beneficial over time.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

In recent years additional weight has been given to activities in this regard and the promotion of wildlife, especially bird life, has been accorded greater attention as an important element within the overall Tidy Towns programme. The projects you outline under this category all are helpful in sustaining the important food chain, a necessary step on the way to enhancing bird life in the area. Other activities need to be undertaken if optimum progress is to be achieved such as a habitat survey, bird census and related matters. Seek the advice and assistance of a local enthusiast, perhaps a member of Bird watch Ireland for example, who may be willing to draft a suitable programme for you. Then approach the school management who are already clearly interested in adding this additional and important life long interest and dimension to the overall and rounded education of their pupils. We noted the sign for the Game Sanctuary on Brosna Road.

Litter Control:

Your daily litter clean up both in itself and as an example to all the community is clearly having a good effect as very little litter was in evidence on the day of adjudication. Surprisingly some was noticed in the river amenity area which jarred very much with the fine work done here. The daily maintenance of village litter bins is a significant task undertaken by the Community Employment Scheme. Plan to be involved in the National Spring Clean Day next April.

Waste Minimisation:

Your entry makes it clear how active the committee has been in this regard and indeed how receptive the community has proved to this issue especially the business sector and the School. We noted the presentation of the Bring Centre in the GAA grounds and applaud the tidy, litter free presentation of this area, an achievement sadly not the norm in many towns and villages.

This category is as much about getting the community at large to consider and implement methods of reducing the generation of waste in all its forms as it is about recycling items where possible. In effect it requires a change of mindset in both the community and personally to the issue. Considerable guidance is readily available; Read the booklet from Race against Waste which offers many helpful guidelines on the process which best begins with an audit of waste, how it is generated both by individual household and the community in general. Help and advice is also available from Offaly County Council, Environment Department with whom you might consider staging a waste awareness workshop. The Green Flag programme at the school is also an excellent source of good ideas and as you report, can also become a major driving force changing attitudes and amending actions.

Tidiness:

Shinrone projects a neat and orderly face and much of the village is very well presented. The GAA pitches are certainly but the foreground needs attention. Pallets, bails of wire netting and building debris are scattered there and an oil tank (if still in use) should be painted and ideally if possible, screened from view. The extensive parking area was host to a number of heavy trucks on the day of adjudication. The resultant shale and loose stones are militating against a neat presentation of this significant area. There is also an amount of loose shale and stones in other locations notable around the Catholic Church junction. Quite a number of farm field gates are passed on the way into the village. Could an agreement be reached to paint them all the same colour, red for example? The work in progress at the school has caused the front wall to be breached. It is assumed that this will be suitable reinstated on completion of the building. Significant work appears to be in

progress at the tall and large building well set back from the river amenity area, leaving the ground between the two untidy. The absence of weed and grass from kerbs and footpaths is noticed and your efforts in this regard applauded.

Residential Areas:

Shinrone Oaks is maturing very well and on the day of adjudication looked very well indeed. We noted the ESB junction box is suitably painted. Small amounts of weed between pavement and kerbs need attention. The mature trees opposite looked very well. One has become badly tilted and should be corrected over time by the 'stake and weight' technique. The terrace of houses opposite the Roscrea Road looked charming. The practice of parking cars on the grass between the trees on the small estate off the Birr Road should be discouraged. In Annesbrook Drive just one house has been painted so far, the communal grassed area is very well maintained as are a majority of individual front lawns. Annesbrook View houses were well presented as were the houses of Saint Teresa's Terrace. Rathbaun, a small estate is still in course of construction.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Birr Road speed limit signs are in good order, the Village Name Plate needs to be repainted. The flowers outside front walls were especially attractive. Attention is needed to remove scrub and shale lying between the road and pavement. Cloughjordan road Village Name Plate needs similar attention while the verge and hedgerows were suitably but not excessively cut back. The Ballyingarry road commenced with excellent planting and mature trees. The concrete pavement is broken in a number of places. Broken timber fencing here also needs attention and all of these timbers would benefit from being painted before next year's competition. The fine copper beech trees on the Brosna Road are a delight while the excellent amenity area on the Roscrea Road together with its picnic table is very well presented. The new and extended footpaths are a fine addition within the village itself.

General Impression:

Shinrone has a delightful mix of the historic, some interesting buildings and developed amenities. It is very well presented and a credit to all involved. Your continuing progression will have the probable effect of securing additional members for your committee and thus additional activities and successes become possible for you. All involved with this year's entry are warmly thanked, applauded and congratulated for their efforts and wished well in 2009.