

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Foynes** Ref: **451**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **261**
Category: **B** Date(s): **17/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	37
The Built Environment	50	37
Landscaping	50	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	261

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome Foynes to the 2009 Tidy Towns National Competition. Thank you for submitting your fully completed entry form incorporating a very useful sketch map with the comprehensive accompanying notes – it certainly gave us a virtual 'guided tour' during our visit and made our task more enjoyable.

It is impressive to note that you have an active committee of 21 members, with regular monthly meetings with the Community Council. It is also good that you continue to achieve the support of a variety of organisations including: local businesses, Limerick County Council and the West Limerick Resources; through funding resources and information. Your engagement with the local national school and their involvement in the annual spring clean up is positive. Your Communications strategy including your use of public meetings and local media to reach the broader community is very appropriate. Partnership approach is very beneficial and, thus more can be achieved by working together. Keep up the good work. Best of luck with the planned festival, which is your particular niche - the Irish Coffee Festival in mid-July.

As was previously advised, you could consider submitting an annual plan, as it could add points under this section of the competition. A plan based over 3 to 5 years would be advisable and it wouldn't need to be prepared by a professional. It could be prepared by your own committee, but views should be sought from the local community. Any plan should take into account existing plans for the area, such as a local authority's Local Area Plan. Ideally, your plan should clearly explain what you are trying to achieve each year, the approach planned and indicative costs for each project, any supporting agencies and an indication of the lead partner. A three year plan 2010-2012 would be very acceptable, as it's very difficult to plan for any longer timescale, in particular in these difficult economic circumstances.

The Built Environment:

There is an old world feel for the visitor to Foynes. It's obvious that many commercial premises are aware of the need to maintain their properties to the highest standard. The improvements to the exterior stone of the catholic church are impressive and the ongoing work at the Flying Boat Museum complex will continue to improve the attractiveness of Foynes, as a place to work, live and visit. The aim to increase the use of the Irish language for signage is one for which to strive.

Commercial and public buildings that impress included the Fire Station, Foynes Clinic, and the National School. The school, set with the backdrop of the wooded hill, was in generally tidy condition. It is good to see the Green Flag on display here.

M. Fitzgerald's Pub looked well, with an old world appearance. Other impressive buildings were the Yankee Clipper, Foynes Inn, and The Shannon House. Reidy's Centra/Topaz is one of the fine commercial premises on display in Foynes, and seems a real asset to the commercial life of the community.

St. Senan's Centre, opened in 2003, looked in excellent condition, as was the newly built, stone circular building, which was not identified.

The industrial looking building, overlooking the Flying Boat Museum, is fenced off and boarded up. Its presence detracts from the museum area.

The entrance to the Yacht Club is well maintained and the planted boat with summer bedding plants is a lovely feature

The Church and Community Centre created a central focus and the grounds of both were attractive with good landscaping. The car park was mainly litter free, but the recycling centre showed signs of overuse and a lack of maintenance.

A huge amount of work has been done over the years to develop the Flying Boat Museum, as a worthy tribute to Foynes pivotal role in world aviation and it was good to see that it is appreciated and well presented.

The swimming pool near the Yacht Club is a wonderful amenity for the community and visitors. During our visit, the pool was not filled with water, but we presumed that it would be operational within a few weeks and enjoyed by many over summer.

Landscaping:

There are some nice bedding plants on the approach road from Limerick, with colourful flowers in bloom.

The Cliff Project looks well, in what is now its second year of growth. Under very difficult physical circumstances, the grassed area is maintained to a high standard and the new sapling trees are evident. The flower beds at the base of the cliff are colourful and in full bloom, complementing the various flower pots, outside the private residences opposite, very well. The erection of an information panel setting out the details of the project might be worthwhile.

The work done on the harbour road entrance is noticeable; it has a clean and tidy appearance.

The Dernich Drive green was well maintained and landscaped, with mature trees and pretty flower pots on the perimeter of a well kept green. It was a pity to see lots of roadside weeds on the road and on footpaths also.

The green at Corrig Wood needed maintenance work; it has become quite overgrown, which is a pity for an area that has lovely new and old trees, and good potential.

The Grotto at Quarry Road looks well, surrounded by appropriate planting, and adorned by lovely stone walls.

The grassed area surrounded by the stone wall, next to the Community Centre, was in good condition.

The Car Park area in front of the Community Centre was being maintained at the time of visit, which was good to see.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The proposed Waterside Park has the potential to create further natural habitat opportunities, so you should seek out the assistance of someone with the necessary knowledge of natural habitats in order to develop these projects. The developments at Boland's Meadow would be more attractive to the wider community, if an information panel on the Wildlife and Birdlife was erected in Foynes town centre.

Litter Control:

The amount of litter collected in your annual spring clean-up was in evidence from your supplied photograph.

The annual spring clean with the involvement of Foynes National School is a great way of starting the annual effort and the daily patrols thereafter seem to be paying dividends. There was very little litter encountered on the actual streets. It would be important to ensure that any litter patrols regularly check the recycling area, as waste can build up very quickly if not checked. The involvement of the pupils of the national school in the annual clean-up is very positive and all involved deserve great credit.

Congratulations to the Community Council member who is directly involved in daily litter collection; such a Wonderful commitment. As was recommended last year, there could be an opportunity for increased marks under this category, if a Litter Control Plan was formulated. This could be submitted as a separate project or as part of an overall annual plan. The litter control plan should involve a survey to identify problems, a list of possible solutions, clear targets for the work to be carried out and a clear method of monitoring progress.

Waste Minimisation:

Five recycling bins in the car park of the Flying Boat Museum are an important part of your waste minimisation projects, and it is good to see these mostly in good condition, but there was some broken glass in front of these bins on the day of our visit.

Congratulations to St Senan's National School on the 2nd Green Flag award, it was good to see that the flag was proudly displayed.

Tidiness:

Two Residences, just after the Grotto, look unoccupied and are untidy, and with a metal barrier look abandoned. On the other hand, just past these, there are some lovely tidy terraces on both sides.

The FAS sign at the Community Centre was in need of a clean-up, it is felt.

The work done on the footpath to Boland's Meadows is positive.

Residential Areas:

The bilingual sign for Dernish Drive is a welcoming sign for a lovely estate. The grass area is well maintained, the flowers look well, and the mature trees and freshly painted white bollards provide a lovely border for the large green area. The wooden picnic benches look well also.

The Corrig Wood is a fine new development of terraced houses, and as previously mentioned, the mature ash trees in the green area in front are a bonus for the residents. The grass needs cutting badly, however. The monument in Corrig Wood entitled "Heavens Reach" is a very interesting sculpture merging the themes of aviation and marine, two important aspects of Foynes' history. It is a great pity, however that this new monument is almost completely hidden from display by overgrown shrubbery directly in front of it. This needs to be corrected.

Quarry Road is a lovely residential area, with pleasant houses, attractive stone walls and a lovely village pump well kept in a nice paved area. The area is generally very tidy.

A series of 6 old terraced houses reflect the character of Foynes, and while some could do with some painting, they are generally in good condition.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach road from Limerick is well laid out and in good condition, with well cut grassed areas and the areas in front of the private houses are well maintained.

No major problems were observed with traffic signs throughout the town. The milestone marker is an attractive sight. The approaches from Glin and Askeaton were appealing, with neatly maintained grass margins and landscaping.

General Impression:

Your Committee have managed to keep improving your marks within the TidyTowns Competition and great credit is due to all involved. The ongoing task of getting the correct mix of appropriate commercial, residential and leisure developments will require a huge commitment from your Community Council and indeed the entire Foynes community. We wish you success in your next part of your TidyTowns activities and keep up the excellent work.