

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Clogheen** Ref: **637**
County: **Tipperary(South)** Mark: **252**
Category: **B** Date(s): **07/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	39
The Built Environment	50	31
Landscaping	50	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	22
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	20
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	252

Overall Development Approach:

Congratulations to Clogheen TidyTowns Group for participating in the TidyTowns Competition 2009. Thank you for your submission and for the supporting literature which shows that you are an enthusiastic group of people, committed to the improvement of the appearance and quality of life of Clogheen and with the support of the younger generation. Thank you for the map and especially for highlighting areas of importance. These highlights steered the adjudicator in appropriate directions. The map would have been easier to follow, if you had marked in the names of the towns each approach road leads to. The essay on activities in the village helped give a flavour of your priorities, of your frustrations and of your achievements in the past year and should be filed for future historians as primary source material. It is obvious from the material supplied that you engage actively with agencies, which shape the future of Clogheen, and with bodies attempting to enhance the life of the village. Your pride in the achievements of the school leaps from the page and the fruits of your interaction are obvious from the appearance of the school and its grounds. Thank you for enclosing your plan for 2009 to 2013. This adjudicator would like to believe that your plan has been typed up and given to all members of your group. The plan might be of greater value to you were you to be more specific in your aims, for example specify the trees you intend to plant and in which areas this planting will take place. In the case of each element of the plan, specify who will carry out the work, which agencies you will enlist to assist in the work and state the likely cost of the work, and the sources of the revenue required. It is clear that you understand the challenges facing Clogheen and that you are wholehearted in your efforts to improve the quality of life of all its people.

The Built Environment:

The streetscape of Clogheen suggests a once thriving market village that has become more dormitory area. Clogheen is blessed with buildings that were show pieces in a previous generation and now lend gravitas to the present surroundings, as in the AIB building and St Paul's. Inevitably, some businesses have closed and

the buildings that housed those businesses are awaiting the next stage in the development of the village. Your efforts to negotiate with the owners are commendable. Yet those buildings mar the image you would like to create. It is a pity that the surrounds of the Fire Station have become somewhat grubby. Some of the present businesses could enhance the street by improving their fronts. But there is much to compensate for the negative influences. You are fortunate to possess a streetscape that is a mix of one, two and three storey buildings. Hermitage House and Parson's Green create an expectation of good things to come, as one approaches the bridge. Brendan's Bar and Carey's Pharmacy bring a dash of colour to the street. The treatment of the area of the Vee Valley Day Care Centre and Old People Home illustrates how change of usage of buildings can be tastefully achieved. The new dressing rooms at the GAA ground suggest a vibrant community spirit. In all one senses, a community that echoes of a past that has been transformed into its present state. One hopes you can enhance rather than demolish.

Landscaping:

The natural landscaping of Clogheen is a glorious start. One sweeps into a town at the foothills of the mountains. The Galtees are a promise in another direction. The natural forests try to hide the present of a thriving community. Two rivers promise a flourishing wildlife with river walks. The inhabitants just add a dash of colour to the natural setting. There is much evidence of attempts to soften the harshness of concrete with the delicacy of soft landscaping through generations of Tidy Towns committees. The raised beds bring all year round colour to the street. Tree planting has been ongoing. A co-ordinated set of hanging baskets along the street would deflect the eye from the emptiness inside the building and from the harshness of a long street of concrete. Even though, the gates were chained against this trespassing sinner, one could sense the work that had been completed around the grotto. The roses are beginning to bloom and complement the work already done at the Doug bridge. Full marks to the meitheal of boys and girls, who can be justly proud of the maintenance work on your shrubberies. The grotto looked a treat. One hopes that they were given 'homework off' that night.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It is no wonder that your 'riverbank area is your pride and joy'. The natural setting of the village is the greatest gift that has been bestowed on Clogheen. The adjudicator's problem was one of access. It was possible to wander at the Dinsdales bridge area, but access to the river seemed limited. No signs for the riverside walk were found. The area around the other bridge was beautifully maintained, but the adjudicator feared that he might be a trespasser. The wildlife boards suggested that entry was welcome, but one could not be sure. Well done on the wildlife boards. But the script was not legible from the roads. One feels that this section needs a fresh approach from your committee. The potential for you is enormous. Your future lies in this section. Have a look at the entry form for the Biodiversity Award entry form. Google biodiversity in Ireland and Tipperary. There may be people in your community who have an informed interest in wildlife and who would be willing to assist you with this section of the competition. When planning your landscaping projects keep in mind the welfare of birds and bees.

Litter Control:

Your efforts to control litter are well worthwhile. Frustratingly there is litter, though at a low level. Last year's adjudicator enquired about participation in the National Spring Clean. Creating awareness, so as to prevent littering is a major element in this section. Your litter project for 2010 is to add more dustbins, very good but hand in hand with this is the need for a plan to help reduce littering. You might take a look at your strategic plan again and infuse some litter elimination projects.

Waste Minimisation:

It was delightful to see the signage for the bottle bank, which is discretely situated. Despite the cameras, there is, sadly, evidence of dumping. Your clothes bank, though not so prominently signed, was good to see. This is a section in which you could make greater advances. It could benefit your committee to study the booklet 'Race Against Waste'. Such a study would stimulate new waste elimination projects for you. Remember that the emphasis in this section is not on litter control, but on minimising waste in your community.

Tidiness:

It is a major challenge for community groups to present a tidy image of their village, when there are many empty buildings in the village. You are doing the best you can in this matter. But there are other tell tale signs that could improve the tidy aspect of the village. Make a list of situations under your control that that could help, for instance the condition of road signs, the condition of bins, the presence of weeds in estates. These are definable, tackleable and relevant. Visitors to town are well catered for, with well lined parking facilities.

Well done on the almost complete absence of graffiti.

Residential Areas:

The various housing areas of the village represent many different eras of building across the generations and, in general do the village proud. The houses leading into town on the Cahir approach road are particularly impressive. Keep an eye out for poorly painted fronts and try to influence the owners. It is most gratifying to find the estate name displayed proudly, as in Alley Close and with its Gaeilge version too. In a few cases, weeds did not help the appearance of an estate. The annual garden competition is a great idea. As part of the winners' prize, note on your entry submission the names of the winners and include them on the map for 2010.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Well done on your Failte signs, and also on your Slán signs. These signs are attractive and uplifting for the passer by. Clogheen is blessed with beautiful stone walls along many of its approach roads. The walls must be cared for and are worth minding. These walls help define Clogheen. The bridges on two of the approach roads are among your finest heritage buildings. The lamps on these bridges are a worthy contribution of a subsequent generation to the aesthetic experience. The visit to the cemetery was well worthwhile and here the bridge adds dignity to the site. Keep an eye out for weeds in places. This adjudicator loved, what might be called, the back areas of the village. Brewery Lane is a delight, as is Cockpit Lane. Both are full of charm. Think again before demolishing an old building, because it is now an eye sore. Well done on your work at Poul Buí. Again the name is full of meaning. It is delightful to find attractive bilingual street names adorn street corners. Some of the directional signs would present themselves more confidently, if they got a shot of the power hose.

General Impression:

Clogheen is beautifully situated. It was once a thriving village. It retains much of that character. The nature of village life has changed resulting in the passing of some business activities and this leads to change of use for the premises involved. So often, your committee is powerless to influence such change. But the rivers still flow through Clogheen and maybe it is in those rivers that the nature of village life in Clogheen is defined. Continue your efforts to improve the experience by the river banks. Try to make the rivers accessible to as many as possible. A memorable experience.