

Tidy Towns Competition 2010

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Abbey** Ref: **104**
County: **Galway** Mark: **292**
Category: **B** Date(s): **30/06/2010**
27/07/2010

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009	Mark Awarded 2010
Overall Development Approach	50	44	43
The Built Environment	50	35	35
Landscaping	50	39	40
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30	31
Litter Control	50	40	41
Waste Minimisation	20	11	12
Tidiness	30	19	19
Residential Areas	40	27	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	36	36
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	400	289	292

Overall Development Approach:

Congratulations to Abbey TidyTowns on attracting new volunteers over the past year. This is an essential task to ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of the project. Perhaps one of your newer members would help you develop electronic tools for communication – e.g. e-mail, text messaging, Facebook or Twitter sites – all or any of which would compliment your web site. This could help attract even more new volunteers. Do you wear high visibility vest with the TidyTowns logo printed across the back when working on projects? This would further highlight the wonderful work you are doing.

You are at a very high level in the contest and well done on being top in Galway for so many years running. At this stage however you would be expected to have a three-year plan which sets out your strategic approach for the future – see the TidyTowns handbook for more information. Many thanks for your wonderfully drawn map.

The Built Environment:

As you are aware major surfacing and other works are underway in Abbey but no doubt upon completion the village will be looking better than ever. Kilnalahan Abbey is a fantastic historical centre piece for the village and is excellently presented. The community centre is very tidy. The stone wall running around the village green is a lovely feature – have you considered removing the wire that is present in some locations?

The 'ladywell' and interpretive sign is very well presented although wooden posts being stored along the roadside here create an untidy impression. The school is beautifully presented and it is great to see it flying the tricolour, county and Green flags so proudly. The derelict house on the Portumna road junction is very well treated. The RC church looks very well as does Holohan's shop front.

Landscaping:

Planting throughout the village is excellent. The range of bedding plants, in suitable locations and providing year-round impact is wonderful. The colourful flowers along the stream are gorgeous. Remember however that landscaping is about more than just flowers. The planting of suitable trees, particularly native Irish species, in appropriate locations can do much to soften appearances and have the advantage of lending year-round effect.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

You are doing well in this category and it was nice to see that bird feeding areas and other habitats were highlighted on your map. I was so impressed to see that you are maintaining the feeders by the river as birds come to rely on a continuous supply of food – they were being well attended on adjudication day! The feeders at the scales was unfortunately empty.

It is great that you are liaising with Galway county council on biodiversity awareness and that you can acknowledge the importance of species such as the otter. Your planned nature walk if fantastic and working with schools and young peoples groups is invaluable. The clean and well presented bird identification board was admired.

Litter Control:

Even when performing well it is so important to keep the issue of litter high in people's minds so the slogan competition is a wonderful idea. The bring bank was spotless. The level of litter control throughout the village is exemplary – well done!

Waste Minimisation:

It is fantastic that you now have a recycling facility in the town as this is an essential component of modern infrastructure. The overarching goal under this category is to reduce waste going to landfill to zero. Encouraging composting through the workshop that you held is vital so please think about how you could get everyone in Abbey involved – including local businesses. Some additional ideas may include car boot sales; encouraging walking and cycling (for grown ups as well as children) or making sure people use non-disposable shopping bags. The continued success of the school in the Green Flag project is wonderful and their achievement should encourage changed behaviour throughout the community.

Tidiness:

The village is extremely tidy with very good quality path surfacing. Signage is clean and well presented. Have you approached the ESB to ask them to put overhead wires underground? Away from on-going works traffic cones e.g. near Hynes, should be removed while a nearby property sign (for Sherry Fitzgerald) should be disposed of.

Residential Areas:

It is very impressive that you are working with residents on planting schemes and encouraging wildlife through the placement of native trees over exotics. Private homes on adjudication day were all presented to a very high standard. The small estate on the Duniry road has no name plate while a traffic cone and large blue hose at the entrance should be tidied away (otherwise it looks great!).

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Unfortunately the Portumna approach road was under construction and it is acknowledged that there is little you can do about it (apart from keeping them under pressure to stick to their timetable). The beautifully kept sign and colourful flowers are a great welcome to Abbey on this approach. Road surfacing needs to be addressed to the front of Smokey Joe's.

General Impression:

Abbey is a charming village and was a great treat for this first time visitor. You richly deserve your past rewards and it is hoped that you can now maintain the high standard you have set yourselves. Best of luck!

Second Round Adjudication:

On the day of the 2nd Round adjudication road works were still in progress in Abbey and obviously the village could not be expected to look at its best. This however has not influenced negatively your 2nd Round adjudication. Abbey is a village of character with a great sense of history which your Committee has enthusiastically embraced. The various heritage and amenity sites were noted as was the historical interpretation provided at various locations. This adjudicator fully endorses the view of your 1st Round

adjudicator in respect of the 3 Year TidyTowns Plan and this should be considered by your Committee at an early date. The Scouts Mural was admired and is really colourful; it was good to see the names of the children involved noted here. Good landscaping was noted at quite a number of locations in and around the enlarged village area. Landscaping at the village signs was admired. At the School the excellent colour scheme and the window boxes work well together. Your treatment of two derelict houses was examined and this is most effective as a temporary measure. Litter control continued to impress. Abbey is an attractive village and this adjudicator looks forward to revisiting at some time in the future when road works are completed.