

# Tidy Towns Competition 2013

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Ennistymon**

Ref: **69**

County: **Clare**

Mark: **256**

Category: **C**

Date(s): **18/06/2013**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2012</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2013</b>
Overall Development Approach	50	44	45
The Built Environment	50	32	33
Landscaping	50	36	37
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	27	28
Litter Control	50	23	25
Sustainable Waste And Resource Management	20	8	9
Tidiness	30	15	16
Residential Areas	40	27	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	27	28
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>256</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

It was a pleasure to visit and adjudicate Ennistymon. Your extremely comprehensive submission, particularly the photographs and maps, were most helpful. It is noted that you have lowered your population status from Small Town (C) to Village (B) ; please let us know your actual population next year for our records. The concise Three Year Plan with achievable targets will be a useful document against which to measure progress. Your adjudicator this year had not been in the town for many years and enjoyed seeing many changes for the better. However, please appreciate that it is not within the scope of this Report to comment on all the improvements you have made – rather to highlight some and also offer constructive criticism. It would seem that the Tidy Towns Committee is highly efficient in motivating awareness throughout the community, both through physical work and liason with other groups.

### **The Built Environment:**

SuperValu and its landscaped podium was well presented and being of contemporary design does not compete from a visual point of view with the sense of history emanating from the old Church (now Teach Ceoil) opposite which commands the street below. Extensive strimming of the graveyard here was taking place at the time of adjudication. Another place with great history is the graveyard and old Church of Ireland Church on Church Hill. The Courthouse is a fine stone building. The Fire Station surrounds were regrettably weedy. The Garda station needed freshening up. The Roman Catholic Church with its well maintained grounds and the fresh tree foliage in the car park was admired. The Council Offices were well presented. The painstaking work cleaning the cobbles in front of the library and the remaking of the benches was greatly appreciated – perhaps the building will soon be freshened up to complete the picture. Falls Hotel occupies a beautiful location with its view over the river. The standard of premises in the town centre ranged from the derelict and very shabby to the cheerfully painted. It was great to see improvements such as at Goodness Me and Twomey-Walsh Drapery and to read of the heritage grant for Byrnes. Bright colours are effective but subdued colours also have their place – for example, the Credit Union with its simple, distinguished frontage. Others admired include James Griffin for its shopfront and window display, the sash windows and lettering of Ennistymon Medical Centre, the sash windows and well presented Teach Bia, the traditional lettering and curved glass of James Devitt Hardware, Oh La La Creperie (although the upper facade needed freshening up), the size of lettering of Hayes Print Ltd, Crosbie for its excellent presentation, and McMahon Bar and Hair Design for their sash windows. Hopefully Considine & Sons will soon be sold and refurbished as it occupies an important location.

### **Landscaping:**

The young trees along the street will make a valuable contribution to the town centre as they mature. The planting of native apple trees at six locations around the town was an excellent idea and hopefully there will be great interest in the pruning / mulching workshops. The hanging baskets on the bridge were most picturesque but despite your extensive work in recent times the river in general still has tremendous further untapped potential. Your ambitious plan to renovate and develop forgotten beds and borders is highly commended - the results are already clear to see !

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

The River Inagh is the prime natural amenity of Ennistymon, yet apart from a few premises, recent apartment development and other interventions including the laudable reclaiming of the former dumping area at Ardnaculla, the town still largely appears to turn its back to the river. Rusty corrugated iron in the same view as the wonderful arched bridge is unfortunate. Having been drawn through Byrnes Archway the cascading water causing exhilarating spray and noise made the adjudicator stop and enjoy the atmosphere for a few moments but on turning around and climbing the steps to the riverside walk substantial weeds and old litter were encountered. Perhaps you could carry out a wildlife survey for next year. The Dawn River Walk in May must have been most enjoyable and educational ! Results of the otter survey would be interesting for next year's adjudication.

### **Litter Control:**

A light scattering of litter was evident in the town centre, some of which in back areas appeared to have been in place for some time. However, generally there appeared to be less than last year. Hopefully, with a rigorous litter control system in place there will be progressively less to collect as everyone begins to realise that it is simply not acceptable to litter our beautiful environment.

### **Sustainable Waste And Resource Management:**

The restoration of the Hydro-Electric Power Station at The Falls Hotel is a very exciting project. The conversion of electrical waste to fashion was an innovative idea – the photographs were amazing ! Your other initiatives all contribute greatly. Do please let us have information on management of all waste issues next year once you have studied the revised content of the Handbook which is available for download at [www.tidytowns.ie](http://www.tidytowns.ie). The category of Waste Minimisation has been renamed Sustainable Waste and Resource Management. This is to reflect the greater emphasis now being put on Waste Prevention ahead of Waste Treatment. It is important to submit relevant material to give the adjudicator a clear picture of the work being carried out. You have a great opportunity to be creative and effective in the prevention of waste and in the sparing usage of resources. You should consider any resource efficiencies across the community, so please also bear in mind water, energy and transport. Highlight any progress in reducing usage. This category is not about litter. Recycling initiatives (which should be well established in the community at this stage) should have a more minor focus. However, initiatives should be mentioned as recycling forms part of a proper community waste management system. Waste Prevention means preventing waste being generated in the first place, reducing the amount that is produced, reducing the hazardous content of that waste and reducing its impact on the environment. Once you have prevented waste as much as possible, you should look at any possibilities to reuse, then to recycle as much as possible. "Rethink, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle". It might be worth establishing a sub-committee to focus on this category, including those who may have a specific interest in this area. Your Local Authority Environmental Awareness Officer is available to advise you.

### **Tidiness:**

Open yards and forecourts need constant vigilance to ensure they are kept clear of debris and weeds, similarly lanes, gateways and all back areas. A consistent high standard of all parts of the town visible from the public domain is required. However, work by the Vocational School TY students and FAS has been effective in the tidying and hence improvement of the respective areas. The clean ups along the river banks are particularly welcome.

### **Residential Areas:**

Individual houses in places had weedy entrance areas which often diminished the impact of care paid to gardens within the boundary. Nonetheless the general standard was very good. In the estate above SuperValu well painted houses contrasted unfavourably with some poor boundary walls. Some particularly well painted boundary walls were noted at Ard na Colla. On the Ennis road Ardonagh estate opposite the County Council offices was particularly admired for its stone walls, planting, expansive grass and subtle variation of house colours. Weeds unfortunately detracted from several residential areas including the terrace up the hill near the bridge. The residential area on the hill up to the old Church of Ireland Church (apart again from some boundary walls) looked very well. Station Terrace has been greatly improved.

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

There are numerous very fine stone walls throughout the town but a programme of restoration needs to be implemented to raise the general standard. Apart from specific greens and isolated stretches of the approach roads the grass verges were becoming overgrown on adjudication day. The verges generally on the initial Ennis approach were particularly disappointing – the first real effort seemed to be the well mown verge backed with the

fine stone wall to the front of the estate on the right. However, the standard was very much better on the Lahinch / Kilrush road – recently surfaced road, cycle track, picnic area, stone walls and the Famine Memorial. Town centre footpaths were quite inconsistent with some weedy and uneven, creating trip hazards. The square next to Crosbie has an appropriate urban quality incorporating contemporary lighting and paving. There is now a wonderful opportunity to redesign the market square – perhaps as a ‘piazza’ - removing the car parking.

**General Impression:**

Congratulations on your achievements to date ! If you achieve everything in the Three Year Plan Ennistymon has the potential to make very significant progress in the Tidy Towns Competition.