

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Portumna** Ref: **320**
County: **Galway** Mark: **261**
Category: **C** Date(s): **27/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	35
The Built Environment	50	35
Landscaping	50	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25
Litter Control	50	35
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	16
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	261

Overall Development Approach:

Your adjudicator would like to welcome Portumna to the 2008 TidyTowns Competition. Thank you for your entry form and brief details of your 2008 work programme. No map was provided with the entry and perhaps for 2009 a town map could be included. Has any consideration been given to the preparation of a 3 Year TidyTowns Plan as suggested last year? With a committee of 20 people Portumna obviously supports TidyTowns in a significant way. The National Schools Poster Competition is a great way of getting children involved in some of your TidyTowns programmes. Do remember that the TidyTowns Handbook gives great information and suggestions. Both new Committees and those who have been involved in the competition for some time will find this booklet really useful.

The Built Environment:

The new street furniture at the Castle Marina looked modern and fitted in well with this lovely waterside location. The adjudicator read with interest of your long term plan for the Shannon Banks Walk and hopefully next summer you will have progress to report. The grounds of the Shannon Oaks Hotel looked really well and the landscaping was admired. Fine landscaping was also evident at the Catholic Church and the area in the car park with the 'Deer' was quite eye catching. The Portumna Retirement Village of modern design is well set off with effective planting. On the road back to the centre of Portumna the Church of Ireland building was attractively framed with tall trees on either side. The Library appeared to be suffering from leaf stain and needed to be repainted and across the road the road boundary wall at the Garda Station was in poor condition and needed to be painted. The wrought iron canopy over the Hayes premises is unusual and an interesting streetscape feature, while The Shoe Shop was much admired for its simplicity of presentation. But it was the Hayes Pharmacy that stood out for this adjudicator with the small glass panels and other interesting detailing. The An Caislean hand lettered signage is an approach that others might consider. There appeared to be many buildings that seemed to have too many lights on the front façade and this frequently took from the

overall impression of the building. One or two derelict buildings were noted and perhaps progress can be made with the owner(s) or the County Council.

Landscaping:

The landscaping at the Courthouse, the Square and the Playground all add much to the appearance of that part of Portumna. However at the landscaping beside the Church on the road towards Ballinasloe the grass needed to be cut. On the other side of the Church the area with the 'Deer' feature was well maintained but perhaps the railings here might be painted matt black. Elsewhere hanging baskets and window boxes enhanced the built environment.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

You are so lucky in Portumna with so many natural amenity areas and the Marina and Water Recreation Park areas were excellently presented. The Town Park is a most pleasant area and the adjudicator admired the outdoor photographic display in the car park here. The new work in the Forest Park marks a logical development and hopefully the wildlife and natural amenity value of this area will continue to expand. The Castle grounds is a really interesting area with a number of heritage sites.

Litter Control:

When you are getting your bins replaced do make sure that the design is appropriate. Not all bins suit every location. It was really encouraging to learn from your entry that the instances of illegal dumping have declined. Some litter was noted in the Water Recreation Park car park and at the Bring Centre at the Emerald Star base. Litter was also evident along Bridge Street. The Bring Centre at the Park car park was well presented, the units were clean and just a few items of litter were noted.

Waste Minimisation:

It is great that the Schools are involved in the Green Flag process and the adjudicator wishes them all well. Have you given consideration to any new initiatives to reduce waste in Portumna? A discussion with the waste Awareness Officer in Galway County Council would be a good place to begin. Each year you should try and have a few initiatives that come under this adjudication category.

Tidiness:

It was disappointing to read that cables will not be placed under ground – what was the reason given by the County Council? This would make such a difference to the appearance of Portumna. The lamp posts that were painted looked well and hopefully this programme can continue elsewhere in Portumna. A number of 'A' style advertising signs were noted on footpaths and this practice should really be discouraged where possible.

Residential Areas:

Houses along the Portumna road were in general very well presented as were the houses in An Baile Glas. Good landscaping at the entrance to Shannon Park stood out as did the excellent landscaping and stone work seen at Lios na Si. Castle Court also impressed.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The verges on the Tynagh road approach to Portumna were in need of a cut. Well presented attractive old Limestone walls are a key feature of your approach roads and every effort should be taken to preserve these during any development works. The Limestone town name plaques on each approach road stood out and were much admired.

General Impression:

It was a pleasure for your adjudicator to visit Portumna. You have the potential to do well in the competition and do try and adopt a more planned approach each year. Good luck with your Tidy Towns projects for 2009 when we look forward to visiting you again.