

Tidy Towns Competition 2010

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Claregalway** Ref: **1988**
County: **Galway** Mark: **234**
Category: **C** Date(s): **15/06/2010**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009	Mark Awarded 2010
Overall Development Approach	50	29	29
The Built Environment	50	31	32
Landscaping	50	32	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	24	26
Litter Control	50	28	28
Waste Minimisation	20	11	12
Tidiness	30	15	15
Residential Areas	40	21	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30	31
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	400	228	234

Overall Development Approach:

Congratulations to the Claregalway TidyTowns committee on your continued hard work, commitment and optimism! Many thanks for the well drawn town map with notes that were a huge help to this adjudicator. You have made good progress since entering the contest last year and this is reflected in the range of contacts you have with schools, business and other organisations. As suggested last year it would be great to see you develop a strategic approach by drawing up a three-year plan. This would identify actions under each of the headings and set realistic completion dates for each.

The Built Environment:

The main commercial centre was looking very well with lovely flower displays at the Claregalway hotel. Despite being a new building the 'Arches hotel' is a fine addition to the town that compliments its older heritage features. The restoration work on the castle was noted and will no doubt make a fine focal feature upon completion. The nearby 9-arches bridge looked very well too. Fantastic views of the Franciscan Abbey are afforded from the river. Traffic calming measures through the village would be a most welcome initiative. The Abby restaurant and bar is a lovely feature while the church is very well presented. Supervalu and associated shops look very well but perhaps there is overkill on the luminous yellow posters to the front. The 'Abbey Florist' has a particularly attractive shop front. The new sculpture was admired and is an excellent artistic addition to the town..

Landscaping:

Landscaping around the Arches hotel is very effective with lovely birch trees for year-round effect. Beautiful hanging baskets were admired along the 9-arches bridge. Very nice and appropriate planting was noted leading towards the castle, culminating in fine floral displays on the bridge.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The river walk will be an excellent amenity once completed and the ecology study will have provided valuable data on the habitats and species present in this area. Do not neglect wildlife elsewhere and the best way of doing this is to survey the whole town. This is the basis of a wildlife plan and informed actions to enhance habitats and raise awareness should arise from it.

Litter Control:

There was some litter on the ground and in the bushes around Spar and also in front of Spar itself. The river bank area was slightly littered and there was some dumping of metal railings. Litter control on adjudication day was to a very high standard elsewhere, particularly along Main St. The car park at Supervalu was very tidy.

Waste Minimisation:

Do not confuse Waste Management with Litter Control. This category is about reducing the volumes of waste generated in the town. Remember that recycling is only the third best option after reduction and reuse. You will have to work closely with businesses on this. You mention that you have a waste minimisation programme for households – please provide more detail on this. Example projects could include home composting, bring-and-buy sales, reducing junk mail or encouraging the use of reusable coffee mugs and water bottles. The school's Green Flag is a very important achievement under this category – well done!

Tidiness:

Driving along the main road a very tidy impression is given. Continue to aspire to a wire-free skyline – it will yield fruit in time. A trailer with advertising hoardings outside Spar should be removed. As you have noted random advertising hoarding and flag etc. are a problem – can you work with Galway county council on this? Christmas decorations over Mulholland's should be taken down. Footpaths and public seating through the town were all to a very high standard.

Residential Areas:

Do you engage with residents associations? How many estates are there in Claregalway? How can you encourage estates to establish residents associations? All houses and estates that were visited on adjudication day were presented to a very high standard. 'An Mhainistir' is a prime example with lovely landscaping consisting of trees and shrubs. Landscaping at the entrance here needs some attention however. 'Lake View' looks very well. There's a lovely estate to the rear of 'Mozarina Bridal' but it has no name, while a traffic cone near the entrance should be removed.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach road from Tuam is very neat and well presented while the large stone welcome signs give a clear point of entry. Advertising hoardings on approach and through the town are a distracting feature. Traffic cones and tyres to the rear of the 'Pathfinder' petrol station should be taken away if possible.

General Impression:

Claregalway is an attractive village in a bustling location. You have made great inroads to this contest and in particular signature projects like the river walk and castle restoration will stand you in good stead. Please work on a three-year plan to ensure that all categories are fully addressed.