

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **CARRICKMACROSS**
County : **MONAGHAN**
Category : **D**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 26-06-98

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1998	Mark Awarded 1997
Overall Developmental Approach	50	45	44
The Built Environment	40	32	30
Landscaping	40	36	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	24	22
Litter Control	40	28	27
Tidiness	20	13	13
Residential Areas	30	25	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	29	28
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	240	230

Carrickmacross, County Monaghan

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The Committee are to be commended for their hard work and commitment towards developing the Tidy Towns ethos in Carrickmacross. The working relationship with the various local bodies and organisations is also praiseworthy. The obvious work in compiling such a detailed map, Development Plan and supporting material is indicative of the genuine interest the committee has in ensuring Carrickmacross reaches its full potential. The summary of the newly revised Development Plan shows that you used your plan as a working document, reviewing and re-focusing your efforts to newly identified priorities. These priorities are all relevant, and this adjudicator agrees with last years comments in this area, and wishes you well in achieving your objectives.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The overall presentation of both commercial and private premises in the town, was good on the day of adjudication. The new footpaths, flower features and brightly painted buildings all contribute to this impression. The ongoing work with O/H wires highlights the difference between the streets already completed and those that have still to get their wires put underground. A few of the "old chestnuts" mentioned last year still remain and will continue to effect your marks in this heading. The old Lakeland Factory is still a distracting eyesore, and similarly the disused building beside the E.S.B. building. While appreciating the nice selection of trees and boulders in the area, of the Community Centre, it still needs a lot of attention. The refurbished Fever Hospital looks very well, a sympathetic restoration, attractively presented with a good planting scheme. The Churches, Schools, and public buildings all looked well. Development appears to be ongoing in the main street, with a good standard of attractive premises, many newer shop fronts in particular caught the eye for all the right reasons. It is important to persevere with last years comments about unsuitable presentation, and excessive plastic signs, on business premises. The presentation of the Post Office was poor, as was some of the premises in Parnell St.. The Fire Station looked well, as did the new pavements in this area, but further consideration must be given to the presentation of the whole Market Area. The toilets also need to be revamped. This adjudicator was particularly impressed with the private dwellings in the town centre, particularly some of the premises in the Farney and New Street area, (bar the Turf Accountant Shop close to Main Street) and around the R.C. Church. Premises in the Industrial Estate of the Castleblaney Road looked well again this year, but it is important to keep the open areas and verges tidy as well. Suabra Plastics on the Dublin Road, remains poorly presented, but perhaps the development adjacent might change the perspective of this corner area. The major filling stations in town all looked well presented and maintained, with some lovely

flower features. Compliments also to your work on derelict house sites, in particular the roofless house on Mullinary Road. Work had started on the house next to Carrick Fitness Centre, and it will also look well when the wall is painted. A similar approach would also enhance the farm buildings with the particularly bad roof at the Shercock Road end of Mullinary Road. The other derelict sites on the Castleblaney Road, and the hedge screened site on the Dundalk Road also caught the eye. The Colourful Mural at Daly Brothers was in the process of being painted, and looked nice. This adjudicator acknowledges your progress in developing off street parking, and your contribution towards access for the disabled. Lower switches at pedestrian lights, dipped footpaths, and disabled parking spaces in central locations were all noted. However a number of premises have a lot of products on the street, particularly in Main Street. This could interfere with access for people with disabilities, and should be discouraged.

LANDSCAPING

The landscape features and the many tubs and baskets and window boxes, throughout the town were consistently well cared for, and attractively presented. The Butterfly sign was noted throughout the town, a very original touch. Along with the individual efforts of many of the premises in the town, they provided a great splash of colour and enhanced the whole streetscape. Landscape features on approach roads and at prominent or focal points were also very attractive and caught the eye. Trees, green areas and grass verges were similarly well maintained, continue your tree planting programme in appropriate locations. The high standard was continued in the landscaped beds in many housing developments around the town. Particular mention must go to the lovely landscaping in the Cran Nua Housing Development, with its attractive mix of trees and planting that would give colour and content throughout the year. This is an important feature of any planting scheme and has been picked up in some of the landscape features in the town, but could be developed further to ensure a year round effect. The site at the end of Mullinary Road, and in the very attractive site close to the (very clean) river at the Fever Hospital, also looked very well, with a nice mix of plants to be enjoyed all year. The new pavement work continues and looks well. The mock wall and pump also look well at the Fire Station. The tubs were also noted at the two well presented Graveyards. Some attractive planting also caught the eye in the Car Park beside the R.C. Church. A large number of householders and local authority staff working in their gardens and at the public landscaping was noted, and reflected the whole communities interest in this area. Well done to everyone involved.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The committee has a role in maintaining the natural environment within the town. Work on your splendid Lisanisk Park continues, and it will all look very well when fully completed. There are many opportunities for enhancing and conserving wildlife habitats and the environment within this area. Open spaces, the water,

meadows and grass areas and hedgerows all offer opportunities within this category. The town is fortunate to have such a facility so close to the town, and this adjudicator hopes that you will also continue your thoughtful approach to access in this park area.

LITTER CONTROL

You have a clear and structured plan for litter control, and have correctly identified it as an important work priority. There was litter in evidence on the day of adjudication. There was sporadic litter on the approach roads in particular on the Kingscourt Road, and also outside Park Emmet. Litter was also evident along the main street between O Gormans and just past Fiddlers, and once again in the basement area of the Garda Station. A bin in this area was also overflowing. There was also litter around the Post Office in the Market area and unfortunately beside the Tidy Towns Office. There was also litter in the Car Park adjoining the E.S.B. There was practically no litter evident in the housing developments and outlying areas. Your litter programme may need be expanded to include clearance or tidying outside work hours. The other bins were tidy and in good order. Continue your education programme in the local schools, it is a worthwhile effort, also continue and increase your PR work, as it reinforces the whole communities responsibility in this very important area. The committee must remain vigilant in this important area.

TIDINESS

The overall impression of the town was one of general tidiness. The attractive landscaping and well-maintained premises contributed to this impression. However, some areas in the town need some attention. The Car Park beside the E.S.B. building is very untidy, with litter and rubble. The railings at the corner of Patrick Street and main street need their paint refreshed. The area at the corner beside the Fire Station also needs attention, with the wall building materials to be tided and rubbish cleared from the trees. Graffiti needs to be cleared from the walls on the way in to the small park behind the Court House, which also has a broken window. Last years comments about Lisanisk Park are obviously being addressed. It is also important to keep the forecourts, yards, boundary walls and alleyways clean, tidy and weed free throughout the town.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Many houses throughout the town and on approach roads were very well presented, with attractive hedges, lawns and flower features. The beautiful and colourful flowers in some individual gardens were noted. The Housing developments also looked very well. Grass maintenance was good throughout the town and there were some very attractive and well-maintained mixed flower beds, located throughout the housing estates. Clough Valley had a lovely play area, but needs a litter bin, in the picnic area, the graffiti removed from its phone box, and its goal posts reinstated. Pearse Ave. and Convent View also looked well and St Mc

Cartains Tce. had a lovely perennial flower bed. Chestnut Grove looked well, and the estate opposite was beautifully presented. Duninatra and Ballyclose had well maintained open areas, and similarly Highfield, which also had some nice mixed flowerbeds, but needs its bench repaired. The standard of finish on some of the newer developments was admired, as were the entrance walls and areas. Cran Nua and the estate opposite particularly impressed the adjudicator. Clear estate names would help identification and look attractive at all the estates in the town. The excellent working relationship between the Tidy Towns and Resident Committees continues, with the obvious pride people have for their living areas, and the attention and hard work involved in keeping them to such a high standard. Well done for the hard work to everyone involved.

ROADS STREETS AND BACK AREAS

As the approach roads are the first impression a visitor gets of the village they deserve particular consideration. Tidy verges and well-faced hedges were obvious on all the approach roads, and for a good distance outside the town, which impressed this adjudicator. The new pavement work continues and looks well in the Town Centre. Some pavements and kerbs need attention on back streets, and approach roads. The road surface on some side streets also needs attention. Street Furniture, Sign Posts, and Car Parks were generally well presented.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Carrickmacross continues to impress. The combination of the effective Development Plan, the obvious commitment of the committee and community, and the full participation of the various local bodies and organisations, all contribute towards the towns progression in this Competition. The committee must tackle the challenge of dereliction in the town, which will continue to hold you back unless addressed appropriately. Effective maintenance, vigilant litter control, and attention to detail remain very important priorities for the committee. Well done and keep up the good work.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (06/08/98)

This adjudicator is always impressed by the dedication and commitment of the towns and villages involved in the competition. Carrickmacross is a prime example of this enthusiasm; the local community have thrown themselves whole-heartedly into the task of presenting their town to the highest standards they can for the benefit of both local and visitor alike. What is particularly encouraging to note is the level of support from both commercial concerns and residents of the town, which results in a cohesive solution. The projects undertaken have been very successful in terms of improving the town while respecting its character and history. Carrickmacross is a town with its own unique architectural and cultural history. With its fine courthouse terminating the vista at one end of Main Street and the Church of Ireland at the other.

The stretch of buildings in between have an interesting mix of fine vernacular Irish shop fronts and stone public buildings such as the Garda Station and the banks. The paving to the front of the Market House was complete and looked well and appropriate. The Main Street of the town looked magnificent, everything had been freshly painted and there were some cheerful floral displays in the form of hanging baskets, window boxes etc. in anticipation of the Entente Florale Competition, the best of luck with this. There is a strong use of colour along the Main Street which is very successful. The new work to the lakeside area on the Dundalk Road with its new planting and appropriate use of railway sleepers as verge trims looked quite magnificent and is a credit to all those involved in the obvious hard work to improve this fine natural asset to the town. The colourful totem pole is an imaginative detail! Congratulations all round on an excellent presentation on second adjudication day.