

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **ARDEE**
County : **LOUTH**
Category : **D**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 12-07-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	40	39
The Built Environment	40	31	31
Landscaping	40	30	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	21
Litter Control	40	30	30
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	24	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28	27
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	224	222

Ardee, County Louth

OVERALL DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

Thank you for the information, plan and map of the town which proved very useful. Ardee is a very busy town and the unending stream of traffic must make it difficult to maintain its appearance. You have a good approach and there are a number of difficult tasks which need to be tackled. Ardee has a number of surprising nooks and crannies if you deviate from the main street, such as the off shoots off Hale street, one with some fine stone buildings and nice baskets and other nicely landscaped areas. The small cottages behind the St. Mary's Church are also an important part of the architectural heritage of the town.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Many of the public buildings were well kept. St. Mary's GFC looked well and was nicely painted – perhaps some creepers might be considered for the outside of the breeze block wall. The Schools are well presented with a good mix of flowers and more permanent planting. The Primary School on Hale Street should take a bow – colourful windows showing an awareness and importance of tidiness. This is the message that will eventually make the difference in years to come. It was good to see a number of older buildings being reused e.g. the old tech and also the old church, which is now a furniture store. It is a pity about the Ardee Bread Company – this was a fine shopfront. Hamills (noted also on the Map) is something quite unique and is very much part of the history of the town. St. Mary's Church looked well though the railings did need some restorative work. The Leabharlann sign needs some attention as well. Supervalu looked tremendous – and set an example for many of the other premises in the town. Malones next door also provided a good display. A number of other premises on the main street such as the Auberge and the AIB looked well though others may possibly consider a more traditional approach to signage if they intend to change the front signs in the future. The northern end of the town seemed to be a wee bit desolate and some of the buildings required upgrading though on this side of the town both the School and Firestation presented well on the day of adjudication.

LANDSCAPING

The landscaping tended to be a bit erratic throughout the town. Some premises, residential areas and indeed public areas presented well-landscaped areas whereas others did not seem to care too much about their appearance. The premises in general on the main street could have performed better. The entrances to the residential estates such as Rathgory, Slieve Breagh and Ferdia Park looked well. The area beside the island looked very well – a nice lamp

standard, leafy area, beside the river, some flowers though the PVC windows did detract slightly from the overall vista. Perhaps a focused effort on the provision of baskets/boxes in 2/3 colours would unify the whole main street.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The sensory garden was not signposted and on driving into the GFC, the adjudicators could see no evidence of it. The river walk is very pleasant and 4 different species of damselflies were spotted in a brief walk down by the river. It is unfortunate that those that have an addiction to alcohol tend to drink and sleep in the sun here throwing the cans down on to the banks – though they have their problems. Try and not to throw grass cuttings down the banks as these rot and certainly do not help to encourage wildlife on the banks of the river. The raised bog is a wonderful amenity to have so close to the town particularly in that it has been identified as a special habitat. There is slight concern over both the filling in of an area near the road and some clearance. Is this a fully protected area or do steps need to be taken to ensure that it is protected? The walk around the by pass was noted though again was lost as it approached by the link road. Perhaps you may consider this as a Sli Na Slainte route with the required signposting and map.

LITTER CONTROL

Unfortunately litter was in evidence in quite a number of areas on the day of adjudication. These areas did tend to be hidden away from the mainstream of the town and the main street was clean with adequate litterbins. Areas where it was noted included around the benches on the riverwalk, around the recycling bins, a shopping trolley in the river and the area in the Fairgreen around the children's amenities. Great effort is required though your awareness campaign is much commended – fines need to be introduced and enforced in order to incentives litter awareness.

TIDINESS

The recycling facilities were noted in the carpark though as in many cases they were quite grubby in presentation. Some of the less well maintained buildings gave an unkempt air to the northern side of the town and in some places weeds were noted growing out of the gutters. However despite the poor weather, grass cutting had been maintained and many of the landscaped areas looked well. The park benches on the river walk did need repairing and repainting and this would improve the park no end.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The houses on the Kells Road were well maintained and looked after the areas in front of their respective houses. Well presented estates included Mullaghdrillen, Campbells Park and Dawson Demesne and the entrance to Ferdia Pak Housing Estate. Additional colour could be considered to

enhance some of the houses on the main street on the northern side of the town. Well done on the inter estate competitions – there is nothing like competitiveness to get people going!

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The approach roads looked reasonable. The Dublin Road was well cut back except for a field on the left hand side approach from Dublin which contrasted with the formal planting further on. The lay-by was in use and looked well. The Kells Road has a long run in and the hospital entrance and Callans were nicely presented on the day of judging. The area opposite of Callans required cutting back. The carpark beside the River Dee looked exceptionally well and is quite dramatic in appearance. The story of Cu Chulainn and Ferdia might be of interest to visitors. Hale Road was reasonable though further out the sheds on the road to Richardstown still required attention as they stand out on this approach. The bypass has been landscaped well though it was noted that a number of the trees and even the young shrubs may need replacing.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The plan and the tasks are impressive, as many of the tasks are action oriented. It is commendable to include the younger generation in the work. Do not be too disheartened with your mark as it becomes more difficult to achieve marks as you progress up the competition. Further concentration on litter, the wildlife aspect and the motivation of premises to become involved in the presentation of their premises should be targets for next year – good luck.