

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Carlow**

Ref: **426**

County: **Carlow**

Mark: **250**

Category: **F**

Date: **29/07/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	43	42
The Built Environment	40	36	36
Landscaping	40	37	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	22	22
Litter Control	40	31	30
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	25	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	33	33
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	250	245

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you indeed for all the information sent with the entry form which was most useful on adjudication day. Perhaps for next year you might send a non-plastic map on which you could indicate where the current years work has taken place or is in the process so that the adjudicator could have sight of it. Carlow is a very large centre which is very difficult to adjudicate so a map of this type would be very useful. Your plan is excellent. Wonderful work is being done by your Local Authority and they are to be congratulated on it. It is gratifying to read that you also have the support of your Chamber of Commerce, An Taisce, Community Groups and Residents Associations without whom it would undoubtedly be impossible to maintain the standards which have been achieved in Carlow town. Congratulations to all concerned. You received an in-depth report from the adjudicator last year. The following therefore is by way of comment on perceived further development to date and should be read in conjunction with that report.

The Built Environment:

The maintenance of your public buildings has continued at a high level. These include the Courthouse, the Cathedral, the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church, St. Patrick's College, the district hospital, Carlow Rowing Club, County Council Offices, Garda Station, Fire Station, the two bridges and indeed many more, too numerous to mention. All of the buildings above were visited on adjudication day and great credit is due to all the Authorities concerned for this high level of maintenance. The developments in the vicinity of Barrack Street, Kennedy Avenue and Potato

Market are further evidence of the regard which your Local Authority and your residents have for their living environment. The fountain is a magnificent feature and is a wonderful addition to that whole area. Carlow Castle you always have with you and is being well preserved. Some derelict sites do exist but your Town Council will, no doubt, have such matters in hand. Business premises, in the main, are being well kept. Some however in Tullow Street and Dublin Street need some refurbishment.

Landscaping:

An enormous amount of landscaping has taken place over the last number of years and is now maturing. This creates a wonderful atmosphere both coming into the town and in it and great credit is due to all concerned for this foresight. The roundabouts on the Tullow Road need attention and were somewhat overgrown. By contrast the roundabouts on the Dublin Road are spectacular and set precedence for every other town in Ireland. The Sculpture Ceatharlach on the Dublin roundabout is spectacular. Most landscaping was seen again this year but in particular, mention should be made of landscaping at the Garda Station, at Carlow Rowing Club, at both bridges, as already mentioned at the roundabouts on the Dublin Road and in the Barrack Street/Kennedy Avenue Area. All of these are being very well maintained and create a wonderful ambience in the town. Containerised planting, window boxes and hanging baskets were presented, also added to the atmosphere particularly in non-landscaped areas and those involved are to be congratulated for their efforts. Some nice planting has also taken place in the vicinity of the Courthouse and the grounds of St. Patrick's College looked resplendent on adjudication day. Comments made under this heading last year regarding future planting are still applicable. There are still many areas in Carlow which would benefit from the planting of trees and shrubs and would further strengthen the claim of "Carlow in Bloom".

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your comments regarding this aspect of the Competition have been noted and some work had been carried out to date.. There is a wonderful opportunity in Carlow with both the River Barrow and River Burrin for the carrying out of a major wildlife project which would greatly enhance both areas and would be an attraction for visitors. Excellent work has been done to date and ducks and swans were seen on the Barrow very near Cox's Lane. However a wonderful opportunity does exist and if you have not already done so perhaps you might consult with Duchas who will be able to help you with advice in this respect.

Litter Control:

For a centre of its size Carlow has been making trojan efforts to solve its litter problem. However on adjudication day litter was to be seen in the area of Cox's Lane, the Rowing Club, on the Athy Road, Tullow Road and in Granby Row. Minor littering was to be seen in many other streets which, in the overall, takes away from what is otherwise a very fine environment. Work will undoubtedly continue on this problem but it is an important part of the Competition and needs constant monitoring.

Tidiness:

In general the town was presented in a very neat and tidy manner. Some building work is still progressing which leads to some untidiness but this will pass. In the event allowances have been made for it.

Residential Areas:

Again this year housing estates are being very well maintained which reflects greatly the interest which the residents have in their living environment. Local competitions undoubtedly have a positive effect as indeed as must the attendance of Residents Associations at your monthly meetings. While some houses need a coat of paint, the vast majority of houses in Carlow are being

kept exceptionally well – some with wonderful gardens which were in full bloom on adjudication day which added greatly to the overall appearance of the town. This type of individual effort is very important particularly in a large centre and in relation to the vast areas which cannot be looked after or maintained by a voluntary group. Wonderful work is being done and again, congratulations are due to all involved.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads are being nicely kept and mention has already been made of the roundabouts. Road surfaces are good and pathways are being well kept. A number of back streets were visited and, with one or two exceptions, looked well except where litter was found. The standard of these areas is also an important part of the Competition as adjudication embraces these streets also.

General Impression:

Tremendous work has been done in Carlow over the years and, in general, is being well maintained. The town has now reached a comparatively high figure in the competition. Further success will be achieved through careful planning and attention to detail. Carlow has the potential to figure in County, Regional and National Awards in the not too distant future and the adjudicator looks forward to returning to Carlow again to see what hopefully will be further progress being made.

Second Round Adjudication:

Carlow, besides being the county town, has now become a regional hub for the national road system, a major centre for business and for colleges of further education. It has also experienced much residential expansion. This has caused the Tidy Towns Committee with a fall off in members. However the Committee, nevertheless, has to be congratulated on the close relationship it has developed with the Carlow Town Council and an amazing number, twenty five Committee members and an additional number of Community Groups and Residents Associations. A special effort could be made to bring in some of the members of the Residents Associations and Community Groups onto the Committee. A wonderful feature of the town is the slowly maturing linear park developed along the Burren river which ties together many new residential and commercial buildings within the town. Congratulations to all on the development of this very interesting landscape project. Two more most interesting landscape features are the fountain and tree of freedom in the Potato Market - a truly wonderful project, and the landscaping of Carlow Castle. The area around the Castle still has major building works in progress but the landscaping of the Castle should eventually be the focal point of this area of the town. The encouragement of the Residents Associations and Community Groups can be clearly seen in the creation of very fine landscaped estates and especially the promotion of competitions between the various estates. What is now needed in many of these areas is a series of major tree planting programmes in the many public open spaces. Both last year's and this year's adjudication reports pinpoint many of the visual problems associated with Carlow town. These should be carefully restudied. One problem area that would seem to have improved greatly is in the cutting down of litter. Wonderful work has been done in discussions with the schools on the elimination of much unnecessary litter. As mentioned in this year's Tidy Towns submission, the large number of students attending the Institutes of Technology and not living in Carlow makes it difficult to get them involved. Talks with first year students will have to be one approach and then encouraging a member of the Students Council to attend the Committee's monthly meeting. The major road system seems to be nearing completion which means that the landscaping of the road verges can now be undertaken by the Committee and the Council without further interruptions. The Adjudicator looks forward to the completion of the soft landscaping on the new very fine roundabout on the Dublin Road. The completion should make this a dynamic entrance icon to Carlow town. Many of the small interconnecting small roads and lanes need rehabilitation. One in particular the Adjudicator would like to see completed is Cox's Lane joining the new Millennium Bridge to Dublin Street.

