

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Hacketstown**

Ref: **107**

County: **Carlow**

Mark: **181**

Category: **B**

Date: **23/06/2003**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2003 | Mark Awarded 2002 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Overall Developmental Approach | 50 | 33 | 33 |
| The Built Environment | 40 | 23 | 23 |
| Landscaping | 40 | 27 | 26 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 30 | 18 | 18 |
| Litter Control | 40 | 15 | 16 |
| Tidiness | 20 | 14 | 14 |
| Residential Areas | 30 | 23 | 23 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 40 | 23 | 22 |
| General Impression | 10 | 5 | 5 |
| TOTAL MARK | 300 | 181 | 180 |

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you indeed for the information sent with the entry form and for the map which was most useful on adjudication day. The comments made by last years Adjudicator under this heading are still applicable. An enormous amount of work remains to be done and if you are to succeed you should seek involvement from as many state agencies as possible: - Carlow County Council, FÁS, Duchas, Regional Tourism Authority (based at Shee Alms House, Kilkenny), LEADER, and any other organisations who may be prepared to assist. As far as a plan is concerned, initially you should carry out a survey of the town and try to identify what needs to be done albeit not in the immediate future. Such a document would be a good basis for calling a meeting of the agencies suggested above plus, of course, your business and local community the objective being to try to identify on a year-to-year basis what realistically could be achieved within your physical and financial resources. In the event perhaps you would send a copy of any such plan with your entry form next year so that the Adjudicator can have sight of it. You received an in-depth report from last years Adjudicator. The following therefore is by way of comment on perceived progress since then and should be read in conjunction with that report.

The Built Environment:

This year your public buildings were again well presented and these included: - the Church of Ireland, Catholic Church, Community Hall, School, Fire Station and Garda Barracks. The cemetery is being well maintained as is the car park. Colaisti Eoin is a fine building and greatly enhances that

end of the town. There are quite a number of derelict sites in Hacketstown. You should make contact with your Local Authority on these as, under the Derelict Sites Act, they are entitled to approach the owners to ascertain what their intentions are in respect of these buildings. There are some very nice walls in and around the town. Others are covered in weed and growth and could easily be cleared. If and when exposed they would add greatly to the overall general appearance of the town.

Landscaping:

The large open spaces at Mountain View and Marion Terrace are being well maintained but would lend themselves to further development under this heading. The Millennium Stone is a nice feature and the wildlife information board adds further to the general appearance of the area where it is situated which is very nice indeed. Containerised planting, window boxes and hanging baskets, where presented, also looked very nice. Unfortunately, in many areas of the town and particularly on the approach roads, weeding is very prominent. In as far as is possible you should encourage business premises and householders to try to eliminate this outside their own premises which, would also greatly improve the appearance of the town. Part of your planning should be to identify new areas where trees and shrubs can be planted which would give you some colour on an all-year-round basis. Your Local Authority should be able to advise you on this.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

You do not appear to have initiated a project under this heading. Perhaps your Schools could get involved in a simple project which would provide feeding tables and nesting boxes for birds and perhaps further wildlife boards showing what birds and animals can be seen in the locality. Duchas – The Heritage Service, would be glad to help with a project such as this.

Litter Control:

Unfortunately, as last year, litter was to be seen practically everywhere in the town. Again, try as far as you can to involve your business and resident community in “sweeping outside their own premises”. Additional litter bins might help and an educational programme with the Schools has proved beneficial in other centres. This is one of the most important aspects of the competition and needs constant monitoring.

Tidiness:

Comments under this heading last year are still, unfortunately, applicable. There does not seem to be any great improvement this year and again must be one of your priorities when drawing up your plan. Again it is an area where your local business community and your residents have to be involved if it is to succeed.

Residential Areas:

The housing estates are generally being well maintained. Individual homes, in the main, looked very well and some had lovely gardens in full bloom on adjudication day. This type of effort adds further to the overall appearance of the town and again is absolutely vital if you are to succeed in the competition. Well done to all concerned.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads looked somewhat overgrown. The adjudication takes place between the town nameplates or the speed limit signs – whichever you opt for. Verges should be strimmed from there on in but bearing in mind the advice given in the Tidy Towns Handbook regarding the cutting of verges in relation to the preservation of wild flowers. Road surfaces in general looked good and pathways are being well maintained. This reflects well on your Local Authority.

General Impression:

You should set your sights on increasing your mark each year for the next five years based on a realistic plan to be implemented with the assistance of the agencies and groups mentioned above. Huge success does not come swiftly in the Tidy Towns Competition. Many centres who are doing very well now were at the same stage, some years ago, as you are. The Adjudicator looks forward to returning to Hacketstown next year to see what further progress has been made. Keep up the good work.