

# Tidy Towns Competition 2003

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Abbeyshrule**

Ref: **572**

County: **Longford**

Mark: **237**

Category: **A**

Date: **31/07/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	40	39
The Built Environment	40	34	33
Landscaping	40	36	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	20
Litter Control	40	32	31
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	22	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	30	29
General Impression	10	8	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>230</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Many thanks for your map, plan and objectives. It was also interesting to note the issue regarding the Cistercian Abbey - lets hope that it can be restored to a degree that makes it accessible in the future and safe for visitors. The photographs were also welcome as it gave an idea of the area on a year round basis. The information on future developments under each of the sections made interesting reading. Well done in having so many festivals.

### The Built Environment:

There was a great deal of work being undertaken on the day of adjudication. The church was being worked on, though it was noted from the enclosed information that repainting will not happen until 2004. The buildings backing onto the canal were being cleaned and scrubbed. The canal/river are great assets. Corrugated roofs in the village needed attention and maintenance. The exterior colour of the wood factory was good (subdued) and the area was clean. There were a few weeds in the forecourt - only a few though. The graveyard was well kept - there are pleasant views from here up to the Abbey. It was interesting and heartening to read of the developments for the canal. The opening up of the canal will allow for greater traffic on the water and Abbeyshrule will become a most attractive place to stop. The new barbecue area sounds interesting and will provide an attractive amenity for boat owners.

## **Landscaping:**

The landscaping, perhaps due to the recent dry spell and maintenance, was good throughout. There was a colourful use of baskets on the Rustic Inn and the side of the canal was well maintained. Work was being undertaken down by the canal harbour and slip way. If possible, develop a landscaping plan that utilizes complementary colours as this helps to link the village and has greater impact. Further planting of trees could still be considered - though do ensure that they are of a single species as mixed species in single lines can look uncoordinated.

## **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The work being undertaken and the erection of the proposed interpretive signage will be welcome. There were a good number of ducks on the water, though no swans were seen this time. The river should not be forgotten and a wildlife trail should be considered through these habitats. The local school children should become involved and organizations such as ENFO, Birdwatch Ireland and the Irish Peatland Conservation Council can provide information which you would find of great use.

## **Litter Control:**

It was good to see that litter is highlighted in the local newsletter produced for the community. There was no litter noticed on the day of the judging, so awareness campaigns must be working. The bins noticed were in good condition.

## **Tidiness:**

The long sweep into the village from the three main routes had all been recently cut back and this gave a tidy appearance to the village. It is important that the underground ducting of overhead wires be explored now as this would enhance the village considerably.

## **Residential Areas:**

There are some very pleasant houses in and around Abbeyshrule. The wooden house had a very colourful garden and planting. The new stone house is very much in keeping with the village, though PVC windows do nothing for the appearance of any building - though they are admittedly less time consuming to maintain. There is a fine thatch cottage further out of the village which looked very attractive. The house opposite the graveyard was well painted (it was blue in colour and had some fine roses outside).

## **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Each of the approach roads performed very well and had a good approach into the village. The hedges were neatly cut back (though not overly so), the grass verges were neat and tidy and the road signage was good - well done.

## **General Impression:**

Abbeyshrule has improved over recent years. It is establishing itself as a place to visit in the area. The exciting new developments down by the canal harbour will enhance the village considerably. Keep up the good work on maintaining the green areas and buildings. Best of luck with your future work.

## **Second Round Adjudication:**

At second adjudication, the village was particularly well presented. There is a real sense of pride in the village and this is reflected in the very well kept roadways, premises, houses and gardens and

canal bank area. The mature trees add greatly to the setting. The removal of overhead cables must become a priority. The areas surrounding the bridges at the canal banks were in very fine condition and work was being completed on the laying of chippings on newly planted shrub borders. The stoned walls and bridges add great character to the village as does the Royal Canal Way with the nicely mown walking path alongside. The Colehill approach road was especially well presented with great attention being given to grass verges setting off the birch trees to perfection. The prospect of the lifting of the culvert at the canal and the subsequent improvements that this will bring - forms a bright prospect – and this together with the preservation of the Cistercian Abbey will represent a major step forward for Abbeyshrule. The River Inny is a substantial river and it would be great if access alongside this were possible to form a riverside walk – particularly since there is such varied vegetation alongside the riverbanks.