

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ardee**

Ref: **466**

County: **Louth**

Mark: **229**

Category: **D**

Date: **24/06/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	42	40
The Built Environment	40	31	31
Landscaping	40	31	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	21
Litter Control	40	31	30
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	24	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28	28
General Impression	10	7	6
TOTAL MARK	300	229	224

Overall Developmental Approach:

The Committee is thanked for their entry into this year's Tidy Towns Competition, which included a very well completed Entry Form, a detailed Town Map and an excellent five-year Development Programme booklet - a booklet that should be seen by many other competing towns. A Committee of twenty eight members is outstanding, and the result of this large and dedicated body of people can be seen in the amount of positive work achieved. Your weekly and monthly liaison with Statutory Bodies such as the County Council and FÁS, the various schools and the business sector serves to focus your Committee members on the proposed works, and particularly involves the local community in the spirit of the Tidy Towns Competition. Well done.

The Built Environment:

With the diminution of through traffic possibly this long street, or at least parts of it, can be looked at, in time, with a narrowing of the carriageway and the creation of alternative bays for tree planting and car parking. The footpath on each side could then be widened. The overall effect of these changes could be visually outstanding with a tree-lined main street with broad footpaths. There are some very beautiful shop fronts and the various competitions organised by the Committee are adding tremendous colour and interest to the street. The Committee are to be congratulated on pushing for this wonderful achievement. The wirescape is now being tackled and again, over the years, will make a big visual impact when completed. The grounds of the Catholic Church are a credit and give a most welcoming appearance. Additional work could be done at the northern end of

the town, possibly again by road re-planning, the narrowing of the carriageways and the widening of the footpaths to allow for trees, seating and maybe a piece of sculpture. This work could give a great boost to the improvement of shops and other buildings in this area. The Market Square, with the library and other adjoining buildings, continue to improve and is developing into a very fine urban space. An increased width of footpath would allow the space to impact more on the street.

Landscaping:

Tremendous work has been done by the Committee on the landscape improvements to the town. The most noticeable is the landscaping to the by-pass and roundabout at the northern end of the town and the yearly improvements to the Fair Green or town park. This is now developing into a most welcoming green space and on the day of adjudication was filled with people of all ages, the children's play area, in particular, was most pleasing. The Ardee raised bog conservation area is a most wonderful amenity and so close to the town. The by-pass and railway long distance walks are most interesting, even now in their early stages of development and completion. A series of illustrated boards on the wildlife along these paths could be considered and the task be given to the schools to work out the contents. Dawson's Bridge linking two housing areas across the Dee river again needs congratulations. All these are excellent projects and the Committee deserves high praise.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The entire small Dee river offers wonderful examples to develop habitats for both flora and fauna. The rich cover of trees, bushes and long grasses is great. As already noted, both the raised bog and the long distance walks of the by-pass and railway again offer different forms of wildlife habitats. Possibly ENFO could be contacted to obtain some of the very fine publications they produce on wildlife conservation.

Litter Control:

No litter was seen on the day of adjudication and the Committee should be congratulated on this fine achievement, special praise to the various school groups on their litter collection and recycling projects. The Green Flag Award is a just acknowledgement of this work. The photograph of the 2003 National Spring Clean is ample proof of their work. It is suggested that in the tree planting programmes being organised, that the tree types should be berried and the species could be oak, ash, rowan, beech, chestnut, lime or thorn. These would add an extended dimension to the other wildlife habitats.

Tidiness:

Ardee was a pleasant and tidy town on the day of adjudication and this is the result of the many people that work on the Tidy Towns Competition and again all are to be congratulated. An item that may not occur in Ardee, but is worth mentioning, is that there is a tendency during the summer holiday period to neglect the school grounds. It is important that pupils should keep the grass cut and pick up windblown litter and also keep the adjoining verges, kerbing and bases of walls free of weeds.

Residential Areas:

It was a very good idea to have representatives from the various residential areas on the Committee and with a joint effort by all. The results show, with the three of the residential areas winning top awards in the County Estate Awards. Well done. There are some delightful residential areas on the approach roads into the town. One outstanding one is Sliabh Breagh, with its well maintained grass areas, its trees and the gardens of the houses in the background. A most welcoming atmosphere is given by this care and attention. Perhaps the Committee could consider the creation of mulch or composting banks for the collection of grass, leaves, etc. The compost could then be used in many

locations throughout the town. There are also some delightful gardens on the entry roads into the town, they also provide a feeling of welcome and the owners of these gardens should be commended.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

In general the entry roads into Ardee are very fine. The roads in from Collon and the Golf Links road were exceptional. Others have very well kept verges, tree planting and all have an absence of litter. In places, on some of the minor roads, the verge width need not be the full depth from carriage edge to hedgerow (if the work load of cutting is too much), but could be a two metre strip and the rest could be left as uncut grass and encourage wild flowers. This area could then blend naturally into the adjoining hedgerows. This detail could protect the hedgerow habitat somewhat more.

General Impression:

Ardee is a very pleasant town and the work being done by the Committee in all aspects of litter control, tidiness, landscaping, both hard and soft, are most commendable. The Adjudicator looks forward to next year's submission to see another installment of their five-year Development Programme completed.