

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Blackrock-Louth**

Ref: **196**

County: **Louth**

Mark: **212**

Category: **D**

Date: **23/06/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	35	33
The Built Environment	40	26	25
Landscaping	40	30	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	21
Litter Control	40	30	28
Tidiness	20	14	13
Residential Areas	30	25	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	24	24
General Impression	10	7	6
TOTAL MARK	300	212	204

Overall Developmental Approach:

The Committee is thanked for their entry into this year's Tidy Towns Competition. This entry contained an Entry Form, very comprehensive additional information and a five-year Programme of Development. An excellent presentation and the Committee is to be congratulated on its most thorough presentation. These documents are of great help to the Adjudicator in seeing the work being done and it should also be of benefit to the Committee in monitoring the yearly programme. The Committee's liaison work with the County Council, FÁS, Eircom, E.S.B. and the Garda is great and with the local community groups and the pupils of the schools. The sponsorship of some of the Committee's projects is proof of the backing provided by the local community. It is very important to continue this liaison work with the various groups mentioned above as they can give invaluable help and advice to the Committee.

The Built Environment:

This is a premier seaside resort serving primarily Dundalk to the north, but also to other areas to the south. It is now receiving much housing development and its related commercial activities, and what was once a small village with a seafront road is now developing along the entire length of the beach and inwards on the rising ground behind. The population is now 3000 and more and much more complex in its environmental development. The Committee of ten has risen to this challenge sympathetically. The seafront itself is slowly developing with a very fine promenade and the focal point is undoubtedly the Millennium Sundial, a wonderful piece of sculpture. In the coming years

more elements will be added . The background of housing, shops and other commercial interests is interesting and in sympathy with the sea, beach and promenade.

Landscaping:

Much work is being done by the Committee in this area, with the addition of planting beds and hanging baskets. The bulb planting is an ideal choice and would look well in April and May. The failure of the cordyline is a surprise because this tree is a very successful tree in many areas along the east coast, not least your namesake Blackrock adjoining Dublin. Possibly more research should be done on this tree and enquiring from specialist nurseries who supply and stock many species of this tree. It may not be a native tree but is associated with seaside areas for a few centuries. The wetlands and salt marsh project is most interesting and ideally located. The Adjudicator will look at the protection and development of this area in the coming years.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Committee should contact ENFO to obtain some of the very fine publications they produce on wildlife conservation, information boards on sea bird wildlife and shore life and the salt marsh. This can be further extended with the help of the schools. There are many examples of this available and they are always popular. An Taisce should be contacted for information on the Green Flag Awards.

Litter Control:

There was practically no litter seen on the day of adjudication and the Committee are to be congratulated on this. Again magnificent work is being done on the organising of litter control and dog pollution. The presence of a litter warden is a great asset to have, this person, backed up with possibly name displays of the statutory laws relating to litter and dog pollution, and fines applicable to thee should further diminish this ever present social problem. Perhaps some more dog poopers should be supplied.

Tidiness:

Blackrock is a very pleasant and tidy seaside town and the Committee should be congratulated on this. An item that may not occur in Blackrock but is worth mentioning is that there is a tendency, during the school summer holiday period, to neglect the school grounds. It is important that pupils should be organised to keep the grass cut and pick up windblown litter and also keep the adjoining verges, kerbing and bases of trees free of weeds.

Residential Areas:

There are some very fine gardens, both on the approach roads into Blackrock and within the village itself. These owners should be congratulated on the care and attention and the feeling of welcome these gardens give. Though it might already be happening in Blackrock, the Adjudicator would consider it a very good idea to have representatives from the various residential areas (and the new areas only developing) on the Committee. Perhaps co-operation between the various housing groups should be considered. The Committee could consider the creation of a Gardens Competition for both the new gardens and existing developed gardens. This co-operation together with the co-operation involving the different residential areas would make a significant impact in a few years. Perhaps the Committee could also consider the creation of mulch or composting banks for the collection of grass cuttings and leaves. The compost could then be used in many locations throughout the town.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The repair of the seafront wall is good and the Committee is to be congratulated for this involvement in the work with Louth County Council. The entrance road, the R172, to the town at both ends is

very pleasant. The idea of additional or replacement road signage in two languages is a good idea and will be an excellent project. The roads within the town are continually being upgraded in footpaths, kerbing and tree planters in places. The promenade is the big maintenance job and the Committee is cleaning and maintaining this very long area each week. Well done.

General Impression:

Blackrock is a very pleasant seaside resort town, expanding rapidly, with a continuous house building programme which has its maintenance problems. The promenade is slowly developing into a very interesting urban element and the Adjudicator will be looking at its continued progress.