

# Tidy Towns Competition 2003

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Batterstown**

Ref: **333**

County: **Meath**

Mark: **229**

Category: **A**

Date: **12/08/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	37	37
The Built Environment	40	27	27
Landscaping	40	36	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	18
Litter Control	40	36	35
Tidiness	20	15	16
Residential Areas	30	23	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	29	28
General Impression	10	8	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>225</b>

### 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 very detailed Village Map and a very well produced booklet on the many associations that contribute to or make up the overall Tidy Towns Committee of Batterstown. For a population of approximately the 150, members of the Committee make up a most impressive number of fifty five. Truly an achievement and the results of this input can be seen in the work being achieved and the many awards received. Again the liaison with the many statutory bodies is most impressive and has been beneficial in achieving the quality work being done by the Committee. Well done.

### The Built Environment:

Batterstown is a small village situated on a main radial road - the R154 between Trim and Dublin and has every chance of being badly disrupted by the through traffic. Although the traffic could be a discouragement, and possibly will be more so in the future, the Committee has approached the development of the village in a positive manner and are to be congratulated for this. The Committee has created a most pleasant stopping point on this road. Cafferty's roadside pub and restaurant is a delightful facility and well deserves the many awards it has received for its external appearance, its most pleasant interior and ample car parking. On the opposite side of the road is a newly created small shopping centre containing a filling station and five small local shops. It also has a most pleasant appearance and well handled car parking. Though the threat of more extensive

through traffic will be emphasized later, there will be the need in the near future for a traffic calming programme and a pedestrian crossing the R154 between the pub/restaurant and the small shopping centre and nearby church. The three small housing groups of the Glebe, Rathregan and Church View are very well maintained and their front gardens give a most pleasing appearance to the village. The Church and graveyard again, are very well maintained. The last years work included work on the entrance area of the Church of Ireland church and a clean-up around the old railway bridge and the rehabilitation of the old overgrown 1738 cemetery. This is a most commendable project, but before any serious work is done here, a booklet brought out by Dúchas on the rehabilitation of graveyards should be obtained. This booklet has guidelines, not only on paths and gravestones, but also on possible reservoirs of older plant types which should be preserved.

### **Landscaping:**

The village has undertaken an extensive tree and shrub planting programme along the entire length of the R154 between the village boundaries. A most commendable undertaking. Especially noted was the mixed planting species which will undoubtedly encourage bird life. With such a planting programme there is really little need for the creation of a separate and maybe artificial sanctuary for wildlife. This is discussed again later. The three small housing groups mentioned under the Built Environment are visually most pleasing and excellently maintained. The Church grounds in particular adds greatly to the pleasantness of the village. The School grounds could take some additional tree planting and the students should be very involved in this tree planting programme. The trees should be indigenous, such as oak, ash, rowan, beech, chestnut, lime or thorn. It is suggested to the Committee that they should consider the creation of a mulch bank from the grass cuttings, leaves, etc. The mulch could then be used in various locations throughout the village.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

As discussed under Landscaping, the Adjudicator sees little need for the creation of a separate wildlife area. The extensive and species varied nature of the extensive shrub and tree planting programme is more than sufficient at present for the encouragement of birds and other wildlife within this planting and the adjoining rich hedgerows.

### **Litter Control:**

No litter was seen in the village on the day of the adjudication and this deserves every praise to the team that trawls the village daily for litter. This exercise also gives the children involved a pride in their surroundings. Batterstown has received recent awards - first in County Meath - for their programmes of litter control. Other towns and villages within the Competition should study the organising of this sustained programme of litter control.

### **Tidiness:**

Generally this small village is extremely neat and tidy and is a credit to the Tidy Towns Committee. However the extensive shrub and tree planting on each side of the R154 needs attention. There is a danger that some of the shrub plants could be overcome by the aggressive grasses surrounding them if they are not continually weeded. This is a problem that will be associated with this brave planting of interesting trees and shrubs.

### **Residential Areas:**

An attractive feature of the village is the front gardens of the houses that face onto the road, together with their hedges and well mown verges. It is expected as additional houses are built within the village that the Committee will encourage the owners of these new houses to landscape their gardens to the same high quality already existing.

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

As expressed under "The Built Environment", the Committee should consider the control of traffic through the village and should hold discussions with the County Council on the introduction of traffic calming and also the creation of a pedestrian path across the R154 between the Church and small shopping centre and the Cafferty roadside pub and restaurant. Possibly also the school needs warning signs. Grass verges are very tidy, but at times common sense could prevail if there is too much grass to be cut, and having the cut areas only 1.5 to 2.0 metres wide and the remaining area sown with aggressive wild flower or grass mixes would cut down very much on maintenance.

## **General Impression:**

The Batterstown Tidy Towns Committee have obviously worked very hard and achieved excellent results. They are to be congratulated.

## **Second Round Adjudication:**

The very positive remarks of the first adjudicator are entirely agreed with by the second.

In early August the floral displays were so much in evidence that the stone inscribed village name sign was obliterated by blooms! Before long improved woodwork will be needed on the outhouse doors of Cafferty's car park. It is a pity that the impressive canopy at the excellently renovated shopping centre obscures much of the fine stonework. These minor topics apart, the rise in marks is fully justified, and the residents of Batterstown deserve full credit for their enterprise and hard work.