

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Crossakiel**

Ref: **401**

County: **Meath**

Mark: **207**

Category: **B**

Date: **18/06/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33	32
The Built Environment	40	26	23
Landscaping	40	32	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15	15
Litter Control	40	35	35
Tidiness	20	16	16
Residential Areas	30	19	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	24	23
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	207	201

Overall Developmental Approach:

The Committee is thanked for their entry into this year's Tidy Towns Competition which included a completed Entry Form with additional information and a map of the village. However, the five-year overall development approach programme was not submitted. This would be of great help to the Adjudicator to show the work being done and would also be of considerable benefit to the Committee in monitoring their yearly progress. The Committee is to be congratulated on their work with the County Council and FÁS and the local school. It is very important to continue this liaison work with Statutory bodies as they can give invaluable help and advice to the Committee.

The Built Environment:

Crossakiel has a population of 300 people. It is a small, very pleasant compact village, developed around the junction of five roads. The focal point is a triangular green space enclosed by a variety of houses that are typical of many small Irish villages, and with a background of the ruins of a church. An interesting space. Also in the village is a very fine memorial stone to James Connell of "the Red Flag" fame. This memorial is sited within a very well landscaped setting of stone paving and partially enclosed by a hedge. The handball alley is quite a dominant building near the Kells entrance to the village. At present there are three floral hanging baskets on the wall facing the public road. It is suggested to the Committee that they should consider the planting of ivy or vines on this wall instead of these baskets. The ivy or vines may be a more appropriate finish to the ball alley wall.

Landscaping:

The green triangular focal point of the village is very pleasant and enhanced by trees and shrubs. Additional tree planting could be undertaken, especially a spinney of trees, at the opposite end to the Church ruins. This could be part of a wildlife sanctuary. Further tree planting could be undertaken on the approach roads to the village and within the school grounds. The school children must be an important factor in this overall tree planting programme. Trees must be indigenous and berried, or other forms of fruit bearing trees. Tree species to use could be oak, ash, rowan, beech, chestnut, lime and thorn.

It is suggested that the Committee should consider the creation of a mulch bank for the grass cuttings, leaves etc. The mulch could then be used in various locations throughout the village in their planting beds.

It is also suggested that the Committee could organise a competition for front gardens. There are some very fine garden fronts on the approach roads to the village. Other gardens within the village should now be encouraged. The total effect would greatly boost the appearance of the village. Possibly, in the years to come, a programme of floral hanging baskets could be considered.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The creation of a wildlife sanctuary is often a difficult undertaking. There was mention in the Entry Form of a possible one in the hedge enclosing the James Connell memorial, which is interesting. However, what is suggested to the Committee, for the present, is the tree planting programme mentioned above using selected trees. This could be most successful. Possibly also the Committee should contact ENFO to obtain some of their very fine publications on wildlife conservation.

Litter Control:

There were few signs of litter around the village on the day of adjudication and praise is due here to the Committee and the support groups. With school children involved in a weekly trawl of the village, they get a sense of pride in their surroundings. Though there might have been a five-bin recycling unit in the village, the Adjudicators did not see it. If it does not exist, the Committee should discuss this with the County Council who supply the unit free. This unit, together with a few strategically sited litter bins, also supplied by the County Council, should contribute greatly to a litter-free village as well as promoting the recycling of glass, cans and old newspapers and cardboard. Of course the accompanying collecting of all this by the County Council must be included in the Council's refuse collection.

Tidiness:

Crossakiel, on the day of adjudication, was very tidy, except for some items such as the grass verges on the entry roads into the village and some weeds along kerbs and walls, both of which should be attended to. The Adjudicator will be looking for total improvement on these few small items in next year's submission. During the school holiday period there is a general tendency to neglect the school grounds. It is important that some pupils should be included in keeping the grass cut in the school grounds, pick up windblown litter and also keep the adjoining verges, kerbings and bases of walls free of weeds.

Residential Areas:

In the Entry Form it is indicated that a Children's Play Area is to be created. This would be an excellent project and with the seats and some tree planting adjacent, would make a most attractive facility. There are some very attractive gardens associated with the village housing and these are to be praised. As stated under Landscaping, a Garden's Competition would help greatly to further improve front gardens .

Could the Committee organise a Programme of Painting (say, just front doors?) which together with floral hanging baskets, would add much colour to the village.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

As already mentioned above, the grass verges on the roadside leading into the village need some attention. The verges need only be cut to a width of one to one and a half metres and the remaining area left uncut and developed with tall wild grasses and wild flowers blending into the adjoining hedgerows. In themselves, these uncut areas of grasses adjoining the hedgerows would be sanctuaries for wildlife.

Better and more road signage is needed. These should be cleaned regularly and kept free of grass around them. The school grounds would need warning signs. The Committee should work closely with the County Council on the supply and erection of these items.

General Impression:

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