

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dunboyne**

Ref: **367**

County: **Meath**

Mark: **197**

Category: **E**

Date: **19/06/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	35	35
The Built Environment	40	32	29
Landscaping	40	32	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16	17
Litter Control	40	20	18
Tidiness	20	11	11
Residential Areas	30	25	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	20	19
General Impression	10	6	5
TOTAL MARK	300	197	190

Overall Developmental Approach:

The Committee is thanked for their entry into this year's Tidy Towns Competition. The Entry Form was only partially completed, but did include a well thought three Year Plan and a Plan of the town. The Adjudicator was pleased to see your many proposals progressing satisfactorily. Your liaison with the local community (both residents and business interest groups) and the County Council, serves to focus your Committee on the many improvements proposed and also keeps everyone involved in the spirit of the Tidy Towns Competition. The Adjudicator looks forward to the results of your Plan of Action in the coming years. Well done.

The Built Environment:

Dunboyne is a rapidly expanding community that is very much influenced by the ever growing urban fabric of Dublin. It has many new residential developments and the consequent increase in traffic that threatens to overwhelm the town centre. The danger of these rapidly expanding residential estates is the tenuous links residents may have with the existing town as they become dormitory settlements to service the Dublin economy.

It is vital, therefore, to bring these residential areas into the development of the town through involvement in the Tidy Towns Competition and a variety of local competitions, such as landscaping their particular housing estates, etc.

The Adjudicator noted one phrase in the Entry Form under "future activities of the Committee" -

"the working with Dunboyne Combined Residents Association to prevent development for housing". To have an agenda such as this will not be successful, much better to work with the expansion of the town for the creation of a successful community with a well designed and pleasing town centre, pedestrianised if possible, and housing areas that form coherent elements within the fabric of the whole town.

The present centre, which is still the crossroads of the original village, has the core elements for the creation of a dynamic new centre, but traffic must be subordinated to the creation of this new centre.

Landscaping:

The landscaping of the town centre and the nearby town park is a start. The pupils of the schools must be encouraged to be actively involved in the landscaping of their own school grounds and adjoining streets by a tree planting programme and through being involved in a litter control programme. Both of these actions would cut down greatly in vandalism. It is suggested to the Committee to create a Gardens Competition to encourage new residents to participate in the Tidy Towns Competition. A programme of hanging floral baskets in the town centre area is a wonderful idea and should be pursued with vigour. Again a Competition for the best use of these floral baskets would sharpen involvement.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Wildlife was not a subject addressed in either the Entry Form or the three Year Plan. A first step would be the creation of a Tree Planting Programme focussing on berried or other forms of fruit bearing trees, such as oak, ash, rowan, beech, chestnut, lime and thorn. The gradual development of some more extensive havens for birds and other wildlife should be considered, possibly along the river's edge and branching out from this natural feature. The Committee should contact ENFO to obtain some of the very fine publications that they produce on wildlife conservation and nature trails.

Litter Control:

As stated in last year's adjudicator's report, litter is a major problem notwithstanding work done since last year on litter control. Heavy truck traffic and building development clash heavily with a programme of litter control. However the designation of certain small areas such as schools, churches and adjoining streets as litter-free areas and patrolled by the pupils of the schools could make a tremendous difference. The litter-free areas could gradually be expanded. More litter bins are needed. The Adjudicator did not see the five-bin recycling units in the town though they might have been there. If they do not exist, the Committee should discuss this with the County Council who supply the units free. These units, together with the litter bins, should contribute to a litter-free town as well as promoting the recycling of glass and other materials. Of course the County Council must continue to play its part in the collection and recycling of refuse .

Tidiness:

Around the central area and the crossroads there was a sense of tidiness on the day of adjudication. Outside this immediate area there is also a general untidiness due mainly to new building works and the ever increasing traffic flow. This can be somewhat overcome by enclosing building sites and monitoring trucks delivering or taking away building and excavation materials to see whether the trucks have suitable covers to contain any loose or light materials.

Residential Areas:

Some residential areas, and in particular their gardens, are outstanding. This willingness to improve their total residential environment by the residents themselves should be greatly encouraged by the Tidy Towns Committee. The creation of a competition for residential areas and apartments would be

an essential part of this encouragement. The Department of the Environment's recently launched City Neighbourhood Competition could be used as a reference in this regard. The local press should be involved in the reporting of the results.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach roads to Dunboyne, though heavily trafficked, could be greatly improved visually by welcoming signs (bi-lingual) and the upkeep of verges. The entire verge need not be cut, possibly only from one to one and a half metres. The remaining uncut areas can be left for wild flowers to develop. Closer into the town, stone walls, tidy hedges, fences and well managed verges present a welcoming appearance.

General Impression:

There is often little time to arrive at a general impression, at certain periods of the day, along the entrance roads to Dunboyne due to the heavy flows of both cars and trucks. This must be curtailed by traffic calming in some form and the Committee must push the County Council for these essential improvements. There is a growing feeling of some success in the town centre, with its public and commercial buildings and the completion of some of the landscaping. As pointed out in last year's adjudication, Dunboyne is an historic and attractive town with three major features: the medieval churchyard and buildings; the central green and the river bank. These features offer enormous scope for further enhancing the town environment.