

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Oldcastle**

Ref: **678**

County: **Meath**

Mark: **151**

Category: **C**

Date: **18/06/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	22	22
The Built Environment	40	24	23
Landscaping	40	21	21
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	8	10
Litter Control	40	22	19
Tidiness	20	12	11
Residential Areas	30	18	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	19	18
General Impression	10	5	5
TOTAL MARK	300	151	147

Overall Developmental Approach:

The Committee is thanked for their entry into this year's Tidy Towns Competition. However, the Entry Form was only partially completed and no three to five-year plan or a plan of the village was included. It is very important that the three to five-year Plan be prepared. It would be of great help to the Adjudicator to show the work being done and would be of considerable benefit to the Committee itself in monitoring their yearly progress. Neither is there any mention of consultations with the Local Authorities. Again it is very important to liaise with the County Council in order to make known your views and requests on various matters affecting Oldcastle. The Adjudicator will look forward with interest to your more completed Entry Form and the production of even a short version of a three-year plan. It is important that the number of members on the Committee be increased to cover all the projects that are envisaged by the present Committee.

The Built Environment:

Oldcastle developed around the crossroads of the R195 and the R154 on a low hill. There are some very fine views from parts of the village across the surrounding countryside. There is a most interesting triangular central space around which are grouped a series of very fine two and three-storey buildings, both private residences and businesses. All are generally in good condition. A very fine Market House once occupied the central triangular island, but this has now been changed to a large hardware store. There are some very fine shop fronts and an award-winning pub which is most pleasing architecturally, both externally and internally. This pub - the Dublin Pub - should be

nominated for a "Best Shop Front Award". The village needs colour and it is suggested to the Committee that they initiate a Competition for the best floral hanging baskets display. Similarly, the Committee could encourage the owners of some of these fine buildings to paint their facades.

Landscaping:

The Committee should initiate, in time, a tree planting programme. Trees are needed in some critical areas of the village and along the entry roads into the village. These should be indigenous trees to the locality and could include oak, ash, rowan, beech, chestnut, lime or thorn. They should be berried or be some other form of fruit bearing trees. The school children should be very involved in this tree planting programme, not in their own school grounds but also around the village.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Wildlife was not a subject referred to in the Entry Form. A first step would be the initiation of a tree planting programme and focusing on berried trees or other forms of fruit bearing trees. This would be a safe and practical method of introducing more bird life within the village. The Committee should also contact ENFO to obtain some of their very fine publications on wildlife conservation.

Litter Control:

There was some general litter in the central triangular area of the village. The school children should be encouraged to conduct a weekly litter trawl around the village, which would also give them a sense of pride in their surroundings. Though there might have been a five bin recycling unit in the village, on the day of adjudication it was not seen. If it does not exist, the Committee should discuss this with the County Council who will supply the unit free. This unit, together with a few strategically placed steel 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 paper. Of course the collecting of waste in this regard is a matter for the County Council.

Tidiness:

On the day of adjudication, in particular around the Square, the village generally looked tidy. The Committee is to be congratulated on this achievement.

Residential Areas:

There are some very attractive gardens within the village and on the approach roads and they are to be praised. It is suggested to the Committee that a Garden's Competition should be initiated in order to create more attractive gardens and to attract additional members into the Tidy Towns Competition.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach roads into Oldcastle need some attention. The verges need only be cut to a width of one to one and a half metres and the remaining areas can be left uncut and developed with wild flowers. Better and more numerous road signs are needed. The Committee should work closely with the County Council on the supply and erection of these items.

General Impression:

As stated in last year's adjudicators report, Oldcastle has considerable potential for enhancement. The village triangular space is basically attractive and it is worth focusing on and building on this asset in terms of tree planting, floral hanging baskets and painting of doorways.

