

# Tidy Towns Competition 2003

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Tullamore**

Ref: **503**

County: **Offaly**

Mark: **242**

Category: **E**

Date: **08/08/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	44	43
The Built Environment	40	36	34
Landscaping	40	34	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	18
Litter Control	40	25	27
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	26	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	34	34
General Impression	10	9	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>236</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Tullamore is a busy prosperous town with a lot of continuous development taking place. The job for the tidy towns committee here is difficult one. The town is growing a lot and a large number of people now live here. On top of this, an ever growing population migrate into the town on a daily basis. Despite this the town has improved greatly over the years and there appears to be a good sense of pride. Your five year plan is realistic and pertinent. You are aware of the town's strengths and weaknesses and you have prepared a very comprehensive plan.

### The Built Environment:

Tullamore has many fine buildings throughout the town and on the outskirts. More and more the built environment is improving in its presentation. The offices of Offaly County Council are complimented on their architecture and presentation. The Tullamore Dew Heritage Centre on the canal is an excellent example of how our heritage can be preserved and made accessible to the public. There are two very impressive squares in the town with many fine buildings. The Bridge House Hotel is beautifully presented and is awash with colourful flowers on the day of adjudication. There are a number of derelict buildings as you mention in your plan summary. All you can do is continue to request that the owners do something about them. The garda station is well presented. Most businesses are very well presented and the Brewery Tap, DeBruns and Loughrey's Public House were particularly admired. The Urban District Council building and Tullamore House are also complimented. The fire station, the train station and Scoil Mhuire are all well presented on the

Athlone Road. The square at O'Connell Street is beautifully presented. Unfortunately, when you come out of this square the standard of presentation falls dramatically along the area adjacent to Coen Building & DIY Store – hopefully this patch of land will be developed soon. The entrance to Home Leisure Camping Centre, etc. needs clearer signs and the building along the road here is also in need of attention (beige building with brown roof). The shopping centre here could be better presented.

### **Landscaping:**

The approach roads into Tullamore are fairly well presented in most cases. The maintenance on the roundabouts is excellent, as is their presentation. The trees up from the garda station on the Clara Road are coming on well and they are a lovely feature on this road. The trees in the carpark outside Tullamore Ancestry are also complimented, along with the pole baskets here. The pole baskets are complimented throughout the town. The town park is beautiful and is no doubt an excellent amenity in the town.

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

With the Grand Canal and the Tullamore River, along with many mature hedgerows and native trees, there is no doubt that Tullamore has an abundant wildlife. The establishment of wildlife corridors along the canal will encourage wildlife. The relevance of this section to the competition is to try to make people aware of the wildlife around them and to encourage its appreciation. The three schools you have links with may be able to help you with a basic survey of local wildlife and eventually interpretative signs to inform the wider public. The ecology survey commissioned by Tidy Towns will no doubt give you vital information and will focus your activities under this heading. The adjudicator looks forward to its incorporation into the Tidy Towns five year plan. You have made a good start under this heading.

### **Litter Control:**

As with the vast majority of towns in Ireland, Tullamore does have a problem with litter control. The litter survey and refurbishment of bins will go some way towards alleviating the problem. Remember that litter is one of the basic elements of the competition. It is appreciated that litter is sporadic and is difficult to control but every effort should be made to continuously lobby the towns population to assist in the control of litter. On the day of adjudication litter was visible in nearly every part of the town – on approach roads, on Main Street, in the town park and along the canal.

### **Tidiness:**

Tidiness is closely related to litter control and large amounts of litter give the impression of untidiness in an area. For the most part Tullamore town centre is not untidy.

### **Residential Areas:**

Tullamore has some fine residences both in the town and in the suburbs. There is an ever increasing number of estates going up in the town. The majority of houses are well maintained and presented. Some are exceptionally so. Tullamore does very well under this heading in the competition. Encourage residents to be mindful of weeds, the presentation of boundary walls and all areas visible from the public road. There appears to be a number of new town apartments developed near the town centre which are well presented. Knockowen Road was one of the areas that the adjudicator was impressed with – houses were very well presented, there was no litter and there is a lovely landscaped green. One particular house on the Clara Road was noticed because of its beautiful garden – it was No. 138 with its beautiful rose creepers.

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

Tullamore has improved under this heading over the years even though building developments do hinder this a little. Continue to lobby Offaly County Council to further kerb areas of the approach roads. Some road surfaces are in need of attention throughout the town, but no doubt this is part of the long term plans of Offaly County Council. The Athlone Road is the least attractive of the approach roads – even though the landscaping on the roundabout is very nice. The wall across from Scoil Bhríde is unsightly with grass and broken wire at the top of the wall. Some attempts appear to have been made to encourage a creeper at the base of the wall but it is untended. Further out along this road, long grass and weeds take away from the approach to town. Even though the fire station is very well presented, the road frontage is very untidy and has an uncared for appearance. The Kilbeggan Road is very developed now. The hospital is well presented. The GAA grounds is strewn with litter, despite the presence of bins. The Portlaoise Road looks well and the landscaping at St. Coleman's is colourful and attractive.

### **General Impression:**

The general impression of Tullamore is very favourable. The town has a lot going for it and it is pleasant to visit. The wide main street and its fine squares are excellent features in the town, as is the Grand Canal and the Tullamore River. Tullamore is a busy and developing town with much to offer its residences and visitors.

### **Second Round Adjudication:**

Litter control was not good on the day of adjudication. There was a significant scattering of litter throughout the town centre. The committee is aware of the town's fine heritage in terms of the built environment and where improvements are necessary. Both De Bruins and Kilroys were admired. Encourage property owners to give as much attention to upperstoreys, gable walls and rear facades as much as they do to the shopfronts themselves. The canal was well presented in respect of its banks and lock gates in general. Work in progress was noted at the entrance to the SRAGH Industrial Estate. The stone wall here was admired. In some instances the outer limits of the town at entrances from approach roads look really bad, for example the entrance from the Portarlington Road and the general environs of Condrens Cement Lit to a lesser extent. There are far too many signs marking the entrance to the town from the Dublin Road (before the 40 mph sign). The advertisement hoarding behind the 40 mph sign is too large. We wish you well with the proposed ecological survey, the findings should be used to identify potential threats from new development and ameliorative measures. Tullamore College and its grounds look extremely well. Consideration might be given to rerouting service cables to run parallel to buildings rather than crossing the road. The wide grass margins and semi-mature trees along Bachelors Walk were admired. Landscaped roundabouts look really well especially the SRAGH roundabout.