

# Tidy Towns Competition 2003

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Thurles**

Ref: **647**

County: **Tipperary North**

Mark: **211**

Category: **E**

Date: **02/07/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	35	35
The Built Environment	40	30	30
Landscaping	40	31	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	20
Litter Control	40	25	25
Tidiness	20	15	14
Residential Areas	30	23	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25	25
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>209</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

The adjudicator was disappointed to note the small number of members on your committee. Five is an extremely small number for a town of Thurles' size. However, the close relationship you have established with Thurles Town Council and FAS is to your credit. Last year's adjudicator mentioned the importance of a work programme. Before next year's competition you should put forward a three to five year work programme. This document need only be a few pages long outlining your plans and objectives for the town's future and setting a timeframe in which these should be implemented. Thurles is a town with much potential. It is extremely busy and more involvement is required from the local community. Continue your work in this regard such as encouraging the establishment of residents associations and organising competitions for shop fronts, housing estates etc. This has proved very successful in other towns.

### The Built Environment:

You mentioned again this year the derelict properties register put together by Thurles Town Council. This should assist in dealing with this problem. Do ensure that any developments are in keeping with the town's character and that the unique heritage of traditional shop fronts is maintained. There are some very fine examples of traditional plasterwork and wrought iron work. For example J. Dempsey's is a fine shop front with its original awning etc. and Eddie Corbett's is also an attractive traditional front. The Tipperary Institute is an attractive Meier-esque modern building set in the landscape, with its water features at the entrance. Do ensure that it is maintained to the highest

standard. Rusty barriers were evident at the entrance to the site. In terms of public buildings, the health centre was fine although the post office and garda station should be painted up before next year's competition - weeds were apparent on its ramp and at the base of its low boundary wall. The railings of the Christian Brothers' should also be painted before next year's competition. The buildings along Liberty Square were generally fine. Hayes Hotel was admired as was the Bank of Ireland. Work was ongoing on the cathedral on the day. Do ensure that traditional shops maintain their rendered facades. It has become fashionable to remove the render from buildings such as these. This is incorrect from both a conservation point of view and will also lead to practical problems of water penetration.

### **Landscaping:**

This is an area of the competition that you evidently enjoy. Work on the roundabouts was admired, in particular, the attractive lavender at the Institute roundabout. Perhaps commercial premises could contribute more to this aspect of the competition by introducing attractive planting to any bare forecourt or car park area. The Riverside Park area with its fountains in the water were admired. Liberty Square is the main hub of the town and would benefit from a rationalisation of its landscaping. One is barely aware of the features within the square such as the fountain! Also the pedestrian crossing appeared to be within the island space rather than on the road itself which makes life very difficult for the pedestrian!

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

Pheasant Island is a fine initiative as a wildlife sanctuary. As mentioned by last year's adjudicator, more work is required in this area of the competition. Get the local school children involved in preparing a report on the wildlife habitats in their location. This could perhaps be incorporated with a riverside walk. Local experts could also help in this regard. Attractive wild flowers were noted at the Drish River and perhaps further the creation of more wild flower meadows could be considered.

### **Litter Control:**

The standard of litter control on the day could have been better. Litter was evident in the car park area of the Tipperary Institute and along the Nenagh Road. More was evident on the Dublin Road, in particular by the well presented Centra. A light scattering was also evident throughout the town. The adjudicator noted that the litter bins are emptied three times a week. Perhaps this could be increased to a daily collection.

### **Tidiness:**

Weed control could have been improved upon. Quite a lot was evident at kerbsides on approach roads. Do discourage fly posting - much was evident along approach roads and in the town centre. Also discourage curved plastic canopies and encourage their replacement with traditional fabric awnings. The mural at the swimming pool should be repainted before next year's competition.

### **Residential Areas:**

Thurles Town Council's work in relation to the tenants' paint scheme is a good idea. Residential areas were reasonable but could be improved upon before next year's competition. Oisín Terrace was fine although some of the boundary walls were quite grubby. At Monakeeva the new signage was admired although the area in the vicinity of the fence was very overgrown. Maple Court was well maintained and Ard Carrig sported some attractive landscaping. Both Elmwood and Hazelwood were fine and an attractive house and garden beside Knox Hall was admired. The Stannix Home was also admired for its attractive brick arts and craft design.

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

The Nenagh Road could be improved upon before next year's competition - it appeared quite overgrown. Weeds were evident at the kerbsides along the Dublin Road. Although the verges had been cut back, the tended area ended abruptly leading to a very overgrown area. Perhaps the barbed wire fence in this location could be replaced in time with indigenous hedging of beech or hawthorn, or a stone wall. In terms of street furniture, the post box and signage in the vicinity of the cathedral will need attention before next year's competition.

### **General Impression:**

Thurles is a very busy centre. It has much potential to do extremely well in the competition but you need a higher level of support from the local community.