

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Bagenalstown**

Ref: **630**

County: **Carlow**

Mark: **250**

Category: **D**

Date: **06/08/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	39	39
The Built Environment	40	35	34
Landscaping	40	38	37
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	22	22
Litter Control	40	33	31
Tidiness	20	16	16
Residential Areas	30	27	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	32	32
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	250	245

Overall Developmental Approach:

Reading through the information which you sent with the entry form your development strategy is very positive and in this connection it is gratifying to read that you have the support of FAS, your County Council, Traders Association and your Residence Committee for your efforts. Your Mission Statement however is very broadly based and reference is made again to the suggestion made in last year's report that you should endeavour to set your work out on a yearly basis in order to measure how successful or otherwise you are being. In fact, many of the comments made in last year's report under this heading are still applicable, particularly those regarding future success and how it can be achieved. In this connection, the Adjudicator would once again appeal to your committee that, for next year, your map would contain reference to specific areas where projects have taken place for the year 2005 so that the Adjudicator can have sight of them. Last year's Adjudicator went into a lot of detail under the various headings as to how this success could be achieved. The following therefore should be taken as a further look at how successful you have been and be read in tandem with the 2003 report.

The Built Environment:

For a town of its size Bagenalstown has a substantial number of public buildings – Schools, Churches, a magnificent Courthouse, Fire Station, McGrath Memorial Hall, Credit Union Building, etc. all of which were visited and were presented in a very fine manner for which great credit is due to the bodies and authorities concerned. The Swimming Pool is a lovely facility as is the Canal Walk,

both of which are being very well maintained. The standard of commercial premises throughout the town is very varied indeed and perhaps better presentation in some cases could be a matter which you could discuss with your Traders Association as appropriate. In this respect comments made in last year's report are still applicable.

Landscaping:

This year, as last year, landscaping in the area of the Canal/Leighlinbridge Road, the Courthouse, the Town Park, the Barrow Track and many other places throughout the town looked wonderful and created a lovely atmosphere. The landscaping at the Courthouse is, indeed, spectacular. Containerized planting, hanging baskets, window baskets and tubs of flowers all made up this wonderful vista and all concerned are indeed to be congratulated. Trees and shrubs planted in the past looked very well. Do continue with this planting policy. Shrubs will give you some colour on an all-year round basis and require less maintenance. Trees are planted for the future and posterity will thank you for them.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

On adjudication day, ducks and swans were somehow absent from the river but that is not to say they are not there. The River Barrow and Canal system present a wonderful opportunity for the development of a wild bird project, something perhaps to which you should give some of your planning time and will also have the effect of gaining you additional marks in the competition. A simple procedure would be to get your schools involved in the provision of nesting boxes and feeding tables for birds along the river bank or in the school grounds. Perhaps there is someone local who is knowledgeable on this subject or alternatively you can consult with Duchas or its successor.

Litter Control:

In general, Bagenalstown was practically litter free on adjudication day. Some minor littering was to be noted in odd spots around the town but, overall, a great effort is obviously being made to rectify what is a national problem. Well done to all concerned. Perhaps the provision of some additional litter bins might help.

Tidiness:

The town was presented in a neat and tidy manner. Commercial premises with open storage spaces are a problem – a difficult one to solve. However, here again perhaps your Traders Association might be able to help. For the larger commercial premises and factories, perhaps the judicious plating of trees would screen some of the open storage areas from public view. This has been done successfully in other centres.

Residential Areas:

While it was not possible to visit every housing estate in Bagenalstown (the town has grown enormously) many were visited and, in the majority of cases were found to be well maintained with open spaces being very nicely kept – in some cases they have been beautifully landscaped. Houses in general throughout the town are being well maintained and many had some lovely gardens in full bloom which added greatly to the whole of the towns' atmosphere. Hanging baskets, tubs of flowers and window boxes, where presented, looked very nice. The whole presentation reflects greatly on the interest which your residents have in the preservation of their environment. Well done to all concerned. This type of individual effort is absolutely essential if you are to succeed in the competition.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads are being well maintained with evidence of verge cutting. The Kilkenny approach

was very nice while the Leighlinbridge approach, in particular, was very much admired. Road surfaces are good and pathways are being well maintained. Try to avoid where possible open storage on footpaths as this can be hazardous for elderly people or those who are short sighted.

General Impression:

Excellent work, both structural and environmental, is being carried out in Bagenalstown. Some lovely housing estates are being built and landscaping projects, both old and new add greatly to the towns' appearance. As part of your future planning, do try to put forward projects under some or all of the Adjudication Report headings which will go a long way to securing you the additional marks you require for further success in the competition. Never, of course, lose sight of maintaining what already exists. This will always be the backbone of your entry and should not be overlooked in favour of any possible new projects. Congratulations on all the excellent work done to date.

Second Round Adjudication:

A presentation of excellence has been achieved for landscaping and natural amenities in Bagenalstown. Items of public art were particularly admired. It was a pleasure to note your picnic and seating facilities being used and enjoyed. The built environment in general is presented to a high standard and the Mc Grath Memorial Hall is excellent; we wish you well in its development as a One Stop Shop. The O'Duinn premises has been nominated for a shop front award. The entrance to the Business Park has been beautifully landscaped however the Recycling point here was littered and the litter seems to have been coming from an overflowing skip. As the day was a little windy this litter was travelling towards the town also. A second overflowing skip was noted at the Recycling point at the Railway Station and bags were noticed here also; this practise should be discontinued before it becomes the norm: the town centre was lightly littered. Residential developments were presented to a high standard and Maple Drive, Beechwood Close and Eastwood all were admired. The wire and post fencing to the site leading to the junction for Fr. Cummins Park and Conway Park looks quite bad and if this site is not due to be developed in the near future it could be planted or refurbished. High grey walls in Conway Park are weather stained and these could be cleaned and/or painted and planted. Boundary walls on the entrance from the Borris road were in need of improvement and the grass at the nameplate here was a little high. Well done on having all streets and housing estates identified. Some road signs are in need of refurbishment and there is a lot of unattractive wirescape around the town. Hopefully this will be ducted in the not too distant future. The Town Park is a beautiful development. Congratulations on the development of fishing stands for disabled access.