

# Tidy Towns Competition 2004

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Carlow**

Ref: **430**

County: **Carlow**

Mark: **254**

Category: **F**

Date: **07/08/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	44	43
The Built Environment	40	37	36
Landscaping	40	37	37
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	23	22
Litter Control	40	31	31
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	26	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	33	33
General Impression	10	8	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>250</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for all the information sent with the entry form and for the copy of your plan. However, you might bear in mind for next year the comments made in last year's adjudicators report regarding the provision of a map indicating where specific projects have taken place which would make it much easier for the adjudicator to have sight of them. While it is disappointing to read of some lack of interest amongst the general public in your activities it is, nevertheless, gratifying to note that you continue to have the support of Carlow Town Council, LEADER, Carlow Amenity Trust, Carlow Tourism, Chamber of Commerce and indeed many other groups for your activities. This is well deserved as you are doing excellent work.

### The Built Environment:

As last year, all major buildings were again visited this year. They are being well maintained and were very well presented. Carlow Courthouse did, indeed, look resplendent and the new Credit Union House is a great addition to the Tullow Road. The Kennedy Avenue, Potato Market and Barrack Street complex is outstanding and is undoubtedly the focal point of the town. As mentioned in your report, and as observed on adjudication day, you still have some derelict sites, but your comments regarding your negotiations with Carlow Town Council are noted. The Millennium Bridge and its newly opened surroundings are indeed outstanding. The whole complex, including Carlow Rowing Club and the newly refurbished Cox's Lane, has given a tremendous environmental lift to that overall area. Well done to all concerned.

## **Landscaping:**

Existing landscaping, both in the town, on the roundabouts and in the vicinity of notable buildings, such as the Courthouse, Carlow Rowing Club, bridges, etc. is being very well maintained and greatly added to by the commercial and private planting in window boxes, hanging baskets and containers; all of which create a lovely atmosphere in the town. Trees planted in the past are now maturing nicely, such as those to be seen on the Barrow Track. Your future plans in this respect have been noted, including your proposals to seek preservation orders on old trees. Tree planting is for the future and posterity will thank you for it. Do also bear in mind, however, some shrubs which will give you some colour on an all year round basis which is always desirable to see and have in a large centre. The town park looks well as do the grounds of District Hospital and St Patrick's College.

## **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

Your plans for development under this heading are excellent and the adjudicator looks forward to further progress being made. While wildlife was not to be seen on the River Barrow on adjudication day, it is felt that it does exist there in large quantities. Your comments and plans regarding nesting boxes and bat boxes are noted. The latter was not to be seen in the grounds in St Dymphna's Hospital, but this was probably due to substantial leaf growth.

## **Litter Control:**

Your comments regarding the litter problem have been noted, as indeed has been the excellent work of the carried out in this regard. Unfortunately, on adjudication day, there was still scattered amounts of litter to be seen, particularly in side streets. The centre of the town did, however, fare better. This is an ongoing problem which many centres have and it has to be monitored carefully.

## **Tidiness:**

For a town of its size, it was presented in a very neat and tidy manner which would seem to indicate that, despite the lack of interest, most commercial operators are conscious of the appearance of their premises. This is to be encouraged.

## **Residential Areas:**

The fact that Carlow has grown so rapidly in the last number of years makes it impossible to visit all the housing estates but, those that were visited, are being very well maintained and, in this regard, your activities in respect of residential competitions is noted. Even the old stocks of houses in places like Montgomery Street, Burrin Street, St Killian's Crescent and the Pollerton area all looked well. Many houses had lovely gardens in full bloom on adjudication day and thereby make a tremendous contribution to your Tidy Towns Effort.

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

Approach roads are being well kept and nicely presented. Road surfaces and pathways are also being well maintained and reflect great credit on your Town Council. Some resurfacing is undoubtedly needed but, overall, the town is very well provided for under this heading.

## **General Impression:**

Very good progress continues to be made and, in this respect, your committee is doing excellent work both in its own right and acting as a coordinating group for the various other bodies. Carlow has now reached a very high mark in the competition and future marks will be got through careful planning and attention to detail. The main problem areas would seem to be dereliction and litter

with perhaps some premises refurbishment throughout the town but, in the main, the town is progressing very well and great credit is due to all concerned. Keep up the good work.

### **Second Round Adjudication:**

It was a pleasure to visit Carlow for second adjudication and to enjoy the beauty of your Town Park and experience the wonderful visual impact of your landscaping activities. Approach roads to Carlow were well presented and the surrounds of nameplates and speed limit signs were good. The standard of verges, etc., was a little mixed on the entrance from the Tullow road, but the junction with the Rosslare road where shrubs are still juvenile was admired for the neatness of green areas here. The landscaped entrance to Carlow Technology and Business Park, with its a water feature, was particularly admired and the public art near the roundabout across from the Braun premises is visually interesting. There are some wonderful additions to the built environment and the Credit Union premises was especially admired; in this adjudicator's opinion, it is one of the best modern buildings to be seen anywhere in the country and it is being considered for an award. Older buildings such as the Courthouse and the Seven Oaks Hotel, together with many others, enjoy a standard of excellence. The Leverett and Frye premises which is your nomination for a shop front award this year was also admired however the plastic neon beer sign (Heineken) is dated and should be removed. Many shop fronts are presented to a standard of excellence and include Teach Dolmain and John Tyndall. Work in progress has been noted at a number of construction sites around the town. No doubt a similar standard of excellence will be achieved for these developments. There was many examples of visually obtrusive wire scape in the town, perhaps the most serious of these was at the junction of the N9 with the town centre; no doubt this will disappear in time both here and in older parts of Carlow. The wire scape free streets in the environs of the shopping centre were admired together with new lamp-standards. Some street furniture was in need of improvement, for example the seat at the junction of Dublin Street and Castle Street. Residential developments are well presented in general, however, a terrace of on-street dwellings along Kennedy Street located across from Domino's Pizza premises are urgently in need of cleaning and/or painting. The difficulty of keeping roadside facades clean with passing traffic is appreciated. Litter control was reasonably good on the occasion of our second visit however there was a consistent scattering throughout the town centre. Well done on a fine presentation and good luck with the implementation of your plans.