

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Cavan**

Ref: **571**

County: **Cavan**

Mark: **236**

Category: **D**

Date: **09/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	40	39
The Built Environment	40	37	37
Landscaping	40	36	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	19
Litter Control	40	28	28
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	25	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	27	27
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	236	234

Overall Developmental Approach:

The adjudicator would like to thank Cavan Town Council and Cavan Tidy Towns Committee for their joint entry submission. It is most encouraging to see such joint cooperation that will without doubt bring long terms benefit to Cavan town. The document 2005 - 2007 was closely studied by the adjudicator and it represents a good summary of work done today and plans for the future. However the objectives for the future should identified on an annual basis, that makes clear the main objectives for each year in the 2005 - 2007 time-frame.

The map was quite useful on adjudication day but it would also to been most useful to have had a map that indicates the suburbs of Cavan town also.

The Built Environment:

Cavan is a large town that handles high volumes of traffic throughout the day. It did appear on adjudication day that even with the one way system that the traffic does not really flow freely. In the evening time the Athlone junction appears to cause major delays. It would have been useful to have had more information on the Cavan Town Enhancement Project 2005.

Through-out Cavan the freshly painted lamp standards in black with gold trim appeared to be everywhere together with the attractive bollards painted in the same colour scheme. This gave an good visual unity to the town. This combined with footpath upgrading has brought about a big

improvement. The adjudicator awaits with interest the decision on the future of the Abbey site in the centre of the town. In Cavan town there is a very strong mix of good shop fronts and those that need some considerable improvement. The adjudicator liked the Fox Shoe shop property that seemed to retain many of the original features. The adjudicator nominated that property for the National Tidy Towns Architecture Award. Buildings in Farnham Street that caught the eye included the Library, Courthouse, Cathedral and the group of stone buildings that includes AXA Insurance. The Cathedral grass areas were superbly presented but the additional of some tree and shrub planting would add some needed colour. The rather unattractive square white building between Esso and the Cathedral needs to be repainted and perhaps window details should be picked out in a different colour. The Playground beside the Park has a most attractive location and appears to be well maintained.

Have you considered replacing some of the shop front signs in the town with signs that use more traditional materials such as timber and hand-painted lettering? This could be approached on a co-operative basis.

Projecting advertising signs were noted in a number of back lanes in the town centre and this needs attention. The issue is how many of these signs are really essential from a commercial point of view? Some rather garish advertising was noted on some gable walls also.

A few derelict buildings were noted that detract from the overall appearance of the built environment of your town / village. However there is a way in which perhaps you can make a feature of these buildings pending their removal or restoration. Try and get the owners to agree that they will blank out the window and door openings with heavy waterproof Marine plywood. This should then be painted matt black, and window bars and door panels painted in white. This approach as a temporary measure can look quite effective.

Have you considered trying to encourage the use of the Irish language on some of your shop fronts? There is a special award in the Competition that includes the use of the Irish language.

Market Square is an attractive area beside the Post Office but the adjudicator is of the view that more can be made of this area. The landscaping here looked well but all seats were in need of re-painting.

Other buildings in Cavan that stand out include the bank properties though the canopy at the Bank of Ireland Pass Machine needs to be washed or replaced.

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Landscaping:

Cavan Town Floral Enhancement Programme is strongly welcomed and much good work has been done by the Town Council in landscaping terms. The Park at the northern side of the town looked especially well on adjudication and was attractively defined by the painted railings. A newly landscaped area on the Athlone approach on the right hand side just after Lidl occupies a high visibility road junction site. Extensive landscaping on the Dublin road was noted. The high sloping bank on the right closer to the centre of Cavan on this approach was heavily landscaped and really caught the eye. The small landscaped area at the road junction to the Hospital needs a greater use of colour to create more impact. In the centre of Cavan the flower tubs in the Cinema car park were really colourful and helped to 'lift' that part of town in terms of impact. At the side of Dunnes Stores and Tesco the cobbled area down the centre of the street would be greatly improved with the addition of a row of trees.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Cavan River flowing through the town has great potential. However in the area of the Bus Station the cleaning of the river bed is recommended, and this may well improve water flow also. The railings here were being painted at the time of adjudication and the red and black colour scheme will be very effective when completed. The same river at the car park in Connolly Street was presented to a higher standard, though littering was a problem here. The railing here could be painted using the same black and red colour scheme used near the Bus Station. The Park on the northern side of town has already been mentioned and this is a great community facility. The landscaped area on the Killeshandra road on the right is also highly attractive. Much planting and flower containers were noted throughout the town.

Litter Control:

Your encouragement to the youth of the town to get involved in litter control is strongly supported. In this context the schools campaign is most important. The adjudicator would like to congratulate Cavan on their success in the IBAL campaigns. Your concept of "Adopt A Road" though unusual appears to be bringing good results. On an initial look at the town litter control appeared to be excellent, however closer examination revealed a number of problem areas. These areas included the Dublin road approach on the main road near the lake, on the Athlone road at the 50 KPH signs, much litter on the green open space just below Esker Place, Ashe Street, the river at Connolly Street car park, and the rose planted area at the junction of Cock Hill and Church Street.

Tidiness:

The painting of the many light standards and bollards in a common colour scheme is very effective. A number of untidy back areas were noted including an unnamed property to the side of the Breffini Inn off Connolly Street. Some other incidental open spaces and short lanes need to be tidied or screened from view as appropriate. The Bring Centre at the Cinema Car Park was very neat and tidy and a credit to all users. The Dublin approach road and that from Athlone were quite untidy in a number of places but major development works were under way in these areas on the day of adjudication.

Residential Areas:

The Town Council support scheme for housing estates in terms of landscaping is a great initiative and the results of this were noted in a number of estates. Likewise the setting up of residents associations in estates is such a good step forward. Have you considered running a Tidy Estates Competition? This happens in a number of towns in Ireland and has been highly successful in standards terms. The College Street red brick houses fit so well with the area echoing the design and materials used in the older properties across the street. Many excellent individual properties were noted and on the Athlone approach road many houses and landscaped gardens caught the eye. At the Ashbrooke estate the excellent landscaping inside the gate on the left hand side created great expectations for further landscaping displays further along in the estate. However the area along by the long wire barriers on the right needs to be landscaped and hopefully this is part of the builders' plans.

The adjudicator nominated the Harmony Heights housing estate on Cock Hill for the National Tidy Towns Architectural Award. The basis for this was the highly innovative and unusual design approach used on a difficult site that slopes in two directions.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The Dublin approach road was rather untidy but a lot of new development work was under-way at the time of adjudication. On the approach road by the Hospital little recent work appeared to have been done on the verges here but the natural landscaping here was quite effective. At the Athlone junction at the Shell property the signposts here need to be rationalised as there are approximately 10 signs here some covered by others. The Ballyhsie approach road by the park was excellently presented, On the Arvagh approach potential for improvement in verge presentation was noted.

Grass cutting here on a more regular basis is required. The internal signs in black and white in the town are excellent and so useful. However some of the older black and white directional signs need to be replaced such as that at The Connolly Street / College Street junction.

General Impression:

The combined efforts of the Town Council and the Tidy Towns Committee have achieved a lot and the adjudicator looks forward to the revised Tidy Towns Action Plan.

Good luck to everyone involved in your good work.

Second Round Adjudication:

Cavan town boasts a handsome built environment which includes many fine cut stone buildings, handsome heritage buildings and many attractive shopfronts; however a number of upper stories to properties are in need of attention together with premises which are a focal point in their streetscape, namely Blacks, particularly its gable wall which forms a corner with Thomas Ashe street and the wire mesh gates of the yards to Dunnes Stores which should be replaced with attractive good quality timber gates to provide greater enclosure. The ESB utility sub station is unsightly and would benefit from enclosure by landscaping or a stone wall. Hard and soft landscaping throughout the town and on approach roads was admired; landscaping should be featured within the residential development in the environs of Fairgreen Hill / Fairview Terrace, many dwellings here are badly weatherstained and the bare earth banks give an appearance of desolation. The entrance to the town from the Bellanleck road is poor in respect of overgrown verges and the plethora of signs at the Business Park. the car park at College Street is underdeveloped. Some of the above observations / recommendations might be incorporated into future plans for the town.