

# Tidy Towns Competition 2005

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Avoca**

Ref: **517**

County: **Wicklow**

Mark: **205**

Category: **B**

Date: **07/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	30	28
The Built Environment	40	29	29
Landscaping	40	28	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15	15
Litter Control	40	29	29
Tidiness	20	16	16
Residential Areas	30	22	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	29	28
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>201</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

The detailed sketch and plan for the next five years was very helpful at adjudication time. Like many villages and towns in Wicklow there is a considerable amount of building development taking place in the vicinity of the village and a watchful eye should be kept on planning applications to ensure they conform to the character of this beautifully located village. The items listed in the plan are very comprehensive and will require much cooperation both with the residents and the public authorities. The recruitment of new members would be a good idea especially now with the new housing states.

### The Built Environment:

The main landmark buildings through the village were noted. The churches are dominant building features – each strategically placed. They are well maintained with good road frontage railings and wall at the Catholic Church. The Church of Ireland is beautifully set on the main road with a fine lawn surround. The Scholl looks particularly well. The Avoca Handweavers premises are very well painted and appear well. Some attention to paint would be helpful with a number of buildings- for example – the roadside community centre wall, the Court House buildings, the credit union, Fitzgerald's and the premises on the corner by the Arklow road. With traffic passing continually, road wash quickly stains walls and cleaning may be sufficient in many cases to restore the standard of décor. The parish community hall, Garda station and school buildings appear well. The post office and old station house also look well. Buildings on the main road appear well.

## **Landscaping:**

The village is surrounded by beautiful natural Wicklow landscapes. The village merges well into its surrounds. The road frontage landscaping at the school is attractive but does need attention to grass weeds. The maintenance of many gardens along the roadside helps contribute well to the village. On the Arklow Road there are a number of particularly good gardens – especially those of the s cottage style houses. The memorial park near the courthouse is an attractive feature. The carpark is attractively surrounded with screening trees and shrubs and the Avoca gardens are beautiful. The entrances to the Woodview and Station road estates contribute well also to the landscape of the village. The landscaping at the new estate on the Arklow road with the iron railing and stone piers is especially beautiful. The space beside the Eircom buildings is unattractive and a solution would be welcome. The planted containers provide a great sparkle of summer colour. The area on the main road opposite the Church of Ireland is very well cared for.

## **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The surrounding woodlands and riverside offer great potential for wildlife appreciation. Projects to facilitate people's observation, awareness and appreciation of the natural environment of this area would be a great asset. By working with an environmental officer and collecting local knowledge, an inventory of wildlife likely to be seen in the area could be assembled and some illustrated display boards erected to present this information.

## **Litter Control:**

There is a very good standard of litter control through the main part of the village. Some litter was noted at the entrance to Station road estate and similarly on the road down to Woodview estate. The work of the children of the National School is to be congratulated.

## **Tidiness:**

The old cemetery is sadly neglected. This is part of the heritage of the village and the restoration of this would make an interesting project. The electrical cables on the Fitzgerald premises need tidying. The planned signage will be very welcome. The removal of overhead cables hopefully will happen soon and give a much more pleasing appearance to the main area of the village.

## **Residential Areas:**

The two original estates Woodview and Station road appear well – these are well maintained with good open space greens and tree planting. The individual houses are generally well cared for and great credit is due to those who look after their own property, front garden and road frontage – by everybody doing this a very positive result can be achieved. Individual houses along the roadside play a significant role in the appearance of the village. The new housing estates on the Arklow road Brook Meadow and Arklow wood look well and it is important these are well landscaped to merge them into the surrounding countryside.

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

The road surfaces are in good condition. The carpark is neatly marked out and very useful – with this carpark so accessible it would be a good idea to restrict parking on the street side giving a less cluttered appearance. The road surfaces and large green verges out on the main road are well maintained and give a lovely approach to the village.

## **General Impression:**

Avoca is in one of the most beautiful places in the country and it is important that standards match the surrounds. The extra buildings and popularity resulting from television exposure results in extra people in the village – meeting the challenge of this new situation presents a challenge. Keeping the integrity of the village must be a priority in any development plan.