

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dunmore**

Ref: **642**

County: **Galway**

Mark: **145**

Category: **B**

Date: **09/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	22	20
The Built Environment	40	19	18
Landscaping	40	24	22
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17	15
Litter Control	40	17	21
Tidiness	20	7	8
Residential Areas	30	18	12
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	16	16
General Impression	10	5	4
TOTAL MARK	300	145	136

Overall Developmental Approach:

Your plan, now in its second year, impressed because of its interesting initiatives and also by the manner in which you set out objectives. Your marking is still comparatively low, and this may be because you have found it difficult to translate the objectives into action. On your map, please mark and all the relevant locations, and also name all the streets and housing areas. We hope we have not missed any important features as a result.

The Built Environment:

This refers to public buildings and business premises. The splendid remains of the Augustinian Abbey with its remarkable west doorway is the most important historical feature of the town; as it is in national ownership it would be expected that weed growth on the topmost portions would be prevented or removed. Dunmore Castle, outside the town, is a commanding mediaeval ruin in an area of much beauty. The octagonal monument, with its historical chronology, was very well presented. The church in its pleasant grounds looked exceptionally well, as was the case last year. The Health Centre was still in need of painting. The architecturally unprepossessing Community School was very well maintained indeed. The flat roofed building next the fine Bank of Ireland destroys the sequence of traditional pitched roofs. The Garda Station was a credit to those who work there. Many individual shops looked well, but there was so much mass-produced signage that the business centre of the town looked no better than average, while it has the real potential to be a very attractive and visually vibrant streetscape.

Landscaping:

Perhaps the best landscaping project seen was the grounds of the Community School, with its lawns, shrubberies and herbaceous planting, though the recreational park at the Golf Course appealed because of its wide green spaces. The area round the church was delightfully planted, with roses specially impressive, and open grassed spaces in estates like that off Barrack street were very favourably noted; nearby, at the Garda Station and the Abbey, stone bordered flower beds were seen. The railings of the fine rugby ground needed painting at the date of adjudication. The riverside walk - also considered under 'Wild Life' - is a well-planned and executed amenity of considerable charm. Several small areas of colour - such as the excellently presented annuals at Emo Petrol Station, and tubs and hanging baskets throughout the town - caught the eye in a positive way.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The bog walk outside the town was visited - neatness would be inappropriate in an essentially rural location like this, and the walk fulfills its purpose by bringing townspeople and visitors to observe this natural landscape. The riverside walk has something of the same effect in an urban context. The planting of young trees in several quarters was noted.

Litter Control:

Mild litter was seen in some streets, but a surprising and rather horrifying amount was seen under the road bridge, including bottles and cans, along the riverside walk, and at the perimeter of the neighbouring sports fields, which gave a very negative impression quite different to the pleasant photographs provided. A bin at Eurospar was overflowing. The recycling centre was quite clean.

Tidiness:

Several unpleasing 'corners' were seen which collectively gave a poor impression far greater than their small size would suggest - among them a corrugated shed across from the Health Centre, a scruffy site opposite the pristine doctor's surgery, a rusty gate opposite the Abbey, an untidy area next the river walk on the Ballymoe road, the back of the Mace premisses as seen from the river, etc. Some dereliction, as mentioned in your notes, was seen. Poisoning of weeds along the river walk had resulted in much unsightly dead brown foliage. Each of the above was fairly insignificant, but in total they blemished what has the potential to be a very tidy town if all property owners kept their premisses clean and neat..

Residential Areas:

The traditional street houses are what gives Dunmore its character. What has been most encouraging is that where some older houses have vanished, infill housing of a sympathetic scale and materials has been provided, so that there is a continuity of design. The comparatively new houses opposite the Garda Station with their neat porches and dormers, are distinctively modern yet fit into the existing townscape superbly well. The same may be said of the estate off Barrack Street, which has a freshness and lightness that is entirely in keeping with the nearby streets yet looks bright and new, and infill housing almost opposite the entrance to the Golf Club and opposite the Health Centre. Your substantial rise in marking in this category is as a result of such building initiatives. Some stained boundary walls disfigured otherwise fine suburban housing of an earlier era.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Your bilingual street name signs are a real success. Most street surfaces, especially at their edges, in the town centre were rough on the date of adjudication. The principal approach roads were well

surfaced. Directional signs were good.

General Impression:

There have been many excellent initiatives under almost all headings, but none so unique or outstanding as to be suitable for nomination for awards. It is hoped that as you follow the aims set out in your Development Plan this will change. Dunmore has enormous potential, and it should be borne in mind that the towns which are now at the top of the scale and are winning the major awards were much less favoured ten or twenty years ago than Dunmore is at present. While the Tidy Towns Committee gives leadership, and makes representations to the official bodies, it behoves all residents and business people to follow the good examples set.