

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Abbeylara**

Ref: **475**

County: **Longford**

Mark: **169**

Category: **B**

Date: **01/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	28	28
The Built Environment	40	21	21
Landscaping	40	22	20
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17	17
Litter Control	40	21	20
Tidiness	20	11	10
Residential Areas	30	18	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25	20
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	169	160

Overall Developmental Approach:

Abbeylara is welcome to the 2005 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission with details of work that has been accomplished in the past year. Again we note the absence of a planned work programme and urge you to prepare one as it is difficult to make substantial progress in the competition without this. The village is located in beautiful countryside and has a fine heritage feature in the Cistercian Abbey. The information panel on Abbeylara and the abbey near the handball alley has been noted. The village enjoys quite a nice streetscape with turns on the approach roads on entering the village and the view of the abbey can be seen at a number of points before arriving in the village centre all of which is complemented by stands of mature trees. One however is quite stunned on arrival at the crossroads due to the lack of integrity of the built environment at this location. The adjudicator understands that this is out of the control of the committee, however perhaps the committee could be proactive in having a design study for the area around the crossroads prepared. Your local planning office might be a good place to start.

The Built Environment:

The village centre on entering from the Granard Road offers a pleasant streetscape of two storey buildings, most of which are residential. One property, which is for sale, retains its sash windows although it does feature a PVC door. The Crawfords premises at the crossroad was nicely painted at the time of our visit and one on the opposite corner looked quite well with the Fáilte on the windows. The remaining two corners at the crossroads are problematic and undermine the integrity of the

village. Hopefully the plastic fascia sign on the Food Store will be replaced with more appropriate signage. The church looks well and some landscaping was noted here, the school looked quite magnificent. We note an application for planning permission for a new parish centre beside the church. Don't forget roofs are as important as roadside facades on buildings and the poor roofs to buildings marking the entrance to the village from the Granard Road present a problem.

Landscaping:

The flowerbed at the entrance from the Granard Road was admired as were container flower displays at various points around the village, particularly hanging baskets. The stand of mature trees backed by hedgerow on the Castlepollard entrance make an important contribution under this heading also. The maturing trees on the roadside of a boundary at the abbey will make a significant contribution as they mature. Well done on the picnic site and its verges here near the crossroads. Some consideration might be given to landscaping the carpark at the sports grounds.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Oliver Lynch Memorial Park (the sports grounds) enjoy good enclosure by high walls with attractively painted murals. The clubhouse here looks reasonably well but as pointed out above the carpark is roughly surfaced and could be both resurfaced and landscaped. The red metal gate here is badly in need of refurbishment. We note the absence of any activities under the heading of wildlife and refer you to your Tidy Towns Handbook which has a plethora of ideas on how to get started under this heading. We wish you well.

Litter Control:

Litter control was excellent, a few scraps were noted on the Castlepollard Road and some on the Edgeworthstown Road also, however the nature of the litter would suggest that it was thrown from a passing car. Your new litter bin initiative is unlikely to have this type of litter and other management activities will be necessary in this respect. Submit details of your overall litter management strategies and daily litter management activities with next year's application as these could earn you extra marks also.

Tidiness:

Well done on the school awareness initiative and competition. We would be interested to hear how this went - were there any surprising outcomes? The site at the top of the Edgeworthstown Road, which is being used to house trailers and other machinery is an eyesore in its current condition and should be properly enclosed, however we note a planning application here for ten two storey residential dwellings. A derelict cottage has been noted beside the handball alley and on the Castlepollard Road. Low roofs are unsightly near the M. McCormack premises and nearby gates are in need of refurbishment also. Weedy gutters have been noted on some dwellings and weedy kerbs on the Castlepollard Road.

Residential Areas:

The infill residential development in the village centre looks well and has some attractive window and door brick details. Bungalows with neat gardens have been noted and admired at the speed limit sign on the Castlepollard Road. One dwelling at the entrance from the Castlepollard Road has a beautifully grassed roadside area to their boundary wall which creates a strong positive visual impact. Could other residents be encouraged to do likewise? Two gardens were admired at the entrance to the village at a second speed limit sign on this road and there were a number of attractive gardens on the Edgeworthstown Road also. Work in progress on a residential development across from the church and school on the Oldcastle Road has been noted and a number of bungalows together with the cottages located across from the proposed Parish Centre are quite charming. In fact there were several beautifully presented dwellings and gardens on this road.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The ornate Fáilte stone on the Granard Road was admired, well done. Nameplates looked well also, verges tended to be a bit overgrown but not problematic. Stone walls lining approach roads are an important part of your heritage and should always be kept weed free. A stretch of footpath at the Food Store was in need of refurbishment. Try to have the old style nameplate on the Edgeworthstown Road refurbished as it is a nice feature. Well done on stone wall construction with the help of FAS, it complements the existing older stone walls on approach roads.

General Impression:

Abbeylara is a village with attractive residential developments and some public buildings but has a fundamental problem in the heart of the village at the crossroads. We do wish you every good luck in addressing this problem over the next few years. A lot of work has been achieved and everyone concerned should take a bow.