

# Tidy Towns Competition 2005

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ardagh**

Ref: **639**

County: **Longford**

Mark: **266**

Category: **A**

Date: **10/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	46	46
The Built Environment	40	36	35
Landscaping	40	37	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	26	26
Litter Control	40	35	35
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	27	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	35	35
General Impression	10	9	9
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>264</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Ardagh is welcome to the 2005 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission. We note the absence of a planned work programme but the map was beautifully illustrated. Ardagh is a charming village set in beautiful woodland countryside and has a unique character and ambience which rewards a visit for any occasion. The village looked well on adjudication day.

### The Built Environment:

All buildings were presented to a high standard and the N&P Noone premises appears to have been refurbished to its roadside facade. The two Lyons premises continue to look well and Scoil Meí Naoifa together with the church and visitor centre enjoyed an excellence in presentation. Well done to all concerned.

### Landscaping:

Your strongest point in the competition is for your activities past and present under this heading. Grass verges on approach roads and within the village are presented to the highest standard and one wonders why the grass verge on the sports grounds road remains overgrown. All green areas are being beautifully maintained with a successful combination of both bedding plants and permanent trees and shrubs for seasonal interest. Container plants around the village were not yet

in bloom, although flower beds and hanging baskets were most colourful and profuse. The magnificent avenue of mature pines and semi-mature silver birch leading to St. Bridget's Coachyard has to be seen to be appreciated. Underplanting was noted here to ensure a heritage for future generations. Well done on having your own glass house tunnel and mulching area.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The boundary wall of the Bill Keenan Memorial Park (sports grounds) was quite well presented although there was a lapse in a few spots regarding weed growth at the base of the wall, however it was not a major problem. The car park here was neat also. The cemetery looked well and rewards a visit and we note planting of beech here. Well done on your choice of hedgerow as this will be supportive of wildlife. Your neighbourhood area is a wonderful amenity, so much so that one hates to leave. A fine presentation.

### **Litter Control:**

Litter control was excellent during adjudication, none was noted. You could earn additional marks under this heading with details of your litter management strategy and other regular litter activities.

### **Tidiness:**

Some stretches of weedy footpaths and kerbs were noted together with some eroded grass verges. The recycling point in the car park was neat but sprayed weeds in the car park itself looked somewhat untidy.

### **Residential Areas:**

Work in progress was noted on a new residential development on the Carrickboy Road. Hopefully this will mean more hands for the Tidy Towns effort. New residents should be encouraged to become involved in the life of the community. There were some wonderful stretches of roadside areas to boundary walls of private dwellings near the sports grounds; these were neatly grassed and made a strong positive visual impact. One dwelling had a badly weather stained roadside boundary wall, however most featured stone boundary walls which were most attractive. A number of gates, railings and walls throughout the village need improvement.

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

As noted above, verges of all approach roads were neatly presented with the exception of those along the road on which the sports grounds are located. This has been the case for many years and this adjudicator is quite curious as to why. Street furniture is well presented and lampstandards were particularly admired. A signpost should be provided for both entrances to the car park, both for the car park itself and for the recycling point as it is easy to miss. There was one signpost in place on adjudication day but it could be hardly seen under all the growth on the wall. A hanging sign is suggested for both entrances. The car park itself continues to be badly potholed. The wirescape free status of the village centre is wonderful as it affords an uninterrupted appreciation of the beauty of the village centre.

### **General Impression:**

The overall impression of Ardagh is most favourable and has been for as long as this adjudicator can remember. A visit to your lovely village is always worthwhile under any circumstances.

### **Second Round Adjudication:**

It was delightful to visit Ardagh after a break of seven years since your great win in 1998. After a

very dry spell the rain came on second adjudication day gave a great freshness to the area. Your rich display of mature trees, well presented stone walls, intensive landscaping, well presented houses and a very good road structure combine to make Ardagh one of the great champions in the Tidy Towns movement. That said, we observed some slippage in attention to detail and you now need to revisit some of the great developments of previous years. We were disappointed to find the Heritage Centre closed in mid August. The centre's environs are wonderful but some of the plaques have gone shabby and the display map is weather stained. The nest of oaks (planted by C.J. Haughey) at the rear of the centre is superb. We also notice some sporadic house building on the village approaches: we would much prefer infill development if space permits, or perhaps small appropriate clusters of housing. Your landscaping has already been praised by the first adjudicator and this extends to the cemetery where some of the graves have dignified landscaping in and around the grave plots. The half moon gate to the cemetery from the church is unique. We commend you on your work in planting new trees and in moving with the times in developing a mulching centre: well done to all concerned.