

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Reaghstown**

Ref: **13**

County: **Louth**

Mark: **235**

Category: **A**

Date: **08/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	36	37
The Built Environment	40	29	28
Landscaping	40	36	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	14
Litter Control	40	34	32
Tidiness	20	16	16
Residential Areas	30	25	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	32	30
General Impression	10	9	7
TOTAL MARK	300	235	222

Overall Developmental Approach:

It was a great pleasure for your adjudicator to visit Reaghstown for the first time on adjudication day. What a beautifully presented village it is where the level of community support is obviously so high. The adjudicator would like to thank you for the map of the village and the 3 Year Plan. The 3 Year Plan requires more detail, and this point was made by the adjudicator in 2004 as well. In regard to the Plan it is important to identify by year what key objectives your Committee will have, and what bodies or agencies will be involved in implementing that objective.

Unfortunately the Entry Form did not state clearly what work, and where, had been undertaken since July last year for the 2005 Tidy Towns competition. For example under the Built Environment section of the Entry Form it stated "Building of stone walls and repair of existing stone walls". The adjudicator needed to know where this work had been carried out in the village, so that additional marks could be allocated if appropriate.

The Built Environment:

There is a very friendly cohesive feel to the village, and a strong sense of community. The first introduction to the village of the main road is by the superb landscaped area. The adjudicator nominated that area for the National Tidy Towns Landscape Award and was considered with the many other nominations from around the country.

The old village pump painted green was noted as an attractive feature as were the colour co-ordinated field gates . At the Church the steps off the roadway needed to be painted and also the road boundary wall and pillars.

Landscaping:

The level of landscaping in the village was really impressive and the total village appeared to be landscaped with excellent freshly mown grass verges throughout. The hedging also looked very effective, some had been cut and trimmed and some not. The adjudicator is of two minds as to which is best in such a rural setting at Reaghstown. The uncut hedging gives a lovely natural feeling, while the neatly cut hedging gives that well kept appearance. Light trimming from time to time is probably the best action to take. At the car park area the landscaping is beginning to mature and in a few years will look really well. On adjudication day the stonework tended to dominate the landscaping here.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

In many towns and villages this is an aspect of the Tidy Towns Competition where there can be significant potential for development. All towns and villages have the presence of wildlife to some degree. It is important that your Tidy Towns Committee would examine further the wildlife potential, and see what you can achieve in terms of making your area even more wildlife friendly.

If you have not already done so, the starting point is to have a habitat Survey carried out of the wildlife in your area. Suggested habitats to be considered include the following –

- Urban habitats – gardens, waste ground, walls, graveyards, hedges
- Wetland habitats – rivers, ponds, lakes, canals, reed marsh, bogs
- Woodland habitats – forests, hedgerows, plantations, parks
- Grassland habitats – roadside verges, parks, wet meadows, dry grasslands

The Survey should produce a species list for each of the habitats relevant to your area

This need not be an expensive Survey. Perhaps there is a knowledgeable person in one of your Schools who might undertake this task for you. Basically the Survey would identify the animals, plants, birds, fish that inhabit your area and their associated habitats. It should be remembered that to carry out the Survey properly that it will probably take a year so that all habitats can be assessed at different time of the year.

Using the results of the Wildlife Survey your next step should be do draft a straight forward Plan to preserve the identified habitats in your area, and investigate the possibility of new ones. For example perhaps there is an old Pond in your area that is disused, but with a little work could be an important area for wildfowl.

It is most important to try and involve your local school children in this project, and in many Schools there is probably a teacher who may have an interest in this area who would be willing to get involved.

As part of the actions to be undertaken in your Wildlife Plan you might like to consider the provision of some weather proof and vandal proof display panels, illustrating and explaining the wildlife in your area. This has been done very successfully in many towns and villages in Ireland.

Litter Control:

On adjudication day litter control throughout the village was really excellent and this represented an extremely high level of community commitment to litter monitoring and collection.

Tidiness:

The village had a very satisfactory overall feeling of tidiness and attention to detail on adjudication day. As you progress in the Tidy Towns competition it is the attention to the small, often overlooked details that will win you additional marks. The presentation of the general area of the Danny Boy pub could be improved. This is not to say that the area was untidy on adjudication day, but more can be done to develop the visual potential of this site. The blank pole opposite the Westerns GFC property should be removed unless it is to have an immediate future purpose. At the Car Park the two concrete walls need to be plastered and perhaps painted. Some of the Speed Limit Sign poles need to be painted by the Local Authority.

Residential Areas:

The Mountain View area was excellently presented with the attractive low grassy mound with the fine mature tree and seat. All property owners appeared to have taken great trouble to present their properties in a really excellent way. This is important because in a village like yours every property is crucial to the overall presentation image.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The three approach roads to the village were excellently presented and the narrow grass margins had been so carefully cut, obviously on a regular basis. The landscaping though out the village added so much to the great impression created by Reaghstown on adjudication day.

Congratulations and well done to everyone involved in your great work.

General Impression:

Second Round Adjudication:

Reaghstown was a pleasure to visit on the occasion of second adjudication. A high standard has been achieved for the presentation of the village under all headings in the competition.

Landscaped areas are a joy to behold particularly at the entrance from the main road; grass verges throughout are being maintained to a standard of excellence for such a small community.

It was good note the results of your wild bird survey posted up for everyone to see and appreciate; might you consider undertaking a Flora survey?

Westerns GFC possibility enjoys the best landscaping to its entrance to be found anywhere in the country.

Litter control and tidiness was excellent; hopefully your new neighbours will come on board and become involved in the Tidy Towns.