

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kingscourt** Ref: **54**
County: **Cavan** Mark: **177**
Category: **C** Date(s): **27/06/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	27
The Built Environment	50	20
Landscaping	50	24
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	13
Litter Control	50	24
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	11
Residential Areas	40	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	22
General Impression	10	6
TOTAL MARK	400	177

Overall Development Approach:

The comprehensive five year plan shows a very good grasp of the requirements of the town and surrounds. By pinpointing the areas where development and improvements are needed a good element of objective and assessment as time goes by can be made. This helps also to focus peoples mind on the tasks in hand. Sewerage works and building construction are temporary causes of disruption. Encouragement of the diverse groups within the town to become involved is laudable. The concentration on the approach roads is a valuable aspect and will yield good results. Road surfaces, footpaths, gulleys and crossings are all important both from a safety and visual aspect and it is heartening to see that all these figure prominently in the 5 year plan and in the review at 2006. A committee of 15 members is a good size.

The Built Environment:

The structure of the buildings in the main street is very orderly with the wide aspect to the street and the availing of this for tree planting. The roundabouts also give a structure and style to the main street. The diversity of the shop front appearances adds to the character of the town. While there are many well tended business premises along the street there are still a number requiring attention and hopefully as more improve greater encouragement will be taken by the remainder. Some dilapidated buildings were noted. The Market Square looks very attractive with the prominent lamp standards, the trees and the railings. The railings could be more unified in style. The thatched building is a notable building feature along the Main Street. The Church of Ireland and Catholic Church are fine assets in the building sense. St. Mary's hall - the Library building is attractive. The buildings at the handball Court open a new area in the town – along with the children's playground. When the rear of buildings becomes opened up they frequently reveal the backs of buildings which may not be the most attractive and may need remedial action.

Landscaping:

The trees on the central border along the Main Street provide a very interesting aspect to the town. As these mature they will confer a unique character on the town. Some attention to the areas at the base of the trees would be helpful and any formative pruning that is needed should be done as the trees progress to get the maximum effect. The roundabouts give a nice colour aspect – these need to make a stronger statement – either by the choice of stronger statement plants – maybe coloured New Zealand flax in each centre with taller bedding subjects or perhaps columnar trees could be planted in the centre of each and surround with colourful planting. The green area to the front of the St. Josephs National School and the green spaces at the nearby housing estate provide a good landscape aspect at that part of the town. The tree planting within the large stones at the Kingspan premises is a good idea but needs attention to remove weedy grasses among the stones. The area surrounding the Fire station could be further improved. The cemetery is well maintained and appears good. Many containers through the streets give good seasonal colour and create a pleasant atmosphere.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Progress is needed with this aspect of the competition. Having wildlife and natural amenities can create great interest and opportunity for peace relaxation and interest. Involvement with school projects and obtaining local information all can form a part of a project. Mention of the various possibilities was made in last years report and concentrating on these now would be helpful. The meeting with Coillte mentioned in the entry form seems positive – the idea of access to Dun-Ri-forest Park from the town would be worthwhile.

Litter Control:

Good efforts are being made in relation to litter control. The committee's involvement with the parents association of schools is a very positive action and will help. All strands of the community must become involved in order to make a sustained improvement in the litter situation. Generally the litter levels were noticeably low although some litter was observed on the street sides.

Waste Minimisation:

The green flag attained by St. Josephs School is noted and the work of the Scout Beavers and Cubs. Greater awareness needs to be spread among all aspects of the community of the need to recycle and the problems facing the community in the future without a good approach to waste minimisation. This aspect of the competition is about concentrating both on the need to choose materials and methods that avoid producing waste and to consider environmentally friendly ways of dealing with the waste that is generated. A campaign of awareness with both homeowners and business people needs to be started to give an understanding of the importance of waste management and recycling. Compost heaps can be made for green materials, avoidance of using materials that do not degrade easily and separation of the various materials so that they can be recycled.

Tidiness:

Mention is made in the entry of sewage works to be undertaken in 2006. Such work does cause disruption but is only temporary in nature. In such case it is understandable that the work would cause some untidiness but it would not be reason to abandon making efforts to minimize the problem. The petrol pumps above Erans Hall look very untidy as does the premises at the start of Peppards Hill. The central lights on the main street with underground wiring are very good but there is still a considerable amount of overhead wiring to be dealt with. Also some tidying at the area behind buildings by the handball and racquet ball building needs attention. Protruding signage on shop fronts should also be considered.

Residential Areas:

Several housing estates were visited and it was encouraging to see both the level of care of individual gardens and the care of open spaces at the entrances to estate. Tree planting is very important in any open space with estates and particular emphasis should be placed on this – as trees mature they lend great character to an estate. The spaces can often accommodate even a few large growing trees and help to tie the surrounding landscape with the new housing estates. Kerbside weeds, attention to verges and repair or replacements of trees as needed should always be undertaken to keep a good quality standard in the estates. Local competitions among estates can be helpful. A careful watch to ensure developers do not leave site unfinished is needed.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The concentration on roadside improvements as noted in the submission with the entry form is laudable. Kingscourt has several approach roads and an approach road frequently determines the quality of the village or town. Road surfaces within the town on Hall street and up by the side of the Market Square need attention to their bumpy surface- similarly at Turners Hill. Stone walls are a very important feature of the roadsides and of the fabric of the town and surrounds in general. Attention to repair of stone walls and the avoidance of natural stone walls being covered in vegetation completely is important. Admittedly sometimes a little

vegetation is attractive and represents some of the natural flora of the area but predominance is undesirable.

General Impression:

Good progress can be made by following a concise plan with clear objectives and time scales. Building work when it settles will give a more settled appearance. The Main Street is a good focal point and worth devoting much effort to this – especially the businesses that need attention