

# Tidy Towns Competition 2006

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Durrow** Ref: **412**  
County: **Laois** Mark: **251**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **05/08/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	44
The Built Environment	50	34
Landscaping	50	37
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25
Litter Control	50	23
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	35
General Impression	10	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>251</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Durrow Tidy Towns Committee is one that seems to have dedicated itself to the cause of bettering and improving the town for many years now. Frequent monthly meetings are laudable. You would appear to have a close working relationship with local schools (in respect of their Green Flag ambitions) Fas, and the Laois County Council. We are sorry to hear that you are sometimes disappointed with your marks but, unfortunately, that is what happens at the high level you have achieved in the competition! Each point is harder won. Your development plan made interesting reading. The plan contained in it was a little small in scale for the purposes of adjudication so perhaps you could include a more detailed one with next year's entry?

### **The Built Environment:**

The commercial premises along the main streets of the town generally looked well on the day. Of note were: The Copper Kettle and the Stores. Phelan's will need a paint before next year's competition. The Bank of Ireland was stained at the gable. The Castle is a marvellous heritage statement to have in the village centre, with its magnificent stone walling. The Church of Ireland next door looked well but will need painting before next year's competition. The Durrow brick Memorial is a wonderful piece of reminiscence, as is the Emigrant Memorial. Bob's Bar looked fresh and cheerful with marvellous floral displays at the old bridge. There are some attractive shopfronts on the Kilkenny road including the Durrow Pharmacy and the Credit Union, Plans for the improvement of derelict sites and a plans for the square are looked forward to. The Civil Defence Building and Fire Station were most bright on the day. The ICA Hall looked a little patchy where ivy appeared to have been recently removed. The National School on the Kilkenny road looked quite modern and the Community Centre was charming. The Garda Station and Post Office were quite fresh and the stone church was well presented.

### **Landscaping:**

The large expanse of grassy open space at the Village Green is a marvellous setting for Durrow and many another town or village must be quite envious of it! It played host to a carnival on the day and therefore could not be appreciated in its full glory. The planting of native trees is always commendable and will be an asset for future generations. The marvellous displays of flowers to the nursery on the Abbeyleix road create a wonderful display for the motorist passing through the town. The picnic area and associated waterwheel on the Abbeyleix road had some attractive stone walling and was being well maintained. The incidental landscaped spaces such as the trough of petunias on the Main Street at the directional signs for Kilkenny were admired. The brick monument incorporating tables and seating was admired.

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

The concept of a butterfly park is a wonderful one and we note that it is being relocated. This adjudicator also had difficulty locating it and eventually concluded that it was the open space between the petrol station and the Fire Station? The erection of nesting boxes in this setting is laudable. The plans to enter the Green Mile Competition are looked forward to. This is a competition that has really taken off in other counties. The erection of a steel bridge at Course Wood was another worthwhile project.

### **Litter Control:**

The standard in this category of the competition was not the best on the day. The odd paper and bottle was noted along approach roads and in the vicinity of the green. As the carnival was taking place on the day, this was taken into account. The monthly litter competition is a good idea. The participation of the children is a wonderful idea, as the sooner that awareness of the environment is engendered in people the better. It is something that will live with them forever. Your plans to participate in the Inter-Community Challenge are laudable and we wish you every luck! We also look forward to seeing the results of your Children's Art Slogan Competition.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

This section of the competition relates to the segregation of waste, recycling and composting, as well as the provision of recycling facilities. Do read your Tidy Towns Handbook and Race Against Waste brochure for ideas for furthering this aspect of the competition. They have suggestions such as the organisation of seminars on recycling and the holding of composting workshops etc. The recycling area on the Cork road was neat on the day with no evidence of dumping.

### **Tidiness:**

The village generally had a reasonably neat and ordered appearance on the day. There are a number of derelict properties along the streets of the town which look unfortunate-in particular on the Cork side of the town. The large 3 storey building that has lain empty for many years now on the Abbeyleix side of the town (the Bianconi Inn referred to in last year's report?) appeared to have been painted but, as mentioned by last year's adjudicator, appeared to be slumping on the day. The ongoing maintenance that you do in terms of weed control etc is impressive.

### **Residential Areas:**

Both individual houses on approach roads and street houses were generally well cared for on the day. Those on the village green were particularly admired-one ivy clad house laudably retains its original timber sash windows which makes such a difference to the appearance of properties such as this. A most attractive house and garden were noted opposite the National School on the Cork Road. Old Oak Grove estate was admired with its newly planted ash trees. There are some very attractive gardens and stone entrances on Mill Road. St. Fintan's Terrace and associated grotto were well maintained.

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

The repainting of street furniture, village pumps and the bridge is laudable. Approach roads were reasonably well cared for on the day. New trees were noted on the Abbeyleix road. Road surfaces around the green were somewhat rough on the day. The Kilkenny road sported some beautifully maintained grassy banks.

### **General Impression:**

It was a pleasure to stop and visit Durrow for once instead of just passing through on the busy Dublin-Cork road. It has much to offer the visitor and continues to perform well in the competition!