

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Reaghstown** Ref: **498**
County: **Louth** Mark: **249**
Category: **A** Date(s): **06/06/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	38
The Built Environment	50	29
Landscaping	50	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	18
Litter Control	50	36
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	16
Residential Areas	40	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	32
General Impression	10	9
TOTAL MARK	400	249

Overall Development Approach:

Your Three-year Plan is impressive. An enormous amount of research has clearly been undertaken and what must surely be attainable objectives have been proposed. What is particularly sound about this document is that it sets annual goals – where this is not done there has been a tendency to go at all the projects at once and this can lead to confusion and exhaustion! This adjudicator has noted that yours is a predominantly farming community and so agricultural needs and traditions must be respected. Please list projects completed this year on your 2007 entry form – that is, as well as what is already in the Three-year Plan booklet.

The Built Environment:

There is very little architecture as such in Reaghstown, except for the fine church. As heretofore, it is exceedingly well kept in its attractive surroundings.

Landscaping:

Traditional Louth banks are in evidence – time was, not long ago, when these were ignored; congratulations on bringing them back to prominence. It was good to see the planting of shrubs and evergreens which maintain interest throughout the year included in the huge beds alongside the car park. On the date of the visit many of the herbacious plants were already in flower, with deep blue cranesbill making a superb show; others were about to come on. Lovely blue irises were in bloom in a number of beds throughout the village, including the triangular space described as WP2. Other plantings, in private gardens, contributed to the pleasant scene. The entrance to the village from the Ardee road was landscaped to the high standard we have come to expect.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Has LP1 'Create wild life plateau' been achieved? It was not quite clear what is meant by this term. It is very good that so many bird tables and feeders are maintained, with more apparently to come. The extensive explanatory panel identifying wild birds is exemplary: you should anticipate having this replaced before long because the colours in the pictures are beginning to fade. Tree planting comes under this heading; it was good to see so many young trees flourishing, and of course the existing mature trees form a fine backdrop, pleasant to see and useful to wild life.

Litter Control:

There was very little disposable litter throughout the area – congratulations to the whole community on this. Some of the litter bins looked new. It is good to read that although there is no school in Reaghstown, the children help during the holidays.

Waste Minimisation:

As mentioned on your entry form, an eco-friendly approach is taken to waste management. It is good that you separate the different types of refuse for recycling. Do you have a Bring Bank? – one was not seen, but may be situated in a secluded place. The use of a mulching lawnmower is something that could be copied elsewhere. The mark awarded in a nominal one in the first year of this new category.

Tidiness:

Last year's adjudicator remarked that an ugly pole opposite Westerns GFC should be removed, but it is not clear which pole was referred to! There are in fact several poles which one would rather see done away with, as in almost every other village. Two boundary walls on either side of the start of the road to the cemetery were not as well painted as they might be, and a block wall in the car park could do with plastering or even whitewashing. In spite of the above, Reaghstown remains a tidy village. The cemetery is maintained with care and dignity and the neat approach to Westerns GFC is impressive.

Residential Areas:

As last year, the houses are nicely presented, a credit to their owners. Beware of over-pretification: too many decorative elements can conspire to make a visual hotch-potch of a fine house. Mountain View estate was seen to be spruce to the highest degree. If additional housing is proposed, use your influence to ensure that it is situated within the present village to create visual cohesion and also to be socially friendly – and not situated at some remote spot.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road surfaces within the area are reasonably good, though the car park is a little rough. The boundary walls of the cemetery are pristine. It is good to see entrances and farm gates so well presented. What is meant by 'create a gateway to Reaghstown from the N2 entrance'? – presumably this does not mean an actual gate across the road? but a figurative demarcation where the village may be said to begin. In fact, the landscaping at this point leaves the visitor in no doubt as to the presence of an interesting village just around the corner. Signposting is needed from the villages and cross roads to the east.

General Impression:

As you will see from the mark, the impression of Reaghstown which the visitor carries away is exceptionally high – one of the highest in the whole country. Congratulations to the community for creating this sense of charm as well as hard-working achievement. You now have a very detailed plan and if you follow it effectively you may expect another surge of marks, like what you earned last year, again in the near future. Best wishes for this outcome.