

# Tidy Towns Competition 2006

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Athboy** Ref: **571**  
County: **Meath** Mark: **253**  
Category: **C** Date(s): **27/06/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	41
The Built Environment	50	34
Landscaping	50	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	24
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>253</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

The adjudicator would like to welcome Athboy to the 2006 Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for the most comprehensive documentation supplied that was most useful on adjudication day. It was a pleasure for this adjudicator to visit Athboy on a first time visit. There is warmth to this town that is most attractive. Your committee is handling a number of very significant projects for the town and your professional approach being adopted is commended. With a committee of twelve people you appear to have the support of the relevant agencies and the involvement of the Heritage Council is noted. The 2006 Athboy Calendar is a great concept.

### **The Built Environment:**

Unfortunately Athboy has some derelict buildings and those so close to the Heritage Garden are quite unfortunate. The backs of some other derelict buildings are visible from the back of the Bring Center near the church. However Athboy does have some very interesting modern architectural statements. The Athboy Community Childcare Centre is an unusual building that seems to find a happy location on its site. Another building that stands out is the 1996 Credit Union building that has such a striking elevation to the Main Street. The Christmas lighting towards the top of the façade is a little out of place in late June! There are some unfortunate shop-fronts in Athboy and hopefully in time these will change to a more modern / traditional approach that will enhance the Athboy streetscape. Some projecting signs were also noted and a campaign to have some of these removed is recommended. Quite frequently a sign flat to the building front façade can be as effective as a high up projecting that may influence the retail habits of the few.

### **Landscaping:**

Landscaping is one of the great strengths of Athboy and your committee with others has done really great work on tis in recent years. The Heritage Garden is really impressive and so interesting. What a wonderfully simple concept! Why is a large advertising sign for an estate development in Athboy allowed to dominate this

beautiful Heritage Garden and take up a key location in the garden? The Cow Park project site was visited and the concept for this space is most imaginative and the study charts a clear way forward for this project. Likewise the River Project has exciting possibilities. It is so interesting to read that there is such a varied range of wildlife in Athboy. The planting of the 100 trees has made a difference in Athboy. Driving in from the Delvin approach the beautiful colourful landscaping of the Spiral Beds at the road junction immediately caught the eye. The Fair Green is an extremely large area to develop and maintain and on adjudication it was looking splendid indeed. Some dead grass here needs to be removed.

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

The Cow Park and the River Project represent serious steps forward in the development of the educational potential of the wildlife of the town. It seems hard to believe that the Cow Park area has delivered 21 bird species during survey and the river 14 species. Your Bat Walks are a rather unusual initiative but Athboy seems to thrive on the unusual! The Nature Bank at the National School is a great way of introducing young children to nature and wildlife at such an early age

### **Litter Control:**

The daily litter picking rota must place great stress on committee members but the positive results are there to be seen. On adjudication very little litter was noted. There was some at the Bring Centre and some at the 50 KMS sign on the Delvin approach to Athboy. Church View estate also had a little litter here and there. The "Butts Out Campaign" is an imaginative campaign as is the provision of the 1,000 personal ash trays. Congratulations on the Athboy as category winner of the 2006 Litter League

### **Waste Minimisation:**

This is a new category in the Tidy Towns Competition to encourage Tidy Towns Committees and the community that they support to get involved in projects that will reduce waste and encourage recycling. It is good to see that you are already engaged with these type of activities. The National School composting area is a worthy initiative in the effort to reduce waste. Continue to work with your local authority to ensure that you comply with all relevant regulations. It is also most encouraging to read that Race Against Waste literature has been delivered to every business in Athboy. Well done on a good start, and best of luck with your endeavours for next year.

### **Tidiness:**

Field gates can become a feature of the Athboy approach roads. It may be possible for you to get agreement from the relevant landowners that all damaged gates will be replaced, and that all gates will be painted to a common colour scheme. All sign poles should be painted to a common colour if you can get permission to do this. On the main street near Daly's pub a large yard with many loaded pallets was noted. Could this site be screened from public view?

### **Residential Areas:**

The estate bilingual signs are strongly welcomed as is the coordinated programme of name presentation for all estates as the Church View estate demonstrates. At Priory Gate the many young trees here provides a great investment in the future for this estate and in time the estate will be screened from view as these trees mature. The infill housing at Frankville Court fits well here and continues the street line. On Oldcastle road the stone houses are an important feature and a very nice curved arch was noted here also. At Turry Meadows the long iron railing here would blend in much better if painted a suitable shade of green. Butterfield Grove looked very smart with the high standard of landscaping setting off the houses to good effect. At Highfield very good but simple landscaping at the entrance is most effective. The trees, with their low timber surrounds with flowers and the good use of shrubs makes this a very attractive estate.

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

The new town signs are noted on approach roads and the road signs around the town (black / white) are so welcome. On Delvin approach long verge grass was noted opposite the Clinic. Good private verge presentation was a feature of the Oldcastle road but public verges were largely uncut. Further out this road the superbly landscaped area with the large chunky timber posts looked really well. Beyond the Heritage Garden on the Navan road the presentation was quite good. Not a lot of work appeared to have been done on the Hill of Ward road.

### **General Impression:**

Athboy is a very pleasant town that does not appear to have been over-run by inappropriate development and it should have a good future in the Tidy Towns Competition. Good luck with your 2007 projects.

