

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dunboyne** Ref: **540**
County: **Meath** Mark: **218**
Category: **E** Date(s): **11/07/2006**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2006 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Overall Development Approach | 50 | 35 |
| The Built Environment | 50 | 34 |
| Landscaping | 50 | 34 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 50 | 16 |
| Litter Control | 50 | 25 |
| Waste Minimisation | 20 | 0 |
| Tidiness | 30 | 12 |
| Residential Areas | 40 | 27 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 50 | 28 |
| General Impression | 10 | 7 |
| TOTAL MARK | 400 | 218 |

Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator would like to welcome Dunboyne to the 2006 Tidy Towns Competition. You seem to have an active committee of twelve people and the adjudicator notes that you are having difficulty recruiting new members. Unfortunately that is an issue that is impacting on many voluntary organisations in Ireland. The involvement of Dunboyne Tidy Towns Committee in the planning process is important, and is a Tidy Towns Committee role that is often forgotten.

The Built Environment:

Dunboyne has experienced tremendous development in recent times both in terms of housing estate development but especially in the development of the central town core area. It would appear that Dunboyne has accommodated this development in a planned way. Many of the new buildings tend to blend reasonably well with the older buildings in the town. New buildings have in general exercised a restraint in terms of retail signage at that is strongly welcomed. Premises that caught the eye include the beautiful Brady's premises, and the Dwyers premises. The colour scheme of Dwyers is unusual and strong. It is recommended that bright coloured plants be used in the window boxes here to lighten somewhat the front façade. The modern building with the Eurospar premises and the clock somehow does not appear to have the impact that one would expect. The Dunboyne Castle hotel development appears to have blended the old house with the new development in a successful manner.

Landscaping:

The work on the Dunboyne is now completed and the finished result was looking well on adjudication day. It will of course take a few years for the landscaping to mature. The colourful flower tubs on the Batterstown approach road provided an attractive introduction to Dunboyne from that side. The small green area in front of

the church could do with some extra attention and on adjudication day the grass needed to be trimmed. The superb trees at the church provide an excellent framework for the dignified church building behind. The central landscaped area in front of the Grotto was very well presented and the trees here look very well indeed and help to link the town with the surrounding countryside.

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 the wildlife potential of Dunboyne, 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, 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 the Dunboyne area. This need not be an expensive survey. Perhaps there is a knowledgeable person locally 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 to draft a straight forward Plan for Dunboyne 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 display panels, illustrating and explaining the wildlife in the Dunboyne area. This has been done very successfully in many towns and villages in Ireland.

Litter Control:

The Recycling Centre in the Business Park was really excellently presented. It is very important that your Committee would develop a litter control plan for your town / village. The issue of litter control is not an issue just for the Local Authority. All citizens and especially your Tidy Towns Committee have a key role to play. Your plan should include such issues as surveying the litter bins that you have in your community and their adequacy, clean up days and the role of your local schools. Has your Tidy Towns Committee considered organising a litter survey to establish the generators of litter in the Dunboyne area? It is most important that litter bins are placed in close proximity to the largest generators of litter. The regular emptying of a litter bins if of course essential. Some litter bins may need replacement and this should be discussed with your Local Authority Engineer. Do remember that there are many different designs for litter bins. Some designs are more suitable for some locations than others. A number of litter bins need to be power washed and painted or replaced. Litter was noted opposite the Park in the few car parking spaces across the road. Some litter was also noted in the raised area with shrubs at the Grotto.

Waste Minimisation:

This is a new category in the Tidy Towns Competition introduced in 2006. The purpose of this new category is to encourage Tidy Towns Committees and the community that they support to get involved in projects that will reduce waste and encourage recycling. Marks can be gained by Dunboyne for the promotion of best practice. This can include community guidance on methods of reducing waste, segregating litter during clean up events. You could also consider a partnership with local firms and businesses to encourage them to reduce unnecessary waste.

Tidiness:

Road works were under way on two approach roads on adjudication day. Weed growth where kerbs meet the road surface were noted in a number of areas in and around Dunboyne and this needs careful attention. The adjudicator is not in favour of the display of retail goods on the pavement as was noted in Dunboyne. Apart from looking rather untidy such displays can cause major difficulties for people in wheelchairs or the visually disabled. This included a number of 'A' advertising signs.

Residential Areas:

The housing estates in Dunboyne were generally well presented with good landscaping of trees and planted areas. However weed growth at kerbing was noted in an umber of estates. The grass areas at Plunkett Hall were exceptionally well presented, and Court Hill Drive also impressed. The large house beside the old School is impressive and the adjudicator wonders what the history is of this property as it appears to belong to the 'old' Dunboyne when it was just a village.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

On the Maynooth approach road the banks need to be trimmed. The old water tower dominates the Navan approach road and it would be great if this rather ugly structure could be painted a colour that would help to blend it into the landscape. On the Batterstown approach the Dunboyne sign needs to be washed. Other approach roads were presented to a higher standard. Do remember that weed growth at walls can develop quickly and looks quite untidy.

General Impression:

Dunboyne has some character and this is greatly amplified by the fine trees in the town centre and by the scale and 'fit' of new development. The adjudicator would like to wish you well with your plans for 2007.