

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Slane** Ref: **582**
County: **Meath** Mark: **245**
Category: **C** Date(s): **27/06/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	38
The Built Environment	50	35
Landscaping	50	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	18
Litter Control	50	25
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	16
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	245

Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator would like to welcome Slane to the 2006 Tidy Towns Competition. It is many years since your adjudicator has been in Slane and the first impression is how well the village appears to have resisted the damaging effects of new development afflicting so many villages of similar size in Ireland. There is indeed a great sense of history in this area and The Hill of Slane provides such a great overview of the setting for the village. Thank you for the comprehensive support documentation. The "Slane at the Crossroads in 2006" outline document is significant and it is great that you are going ahead to have the full study carried out. Your planning document for the period 2005 – 2008 is most interesting. However it is suggested that you indicate the projects to be actioned in each year, the estimated cost if any, and the associated project partners if any.

The Built Environment:

The signature characteristics of the built environment in Slane are those of stone buildings and stone walls. So many stone buildings caught the eye but those four building that relate to each other at the village cross-roads define much of the character of Slane. There are some more modern buildings that also sit well with the older built environment and those include the Breen's Pharmacy. The Credit Union building uses a pleasing mixture of stone and brick for the window detailing and this building fits well with the local built landscape. Your plans for the restoration of the 1920s terrace as a Heritage Centre are awaited with interest. On adjudication day pavements development work was taking place on the Hotel side of the road and this will tidy up this area considerably.

Landscaping:

Your planting programme of young Beech trees is indeed extensive as you appear to have planted about 600 trees and 300 Boxwood plants – this is a great investment in the future presentation of Slane. The

landscaping at the turn to the Hill of Slane road caught the eye and the area by the main road here is excellently presented. Smaller landscaped areas around the village contribute much to the provision of a contrast to the many grey stone buildings in the village. Your adjudicator agrees with the 2nd Round adjudicator in 2005 that further landscaping in the village needs to be developed as a foil to the grey of the stone buildings. Choose your plant and flower colours carefully with this in mind. As indicated in the 2005 Report further landscaping improvements are required on the Dublin approach road to the village. In some of the estates the standard of landscaping is high and reflects a great sense of community spirit.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The tree identification plaque planned for the Forest is a welcome project. However the presentation of the car park at Littlewood Forest was pretty grim. The litter here was quite appalling. Your work here on the one mile of forest pathways is a major undertaking and a major contribution to the community enjoyment of that amenity. The Wildflower Survey of Lynch's Field sounds very interesting and we would be pleased to read a copy for 2007. The Hill of Slane car park gives a great opportunity to understand the setting of Slane in the surrounding countryside. It is a pity that the car park was so terribly littered.

Litter Control:

Congratulations on your 2nd place performance in the Co. Meath Litter League. Your talks programme with the local schools is an excellent way of trying to get young children to develop an awareness of litter problems. The new litter bins have been noted and the Bring Centre. Litter on most approach problems is a serious issue and as indicated elsewhere in this Report the litter at the Hill of Slane car park and at Littlewood Forest car park was totally unacceptable. It is very important that your Committee would develop a litter control plan for Slane. 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 for Slane 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.

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 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 in the Slane area to encourage them to reduce unnecessary waste.

The extensive waste minimisation with the National School that has been in place for some years is really interesting and that you for supplying the details. Evidently energy conservation has been the target for 2005 and 2006.

Tidiness:

The project to underground cables is really welcomed and makes such a difference to the overall appearance of the village. On adjudication day Slane was generally reasonably tidy. A very untidy large open space opposite the Hotel needs to be screened from view pending redevelopment. The landscaping to the front of this space helps to improve the situation here to some extent.

Residential Areas:

The Best Kept Estate and Best Kept Private Garden Competitions are a proven way of getting even more people involved in your Tidy Towns programme each year. It is noted that you are planning to introduce a Best Window Box Competition in the future. The entrance to Castle Garden is most impressive. Nearby the estate at Wheatfield Park is really well set off by the excellent fine mature trees. It is a pity that so much litter was a feature of this estate presentation. The area inside the entrance at Castle Hill was very poorly presented, but the presentation greatly improved on up the hill. Well presented private houses were noted on the main road into Slane from Navan in the area of the old Church. The Church Lands estate has a rather unique approach to landscaping, but the very high sloping stone bank on the left is a little intimidating visually. At Abbey View excellent landscaping is the strong feature here and the high sloping bank on the left as you go towards the Hill of Slane road is impressive.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Much work has obviously gone into the appearance of approach roads though the Dublin road falls far below the standard of the other three roads. On some roads the fine stone walls sometimes topped with naturally occurring colourful plants are a strong feature. Some walls need minor repairs. On the Navan approach the grass verge on the left in the general area of Castle Garden estate is very poorly presented and a lot of verge

damage was noted here. Overall again this year the Navan approach is the best presented.

General Impression:

Slane is an impressive village and your new approach to developing a planned vision for the future of Slane is strongly welcomed. Good luck with the development of this new vision and we look forward to perhaps seeing the first small steps into the future vision for Slane next year.