

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Trim** Ref: **663**
County: **Meath** Mark: **251**
Category: **E** Date(s): **29/06/2006**
26/08/2006

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	39
The Built Environment	50	34
Landscaping	50	38
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	22
Litter Control	50	31
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33
General Impression	10	9
TOTAL MARK	400	251

Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator would like to welcome Trim to the 2006 Tidy Towns Competition. Having not been in Trim for a number of years the adjudicator was very pleased to see that the essential friendly character of the town has not been overtaken by intrusive development. The map that you provided for the adjudicator was exactly what is most helpful on adjudication day; clearly drawn with street names and key buildings that help to orientate the user. Your committee of eleven members and three times as many sub-committee members is extremely active and you are involved with all the relevant agencies. Thank you for the samples of media coverage that you have achieved and how you stay in touch with the Trim community. The development of the Young Tidy Towns Competition is strongly commended as an investment in future Tidy Towns Committees and environmental appreciation. Your adjudicator especially like your definition of Tidy Towns as "an integrated community working in harmony" and that is a great description of the concept. The Development Plan 2004 – 2008 is a well presented document and the first of its kind that also has the key information in Irish. The adjudicator would like to have read a little more of your plans for 2007 onwards. This Plan should now be revised to cover the period 2007 to 2011. Congratulations on your initiative on Pride of Place.

The Built Environment:

Trim is a very large town that still manages to retain the friendly village feel and some of the buildings in the town still have a village appearance and this is to the town's credit. For example the corrugated iron roofed cottage in Emmet Street must be an echo of Trim when it was just a small village. The smaller shops such as Lynchs in the same street reflect the same feeling. The new Town Centre was well underway on adjudication day and hopefully the external finishes agreed for this building will integrate well with the existing well established town fabric. The area of Trim Castle looked quite well on adjudication morning. The Courthouse building here is interesting in design terms. The new extension with the curved design elements reflect similar elements in the nearby Castle. The elevation to Castle Street in contrast continues the street line. The original

Courthouse building is in need of repainting and colour choice here must be considered carefully. The adjudicator is of the view that "restraint bravery" in colour choice is what is required here. The AIB building now looks a little dull and dated in the context of the colourful domestic houses to the left, and the bright Spar property to the right. The row of cottages in Castle Street are really quite beautiful and the adjudicator is delighted that you have taken this on as one of your key projects this year. Luxuriant weed and grass growth needs to be removed urgently from the chimney pot areas of a number of these cottages. Unfortunately there are still too many projecting signs in Trim. Has your committee considered running a campaign with the Local Authority to have some of these removed by the owners and replaced if necessary by surface mounted signs of appropriate design? Perhaps this could be supported by a financial incentive scheme? The handling of the derelict sites is appropriate. In summary Trim still retains a most attractive village feel in the context of the built environment and is stepping forward with care towards what new development may come in the future. This approach is commended.

Landscaping:

Great work has been done by your committee and others in the context of landscaping. The decision to replace flower beds by permanent landscaping is in the view of this adjudicator a correct strategy, and this is especially effective at the Navan road / Navan Gate junction with the fine mature trees forming a spectacular backdrop for your permanent planting. Hanging baskets, window boxes and the larger displays throughout Trim bring a good sense of colour into the built environment, at the same time reflecting the nearby countryside. The Linear Park near Mill Lane is beautifully presented as are the flower beds at Watergate Street Bridge. Excellent landscaping was again noted on the roundabout near Pratt Park. By St. Patrick's Church the use of the light standards for hanging baskets is effective. Trim appears to have got the balance right between too many hanging baskets and window boxes that might detract from the built environment, and too few. Well done for this!

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

We would be very interested to see a copy of the Wildlife Audit and you might keep this in mind for 2007. Hopefully you will now be able to prepare a Wildlife Plan for Trim that will encourage further wildlife into the town area and that will help you to cater for the needs of such wildlife. Hopefully additional wildlife information panels will follow from this. The Porch Fields plans sound really interesting.

Litter Control:

Congratulations on doing so well for so long in the IBAL programme. Your litter control plans appear to be working excellently and we would be interested to see the details of your strategy in this context. Some litter was noted on the left on the Ballivor approach and the Bring Centre opposite the Mill Lane area was extremely poorly presented with a lot of graffiti evident. Some litter was also noted in the same area on the grassy areas above the river and close to the Playground. At Eldergrove estate some further litter was evident. The Recycling Centre is well laid out and was neat and tidy on the morning of the visit and appears to be well managed.

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 Trim 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. The Trim Recycling Centre and the various Residents Associations that are involved in composting are most positive steps in waste minimisation, as is the schools awareness programme. The adjudicator would like to congratulate St. Mary's National School on the Green Flag status for 2005 which hopefully they have retained in 2006.

Tidiness:

On adjudication day Trim was quite tidy and just a few small untidy areas were noted. It is appreciated by the adjudicator that the major town centre development now under way by its nature will bring some element of untidiness. Can you try and see if the Local Authority to repaint the poles used for Speed Limit Signs and other sign poles in Trim.

Residential Areas:

Quite a number of the estates in Trim were visited and the overall impression is one of great community spirit and cooperation to make their own estate a better place. The Inter Estate Anti-Litter League is obviously playing a key role in this. On the Ballivor approach road the cottages on the right hand side may have some potential for a coordinated paint scheme. Mill Lane is a really beautiful area and is more like a small village within a town and there is a lovely feeling here of a close community. The white houses with green detailing

and the colourful window boxes make this a great area. The Sarsfield Avenue area has some fine mature trees and good landscaping. At Eldergrove some timber post and rail fencing needs to be painted. Good road alignment in Priory Grove has given this small estate a great sense of a close community.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The bilingual street signs in Trim are excellent and this is an example to many other towns in the county. The approach roads are generally very well presented with fine grass verges and either established mature trees or recently planted new trees such as seen on the Athboy approach by the white long pebble dashed wall. On the Dunderry approach road the long timber post and rail fencing leading to the main road would be greatly enhanced if painted in matt black. In summary approach road presentation reflects great credit on your committee and many helping agencies and individuals.

General Impression:

It has been a great pleasure to visit Trim and appreciate the great work that has been done in the past few years. Let us hope that in the future major development does not try to take the heart out of Trim, and that it will be accommodated in a way that enhances what you already have in terms of the built environment and friendly atmosphere.

Second Round Adjudication:

Trim continues to retain the high standards that gained such great recognition in past competitions. At the second round adjudication the landscape aspects of the town were looking particularly well now benefiting from the maturity of late summer. The formula of good tree planting, well tended grass verges and good walls on approach roads provides a very attractive entrance. New estates such as at Victorine Abbey and Rochford Manor will need to be well landscaped to help their incorporation into the surrounds. There is additional scope for tree planting in the green areas of Griffin Park and surrounding areas. Both the Norman Pratt and the Our Lady of Trim Parks were looking very well. Work at the Castle grounds and adjacent roadside is causing some temporary disruption, otherwise the formula of well cared for grass surround is very effective in emphasizing the featured Castle. Some attention is needed to the weeds at the base of the Column and the removal of the overhead wires at this point would help in the presentation of this monument. The unsightly premises beside the Meath County Council and Trim Town Council offices premises hopefully will be resolved soon. The riverside areas and bridges are well presented and provide good opportunity for the riverside appreciation. The hospital entrance and surrounds look well. The use of protruding shop signs through the streets might be reviewed at this stage to consider their value. Street name plates look particularly well and are well and consistently displayed throughout the town.