

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Roscommon** Ref: **681**
County: **Roscommon** Mark: **242**
Category: **D** Date(s): **03/07/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	43
The Built Environment	50	32
Landscaping	50	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	24
Litter Control	50	29
Waste Minimisation	20	11
Tidiness	30	11
Residential Areas	40	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	28
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	242

Overall Development Approach:

The very comprehensive collection of information supplied with the entry form gave an in depth understanding of the work of the committee. The liaison with public, business and residents sectors within the town are all important aspects of the work. As towns grow the work of a committee takes on different roles. Lobbying to succeed with various projects becomes a relevant activity. Keeping a watchful eye on planning applications is also important as so many developments take place that could have a bearing on the integrity of the core values of the town. Tremendous changes have taken place in and around the town and so far the town centre has retained its identity very well. Some very good development work has taken place and the structure of the Circular road has facilitated an easing of traffic reaching the various outward roads.

The Built Environment:

The several landmark buildings are well presented. The Courthouse, Garda station and Traveler development Group Church building all form an interesting unit. The steamroller at the Courthouse car park is interesting but one wonders at the significance of this in its current location. At the Square the surrounding buildings are impressive and this area forms an important identity for the town. The old castle is a magnificent landmark for Roscommon and the presentation of this amid such a beautiful setting is a gem. The small museum and Gleasons both add interesting character to the square. There are a number of premises on the town streets especially in the Caste street and Goff Street areas that would benefit from attention to presentation and the premises on the corner of Church Street entering the Main Street hopefully will find a solution soon. The hospital and Health boards premises looks very well and the Famine sculpture and its well chosen surrounds is a fine feature. The Business Park buildings is well positioned, this by the nature of the many organisation housed within has a variety of signage. The GRO offices and surrounds are very impressive. As is the nearby school and, of course, the Abbey school. The Railway station has well presented platforms and waiting room facilities. Two unsightly petrol filling stations at various points both of which are closed hopefully will get a new

lease of life soon. Work of restoration of the gate lodge at the Mote is good. the new development within the town of Cheeryside Business centre was noted and the centre of new shop units on the opposite side of the street which seems to be unnamed yet except for the sign for a solicitors offices. There is enormous building construction continuing in the Roscommon town business areas on the approach roads and on the Circular road itself.

Landscaping:

The Lough na Neanne town park is a magnificent feature in the town and congratulations to all that have any involvement in this project. This park has marvelous design, sets off the castle to perfection and contains a wonderful collection of trees, water feature, bird watching facilities and is ideal for leisure. This park alone contributes to tree planting of the town significantly. Tree planting on the Circular road has matured very well over the years and is now having a very good impact on the roadside – this is set off very well by the well kept grass strip beneath the trees. The landscaping of business premises on each of the approach roads is so important and one can see from the Circular road how such landscaping, particularly in the form of tree planting, helps to conceal and soften the vast expanses of business and industrial buildings and their accompanying car parks. The IDA centre was particularly noted in respect of landscape – a rough count of 250 identical semi mature Lime trees form impressive entrances to this sight and these together with the under planting and the lamp standards form a dramatic approach to the buildings. The Abbey school and the Abbey Hotel both contribute well to the landscape with their fine plantings around their buildings. Many individual residences also play a very significant part by caring for the road frontage of their gardens and thereby contribute to the overall landscape appearance of the town and its surrounds.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Town park as mentioned above makes a very significant contribution with the lake and the bird watching facility. This contribution will increase as the trees mature and provide more cover. The Mote area is a lovely acquisition and provides such a fine wildlife facility so close to the town centre. All forms of encouragement of people to gain a greater understanding of their natural environment are helpful and concentration on these aspects is very worthwhile. Schools can avail of the facilities to make investigation projects and again bring home the value of an interest in their environment.

Litter Control:

Working with the business community, the council and the public all are important contributions to furthering the general standards of litter prevention and elimination. There are good standards of cleanliness in the town. Some litter was noted along some streets, in Jail lane and the laneway to the side of the Traveler Development Church building was badly littered and weedy. Schools involvement is all important too and your work in this respect is positive. Care is needed especially surrounding petrol filling stations which have become sources of take out food and drink.

Waste Minimisation:

The work of the committee in encouraging people to use the civic amenity recycling unit is very positive. It is noted that when rubbish is collected by the committee members that segregation of the materials is done - a time consuming process but very worthy. The recycling campaign weekend, charity shop, and the part played by the schools in the Green Flag all help towards this aim.

This aspect of the competition is about concentrating both on the need to choose materials and methods that avoid producing waste and to consider environmentally friendly ways of dealing with the waste that is generated. A campaign of awareness with both homeowners and business people needs to be started to give an understanding of the importance of waste management and recycling. Compost heaps can be made for green materials, avoidance of using materials that do not degrade easily and separation of the various materials so that they can be recycled.

Tidiness:

There is a good level of tidiness through the centre of the town. With all the building developments taking place in the surrounds – tidiness does not lie easily with building construction in progress. The importance of ensuring that all sites are well finished with appropriate landscaping, boundary structure and reinstatement of surrounds cannot be emphasised enough and a watchful eye should be kept to lobby for this if necessary. This applies to new housing estates as well. The under grounding of cables that has taken place is very welcome and makes a great difference – hopefully this will be extended to more streets of the town.

Residential Areas:

The large numbers of housing estates that have been developed over the past few years are looking well. Attention to the entrance areas and open spaces is all important in the presentation of these estates. Extra tree planting can usually be accommodated and this would be very helpful as over time trees can make a

very strong impact on estates and create an identity for the estate. Where possible even a small number of large growing trees such as oak, sycamore, chestnut, ash and lime and beech should be considered as a way of leaving a significant legacy to future generations as the life span of these trees far outstrips the human life cycle and the beauty of even a single mature tree surpasses any number of short term garden/city small trees.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The streets of the town are well marked and the lack of car parking payment is unusual and welcome in such a large town. The clutter of cars parked is not the most attractive sight in the square and at some stage excluding cars here, if extra car parks were provided elsewhere, would create a lovely pedestrian area in the square. The numbers of lanes around the town are interesting such as Harrisons, Chapel, Time and Jail lanes. Jail lane is particularly well treated with the plantings and paving and represents a great initiative. The Circular road and main exits roads form a good network and the roundabouts look very well with their tree planting and others with trees/shrubs/roses plantations.

General Impression:

Very good work has been done in Roscommon and there is an enormous building programme currently in progress. All of this changes the nature of the town. The retention of the central core of the town is all important as is the management of traffic. The Town Park and the Mote Park are great assets and the contribution made by individuals is acknowledged.