

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Grangebellow** Ref: **1386**
County: **Louth** Mark: **192**
Category: **A** Date(s): **19/07/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	25
The Built Environment	50	20
Landscaping	50	20
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	15
Litter Control	50	25
Waste Minimisation	20	5
Tidiness	30	20
Residential Areas	40	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	192

Overall Development Approach:

Grangebellow was entered as part of the drive by SuperValu to work with communities to approve the environmental standards of their areas through participation in the National TidyTowns Competition. Areas were entered on the basis that they fall within the catchment area of the nearest SuperValu store and this 'baseline assessment' is intended to provide a basis on which progress could be made over the coming years through partnership with residents, businesses and local agencies. As such it should not be interpreted as a critique of the area but rather an opportunity for everybody to work together to make their hometown a better place to work, live and visit. As part of SuperValu's strategic approach to sustainable development in the area, a nominal mark has been given to reflect this. Further marks will be awarded in future years where more tangible TidyTowns structures are developed and local environmental plans prepared and implemented.

The Built Environment:

This small village is situated at a cross-roads. The corners of the cross-roads each have quite distinctive buildings, some old and of heritage value. Doherty's pub looks very well with a tasteful outdoor area and hanging baskets. The white-washed walls give a particularly rural charm to the town. The 'Dunleer Car Dismantler/Cassidy Plant Sales' premises takes away from this somewhat – painting their wall would greatly increase the overall appearance.

Landscaping:

The village has some beautiful old specimen beech and oak trees which add greatly to the character of the town. Landscaping in rural areas such as this depend largely on natural features, particularly hedgerows, and so their correct management is important. This means only cutting back a appropriate times and allowing hedges to grow up, so that some trees can grow to maturity.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The principle wildlife feature of the town is its surrounding network of hedgerows. These are vital wildlife habitats, supporting a range of plants and animals. They should be correctly maintained, particularly in relation to cutting, which should only take place from October to February.

Litter Control:

The village was largely litter free of the day, however there was a small amount of litter in the pub car park.

Waste Minimisation:

Without details of ongoing community projects, it was difficult to assess the extent of progress being made under this category and I would look forward to seeing whether progress has in fact been made on future assessments. However taking into account the existing council facilities and SuperValu's own commitment in this area, I believe a nominal mark is appropriate for this year. There are however plenty of ways in which local communities can assist in tackling this growing problem and many useful tips are contained in the Race Against Waste community booklet available from the TidyTowns Unit in the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Tidiness:

The town is largely tidy and uncluttered. The areas beside Doherty's pub however looks abandoned, although it may be that the site is being cleared for a construction project.

Residential Areas:

While there are no large residential areas in Grangebellew, there are some houses along each approach road and they are all well maintained with nice gardens.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Some signage on the approach roads would do much to enhance the town's identity. There is currently nothing in the town to identify it. The roads leading into and away from the town however are scenic and make for a pleasant drive.

General Impression:

The village is very small, but the pub in particular lends it a certain cosy feeling which is very attractive. I look forward to visiting again.