

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Monasterboice** Ref: **1385**
County: **Louth** Mark: **196**
Category: **A** Date(s): **17/07/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	25
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	20
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20
Litter Control	50	25
Waste Minimisation	20	5
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	6
TOTAL MARK	400	196

Overall Development Approach:

This area 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:

Monasterboice is a small settlement leading to the famous ancient monastic settlement. The round tower is excellently preserved and information panels provide a good level of detail about this fantastic heritage site. The car park is clean with bins and picnic tables. The toilets were also clean, with soap and a working hand dryer! The houses in the residential part are well presented although some gardens lack colour.

Landscaping:

Landscaping around the monastic ruins is of a natural form, i.e. mature native trees that form old hedgerows. The car park has an appropriate level of shrubbery. The town itself does not have much scope for landscaping as it there are no civic or amenity areas. In these instances, landscaping consists of natural features such as trees and hedgerows. These should be correctly maintained, with hedgerows only being cut back during winter months (October - February).

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The greatest wildlife feature around Monasterboice is its hedgerows. These are vital habitats for a range of plants and animals. Perhaps the town could consult with Louth county council regarding their management – particularly when it comes to cutting them back (this should only happen from October – February).

Litter Control:

There was a small amount of litter around the toilets of the car park but everywhere else was litter free.

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 older sign posts for the monastic site are hard to read due to weathering. However, they have a certain heritage value, so perhaps they could be touched up to make them more legible.

Residential Areas:

Monasterboice is not a town and so does not have residential areas as such. Of the existing houses some gardens are well maintained while others could be improved.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach roads to Monasterboice have some impressive tree lines, particularly from Tinure. Some welcome signs would greatly add to the town's identity.

General Impression:

The monastic ruins are very impressive and worthy of their status as national monuments. A steady stream of tourists were visiting on the day of inspection and it was good to see the car park well maintained and in particular a clean and functioning bathroom. The residential part could do more to give itself identity with improved signage.