

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dunshaughlin** Ref: **577**
County: **Meath** Mark: **233**
Category: **E** Date(s): **01/07/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	33
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	24
Litter Control	50	29
Waste Minimisation	20	11
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	27
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	233

Overall Development Approach:

Congratulations to the Dunshaughlin TidyTowns Group for participating in the TidyTowns Competition 2008. Thank you for your submission and for your map which was most helpful in guiding the adjudicator round the town. It is a pity that you did not include a 3-5 year plan. If you do not have one the exercise of compiling such a plan would enable you to set immediate and medium term targets for yourselves, would help you decide which local bodies and agencies would assist you with particular projects. As all projects need funding you would set down in your plan how you propose to fund these various projects. As well as that there are marks for the presentation of a 3-5 Year Plan. It is clear that you are a busy committee. You engage with local bodies and have the support of businesses in your community. In what way do you liaise with Meath County Council? You mention that you are negotiating funding for heritage plans later in your submission. In this section mention your encouragement to estates to enter the Pride of Place Competition. It is a great achievement for your schools that they have achieved Green Flag Status. Thank you for including the school letter, a sign of hope for the planet that these kids are being moulded in a manner that cares for our environment.

The Built Environment:

For this adjudicator it is not a building that is the highlight of the built environment in Dunshaughlin but a park. There is much development happening in the town. An existing townscape is being married to the needs of the modern age. Old and new are being blended. The new development in Chantelle and Supervalu is modern and sassy. But the older buildings hold their ground. Your fine modern Church looks well but the wall needs a power hosing. The library, the fire station, the Garda barracks, all of the schools...very good. Many of the shop fronts bring traditional joy as in O'Briens and the Sibín. The financial institutions are well housed though the AIB could spend a few bob on refreshing its front. Meath County Council offices look very well and nicely landscaped. But the pride and joy is the amenity area, hidden away from the action with facilities for

everybody. As the trees mature they will bring a further feature for the eye to feast on as children play, teenagers lounge about, the older citizens take a walk and dogs know their place.

Landscaping:

No doubt you have not been idle since last year.

You certainly do attempt to bring colour to the main street through floral displays. There are lovely landscaping touches throughout with flowerbeds and shrubberies. At times there is need for ongoing maintenance. Screening is used to great effect in places by well chosen landscaping. The parish pump, which served your ancestors with non-toxic water, deserves a general make over. It seems as if this is the original site for the pump, something rarely the case nowadays. One imagines the people gathering round with their buckets at this place discussing the affairs of the day. The other relicts of old dacency are imaginative glimpses of your past and well presented and contribute to the heritage image you wish to brand for Dunshaughlin. With town evolving as it is new opportunities for landscaping will no doubt be a welcome challenge for you committee.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It is uplifting to find a group that considers wildlife in the context of their landscaping schemes. All the measures mentioned in your submission are praiseworthy. There may be people in your community who have an informed interest in wildlife and who would be willing to assist you with this section of the competition

Litter Control:

You are doing commendable work in this section but there is litter despite the presence of bins. One could not pin the litter on any age group but one suspects that some of it is the deposit of passing traffic. Maybe you need strong statements on Litter Awareness on the approach roads. You work hard on cleaning up. The fact that three schools have the Green Flag Status is a litter reduction initiative. Reducing the of litter mountain needs to be an integral part of your litter strategy and might reduce the time spent cleaning up. Target passing traffic.

Waste Minimisation:

Well done on any influence you had in motivating the schools to gain Green Flag Status. The ideas these young people encounter and the skills they develop will be brought home to the generations at home and will help in developing composting, reusing, recycling, reducing mentalities. Encouraging the children to segregate waste on litter collection is good practice also. In what ways do you encourage the business community to recycle and segregate and what facilities are there to encourage these practices? The Bring Bank area is well maintained and is being used. Some members of your group might study the recommendations in the booklet 'Race Against Waste'. It would stimulate further waste minimisation projects.

Tidiness:

Well done on your activities in this section also. Get onto the Meath County Council with regard to the various approach roads to town. Mention the signposting to the also as many signposts need an uplift. As traffic is an element in this section, now is the opportunity to say well done on the traffic calming measures that have been put in place. Has any opportunity to rid the skyline of all cables arisen?

Residential Areas:

In general Dunshaughlin can boast of beautiful houses and of attractive housing estates. There are fine private houses on the approach roads to town. These are vibrant, colourful residences with carefully designed landscaping at the front and a sense of responsibility to the stretch of road outside their houses. It is clear from your submission that your committee is doing its utmost to create a sense of pride through involvement in the Pride of Place competition. Well done. The sense of pride in the estates visited was noticeable, not only in the design and the general landscaping, but also in the maintenance and upkeep of the estates and in the colour that individuals bring to their avenues. It is difficult to understand why somebody would dump the grass cuttings to one side creating an eyesore having spent time and energy maintaining the open space but that was the case in two estates. The Corporation Development was a disappointment. While the entrance is attractive the wild piece of ground looks and is neglected. Many of the fine open spaces need mowing with some of the open space near Lagore Crescent left to grow wild. A pity.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

You mention the constant toil of daily chores that you perform and were it not for your efforts the appearance of Dunshaughlin would deteriorate. What you now need is the full cooperation and commitment of Meath County Council to maintain the road verges on all approach roads. Were it not for the efforts of residents to maintain their house fronts it appears as if very little would be done to define the approaches to Dunshaughlin and to maintain an acceptable appearance. Fine landscaping, for instance, on the Dublin Road, is diminished by the prevailing standards around it. Hedges need to be trimmed in places as at the Gaelscoil, at the appropriate times, in order to keep up appearances.

General Impression:

A most enjoyable visit despite the remorseless traffic but the visit to the town park raised the spirits and freed one from the traffic torment. It is possible to enjoy your town even if there is a rush on the street. Dunshaughlin is a town of two appearances, one very good and the other, well not so good. What would the town be like were it not for you? There is great credit due to your committee for involving yourselves in the shaping of this evolving town.