

# Tidy Towns Competition 2008

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Athy** Ref: **354**  
County: **Kildare** Mark: **253**  
Category: **E** Date(s): **09/07/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	38
The Built Environment	50	37
Landscaping	50	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	26
Litter Control	50	35
Waste Minimisation	20	7
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>253</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Athy is particularly welcomed to the competition this year –for this its 10th anniversary entry. Thank you for the comprehensively completed entry form and especially the fine professional plans you have produced covering 2008-2013. This is a well thought out, structured approach to your tasks and objectives and we sincerely hope it will receive the response from both the civic authorities and public which it richly deserves. Thank you also for the photographs, school newsletter and the very fine booklet, 'Athy Pride of Place'. Your 15 members have been very busy and the results are certainly paying fruit. Athy is developing rapidly even though many of the new estates are not immediately apparent to the passing motorist. One that is, is the major new build overlooking the Canal Harbour. This is being well presented. Indeed the River and Canal are strong and important attributes. The view from Stranhope Street of the river with the church in the background is splendid. There are very large industrial plants on the Kilkenny Road, it is not clear if all are continuing in operation.

### **The Built Environment:**

The street structure in Athy is quite narrow and many of the building cannot be fully appreciated because of their confined location. The White Castle and Cromoboo Bridge is a delight while St. Michael's Church of Ireland which closes the view splendidly on the road from the Peoples Park. The fine new hotel behind St. Michael's Catholic Church is a definite addition to the town while the Canal Harbour and 18th century Bridge is a pleasant setting. The Railway Building is a delight as are the large buildings and the shops around Emily Square. The Mrodel School and the house immediately beside it are a delightful memory of previous times while the new modern St. Dominic's Church is a bold statement of current architecture. The Heritage Centre and Court House are fine buildings which are well presented. The Old World Toilet Building had its own charm. The treatment and presentation of St. Michael's Graveyard and the remains of the Abbey there are important. Additional work around the entrance is necessary to highlight their significance.

### **Landscaping:**

The People's Park and the Town's Park are two important, sizeable areas well presented. Some of the entrances to the People's Park need upgrading. The entrance to the GAA, Rugby and Tennis Club does not reflect creditably on these organisations. Individually or collectively they should insure that the entrance area and approach road is upgraded. The perfusion of flower baskets and timber planters throughout the town is of a very high order and complements to all who have assisted in this presentation. The Railway Station itself is very well presented but the road approach to it needs some attention. We welcome very much the adopt a tree concept of the schools. This is an excellent initiative and we look forward to the fruits of it being on display in the streets in years to come.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

Many plans and proposals are being discussed and finalised and we look forward to the fruits of them in due course. The planting at St. Michael's Cemetery is a practical improvement which is welcomed. The Ego-Park ideas are applauded and their presence on the ground is eagerly awaited. Congratulations to the school children on the successful production of the Grand Canal Habitat Surrey. Additional opportunities for small scale nature reserves could be identified; the two sizeable parks of course but also within the grounds of the Model School and the other schools small areas could be set aside. Discuss the options with a local wildlife or bird life enthusiast or member of BirdWatch Ireland to advance matters.

### **Litter Control:**

Many new bins were noted in the town and these are certainly applauded. There was a material falling from grace around the Swimming Pool in particular. Emily Square and the Back Square had a good supply of litter bins of sensible and useful design. But the Back Square was sadly quite litter strewn.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

The recycling units in SuperValu Supermarket are very well presented and were being respected. The coin operated compacter for house hold waste located in the garage on the Naas Road outside the Civil facility is a useful addition and we hope it will be used considerably. Congratulated to Scoil Phadraig Naofa on securing their Green Flag Status. The concept of the energy free day within the school was interesting and will be watched with interest.

### **Tidiness:**

The power washing of walls and their repainting is commendable and you are encouraged to continue this programme. Working with the Chambers of Commerce on the 'Best Kept Business Award' is an excellent initiative. The Library and the Court House were very well presented. The idea of creating a Graffiti Tolerance Area at the Swimming Pool area is novel and we will be interested in the outcome. The most interesting overhanging iron and metal structure at the Harbour is very evocative of the canal era and deserves better presentation.

### **Residential Areas:**

A substantial number of new houses have been built along the Kilkenny Road and there are sizeable estates here also. The well established estates on Stanhope Street and further out are enhanced by street planting of mature trees. Your idea in the five year plan to have competition between the estates is welcomed as this has proved very beneficial in other centres in raising the standard of presentation of estates by capturing the imagination and securing the engagement of residents groups.

### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

The transit traffic volumes as already indicated are very intensive and accordingly intrusive in Athy. Broadly speaking your road signs were well presented, neat and not obscured by vegetation. The flowerbeds and trees on the Kilkenny Road in particular looked very well while the wide margins on the Dublin Road approach were attractive. Attention is directed to the clutter of signs at the corner on the Dublin approach to the town. The road surface at the Harbour does need attention.

### **General Impression:**

Athy has a splendid display of public buildings, open spaces and with the Canal and River an interesting range of vistas and facilities. Your committee has approached this task in a professional structured focused manner which augers well for your future in this competition.

All involved in this entry are applauded for their efforts and wished well in 2009.

