

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ardfield** Ref: **102**
County: **Cork(West)** Mark: **264**
Category: **A** Date(s): **25/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	38
The Built Environment	50	33
Landscaping	50	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	18
Litter Control	50	38
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	19
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	34
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	264

Overall Development Approach:

Congratulations to the Ardfield Tidy Towns Committee for participating in the Tidy Towns Competition 2009. Thank you for your submission and for your map. While the map you presented was of interest, a hand drawn sketch of the village which highlights the places you regard as being most important for the Tidy Towns Competition could have been of greater assistance to the adjudicator. It is a pity that you did not include a 3-5 year plan. If you have not already put such a plan together, the exercise of compiling the 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 your various projects, would focus your attention on sources of funding for projects. It must be of benefit to your work that you engage with various bodies. In what ways do you benefit from your dealings with the GAA and the Cork County Council? Well done on being in contact with the school. One hopes that any criticism this year will be constructive.

The Built Environment:

Ardfield presents itself as being very much the rural village but spread-eagled by the ribbon development along the road. The strong colours of the buildings at the heart of the village bring vibrancy to their surroundings. The Church and cemetery occupy a pivotal position in the villagescape. Both are beautifully presented. The shed looks well though the adjudicator did not understand the significance of the fish murals but the purple is exciting. There are fine pillars on the gate across the road but the appearance of the gate itself detracts from the surrounding image. As farm gates are part of the village environs you might think of a themed upgrading programme to take place over a number of years. The GAA and Tennis Courts are both magnificent facilities. The work at the GAA entrance is still in progress and therefore does not look at it's best just yet. The seating at the Tennis Courts reminds one of the thrills of Wimbledon and encourages one to stay awhile and enjoy. The National School of 1882 seems to have survived many changes. Part of its charm are

the vestiges of wall from previous eras. The fencing off of the oil tank is so appropriate for a school with the 'peann luaidhe' posts bringing colour and imagination to their corner. One's attention was also drawn to the stone building with the church windows. One would love to know what the story is with this building. O'Mahony's, Post Office, Beer Garden all add to the unique Ardfield experience.

Landscaping:

There are attractive landscaping features throughout Ardfield which show that the landscaping work has been ongoing for many years: the pump and water trough; the amenity area with the different levels creating interest; the information boards here are not only worthwhile to the passer-by but the community board acts as a village focal point, the beds of dwarf roses add much colour and exemplify the thought and care of the community; the barrels at the Church entrance; the boat promises more in the future; the memorial to Noel Redding; the display of the gun from 1917 and, even the maintenance of the telephone kiosk. All combine to create a sense of pride in past and present. Make sure that the graded shrubbery does not become overgrown and lose its appeal.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

You are entitled to great credit due to your vigilance in assisting with the survival of the grove of trees. Good too that you are conscious of the welfare of birds and bees when planning your landscaping. Make sure that you research the types of bird houses that would suit the birdlife of Ardfield before constructing bird boxes. Have you carried out a survey of the birds that visit Ardfield? What is being done by you illustrates your concern for the biodiversity of the area.

Litter Control:

Having such a long stretch of a busy road does add to the burden of litter collection. Yet there is very little litter evident in Ardfield. Your influence at the school and your weekly collection are proving worthwhile. You do not mention a Fás worker this year. Have you lost this assistance? The emphasis in the litter section is not just on collecting and organising clean-ups. These are important but creating awareness of litter reduction is equally important. As a next step in your fight against litter, make reduction your key ambition.

Waste Minimisation:

It is good that you are conscious of recycling and its importance. You could encourage the school to try to achieve Green Flag Status. The pupils would learn much about recycling, reusing, reducing and composting. They would be involved in waste minimisation projects and would bring their new found skills, their new found knowledge and their new found enthusiasm home to the generations at home. Remember that the emphasis in this section is on minimising waste in your community.

Tidiness:

The footpaths mentioned in your submission certainly help to create a defined, finished appearance to the surroundings as well as improving safety. Parking in the area of the cemetery seems adequate, an important traffic calming feature. There are no cables to be seen from the pump and the clear skyline accentuates the attractive appearance of the lamps. Unoccupied buildings are a challenge.

Residential Areas:

The housing standards in Ardfield are high. The houses are of various design and all enhance their surroundings with gardens, walls or hedges. The An t-Ard estate still needs time to bed into its surroundings. The estate of three houses is more developed and has a modern appearance.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The appearance of the long stretch of road through Ardfield is maintained so as to compliment the natural surroundings. On all roads the furze, fuchsia and the montbrieta seem to grow naturally in their environment. The name stones for Ardfield, and the landscaping about them, send out a message of pride in 'where we live'. Many of the roads now are made more interesting because of the house building.

General Impression:

Ardfield consists of two clusters of village activity joined by a long road. Despite changes to its appearance in recent years Ardfield has managed to retain its authentic village atmosphere. One can understand why

there has been demand for housing in this village. There is space but there is beauty all about also. Hopefully the new arrivals to the village will invigorate the social life of Ardfield, will train teams at the GAA grounds and will eat strawberries and cream in the tennis courts. Well done.