

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Attanagh** Ref: **303**  
County: **Laois** Mark: **222**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **22/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	24
The Built Environment	50	26
Landscaping	50	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	17
Litter Control	50	38
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	14
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>222</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

The members of the committee have set themselves an enormous task in attempting to maintain an area much more extensive than most villages, though with a smaller population; and especially in trying to keep burgeoning undergrowth at bay and lengthy walls in reasonably good condition. It is a measure of their interest and determination that so many people, comparatively speaking, are involved - some committees only number three!. Candidly, there has been success where dwellings are immediately involved but there are spaces where, with the best will in the world, there is no remarkable tidiness, nor could that be expected. To avoid confusion, please write the appropriate response in the section provided, for example 'planting beech hedge' should not appear under 'buildings'. Thank you for your excellent map, which is clear and informative. Your resilience and dedication is greatly admired.

### **The Built Environment:**

St Brigid's Church is the most prominent, handsome and interesting building in the neighbourhood; it is an immense pity that it is also derelict. Its landmark spire should be preserved but, as the committee knows well, that is easier said than done; it is assumed that you have already sought help from the Representative Church Body and the Heritage Trust. The Corn Mill is also an unfortunate sight though valiant efforts have been made to reinstate it and the yellow paintwork is a brilliant idea. The factory is neat and tidy. The Fly Fishing Museum is very well presented, with its fine sculpture and well kept curtilages. A pity the complete railway arch has not been preserved as it could have been an even more significant feature for landscaping – as had been done at Mountmellick. (This adjudicator can just remember travelling on the railway that passed through Attanagh.) The Post Office and Shop are nicely presented.

**Landscaping:**

There is plenty of attractive wayside planting and bright floral tubs stretching far beyond where they might be reasonably expected. The floral tub brightens up the old pump amid its freshly painted walls, though these could in fact do with another coat; comparatively recent landscaping was seen at the pumping station. The magnificent beech hedges are a strong feature of the village. Some gardening work was seen to have been in progress in the church grounds; it may be preferable to allow the paths to grass over and to keep the whole area mowed rather than try to poison weeds on paths which then take on a bedraggled look. The tightly mown verges alongside the roads help to create a cared-for look.

**Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The beech hedge of course comes under this heading as well because it affords shelter to wild life. It was not clear which were the newly planted trees but enough to know that you are constantly replenishing the stock, one of the most important activities under this heading.

**Litter Control:**

Attanagh was remarkably free of disposable litter on adjudication day. It is good to read that you organise litter-picking evenings: but have you identified who actually drops the litter? Is it passing motorists?

**Waste Minimisation:**

It is good to know that you have the support of the LCC in supplying bins. Do the residents have to take much of their waste material to somewhere like Durrow for recycling?

**Tidiness:**

Unfortunately two conspicuously derelict houses were seen. As mentioned above, the church grounds are not entirely tidy though much work has been done in an admirable effort to make them so. Spraying for weeds has paid off along roadsides but in some quarters the sheer bulk of weed in ditches has clearly been daunting. Much effective work had been done in cleaning stone walls. Whitewashing will be needed behind the pump and on the buildings on either side of the Post Office before next year.

**Residential Areas:**

The diversity of house types is one of the more attractive features of Attanagh and the way they all have individually planned gardens. All the inhabited houses were proudly presented.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Surfacing was seen to be reasonably good. Nice old kerb stones were noticed. As mentioned above, the village is rich in stone and most of the walls are very creditably kept up, cleaned and repaired where necessary.

**General Impression:**

It is no pleasure to write negative comments where so much really good work has been put in by so many people, but the adjudicators are bound to report what they find. One thing is plain, and that is that the people of Attanagh may take pride in what they do which is far beyond what might be expected in such a small community. It is hoped that in providing such decent and pleasant surroundings you are achieving satisfaction for a public job well done.