

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ardaghey** Ref: **529**
County: **Monaghan** Mark: **250**
Category: **A** Date(s): **05/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	40
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	26
Litter Control	50	39
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	16
Residential Areas	40	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	29
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	250

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the comprehensive submission plus the supplemental material that substantiates the excellent work that you, as a committee, have undertaken to bring the Village to the level it has achieved, thus far in the Tidy Towns Competition. The supplied work plan for the future was practical and more importantly realisable within the timescales outlined. The excellent sketch map made it easier to identify areas in this idyllic location nestled in the Monaghan country side, away from the hustle and bustle. It is not possible to comment in detail on all issues in this overall adjudication report, suffice to say that in the interaction that you have with statutory bodies, agencies and the local community has paid rich dividends. The continued work with the local community, national school teachers and pupils will ensure that spirit of volunteerism will pass to another generation. Ardgahey has the added advantage in that it's very small, but that aside commitment is needed from the community to make sure that things happen. There is a genuine pride of place amongst the Ardaghey community that is borne out through the visible work that has taken place, and the recognition that the village has garnered from the local media. Very well done and keep up the hard work.

The Built Environment:

The general appearance of all buildings within Ardaghey was to be commended. The Community Centre was neat and tidy with discreetly placed flower boxes, just outside perimeter; a welcome touch. Rackwallace National School has maintained its clean appearance and there was maintenance /gardening being carried out on adjudication day. There are numerous small buildings throughout Irish villages and town lands of historical/cultural significance that remain derelict and hidden. The Forge in Ardaghey is a fine example of a simple restoration project that has contributed to the built environment, as well as providing a historical link with a past era. This is a credit to the Ardaghey community. The stylish street lighting continues to add a touch of elegance to the main section of the village. The Church in the village centre was uncluttered and clean in

appearance, even if the view from the Lisleitrim approach is slightly obscured by farm buildings on the left hand side. The proposal to erect new nameplate signs will be in keeping with the village charm and will complement the other infrastructural work that has taken place, especially in the last number of years.

Landscaping:

The shrubbery containing an excellent stock of perennials outside Rackwallace looked well and is an example of what prudent planting can bring to a building. The circular bed of marigolds at the tree base was very pleasant also, but one is not sure whether it is the recommended practice to have annuals at the base of root expanding trees. Flower boxes at the base of signs on Monaghan, Ballybay and, particularly, at the crossroads (just after Community Centre) signpost add an immediate splash of colour upon entering the village. The small shrubbery at the junction on the Lisleitrim approach highlighted this consistency of presentation that one encounters throughout the village. It is good to note that you have maintained the wildflower presence on the Lisleitrim Road, as sometimes we can be all consumed by uniformed planting arrangements. This type of natural look is synonymous with villages like Ardgahey.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The small garden at the Forge junction was in excellent condition, showing obvious results of the tending and care that was applied to it by those responsible for its up keep. The 'Eolas Faoin Timpeallacht' signposting is a welcome information piece and is a suitable accompaniment for the wildlife garden. The involvement of St Michael's National School in wildlife initiatives and environmental awareness, such as the wonderful school wildlife garden, is duly noted. Links with the national school children are a vital cog in providing the building blocks for a future generation. A good body of work has been done in this category and there is more planned for the future. This warrants an increase of one mark.

Litter Control:

There was practically no evidence of any litter on adjudication day. A small village such as Ardgahey is easy enough to patrol, should be capable of continuing this trend. The committee has been proactive in ensuring that the anti-litter message is to the forefront for local and visitor alike. Well done.

Waste Minimisation:

The very detailed survey undertaken by the committee is a very useful source of base information to determine if there was need for a Bring Bank Centre. Results seem to suggest that what's in place is sufficient and I would tend to agree with that, as Ardgahey is too small for such a facility, especially when you have alternative arrangements within a short distance, and to be honest it might be out of place. The continued work of the National School in its Green Schools Projects is to be commended and both, the pupils and teachers, are wished well in their quest to achieve the next level in the Green Schools initiative. The draft litter management plan for the area is a welcome, but it does not need to be too complex, as the village is being well served by what you have in place at present.

Tidiness:

Verges and hedgerows from all approach roads into Ardgahey were well trimmed and looked neat on adjudication day, allowing aspects such as newly painted fencing, flower boxes and village signs to stand out effectively. On the Lisleitrim approach road into the village, on either side of the road at the base of the newly painted brown fences, there was evidence of some weed growth that should be treated. Despite one or two slightly detracting farm buildings, the majority of premises from the National School to the Church maintained a consistently tidy appearance. The work planned for the future in this section is very straightforward and relevant to the needs of the village.

Residential Areas:

The idea of circulating commendations to homeowners, who have brought their homesteads up to a high standard of presentation, is a novel if slightly unusual one - good idea so long as it's not selective. Most people tend to have a pride in their own homes and are motivated by their own reasons, and try to do their bit for their community as part of the volunteerism spirit that one encounters, especially in rural Ireland. One or two very attractive residences were noted during the adjudicator's walkabout, these certainly are in keeping with the village landscape, as they have been tastefully designed with that in mind.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The Ballybay Road entrance was in very good condition despite some uneven road surface further out the road. The Monaghan entrance was also clean and tidy. Some tree maintenance might be needed on the approach to the crossroads from the Community Centre direction. In addition, there are a few gates to farmland off road approaches that could benefit from a good old fashioned coat of Hammerite or its equivalent. In general, all approach roads to Ardaghew were trim and tidy in appearance. Well done on maintaining the standard.

General Impression:

Ardaghew is a pleasant and peaceful little village where it is obvious residents have put in the effort into keeping the place looking fresh and inviting. The Committee has been very engaging with the local community in trying to improve all aspects of village life and certainly this type of endeavour has paid off in spades. The Village has done very well in the competition year on year and that trend continues. Keep up the excellent work.