

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Ardfinnan** Ref: **296**  
County: **Tipperary(South)** Mark: **259**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **08/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	40
The Built Environment	50	31
Landscaping	50	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	26
Litter Control	50	31
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33
General Impression	10	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>259</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Congratulations to the Ardfinnan TidyTowns Committee for participating in the TidyTowns Competition 2009. Thank you for your submission, for the information on the school's activities and for your map. This map did highlight all of the important places to visit and was helpful. Next year, mark in the names of the next big town on the approach roads, as this landmarks the area around. One notes that you are involved with the Ardfinnan Community Development Action Group and that a plan for a 3 Year Enhancement Programme is being devised. All of this is highly commendable. One is surprised that you do not engage actively with local authority agencies. Engagement with the South Tipperary County Council must surely be vital in the case of a Committee Development Group. The nature of your involvement seems to be mutually beneficent. The adjudicator understands your frustration at the timing of the adjudicator's visit, but all other towns experience the same. One day you will be lucky enough to achieve the second visit.

### **The Built Environment:**

Ardfinnan is a story of two villages, one on either side of the river. Both have their attractions. Barrack street is most attractive and quaint, a mix of a bit of everything. There is a chorus of colour along here, Lamberts, the Gardai, the Credit Union, the chemists, Blackwells, the old and the newer blending to create a street charm. One does not see all of what is here until one looks across from the other side of the bridge. The bridge is the obvious heritage building of this village, connecting the two sides of Ardfinnan with its ten arches. One wonders were there faction fights on the bridge between the gangs from Barrack street and Main street in times past. Look again and one begins to read more of the history of this river bend. The map tells me that that is the woollen mill. Is it lost forever? Any plans? What about an information board on its influence? And there's Ardfinnan Castle across the way. So that must be the heritage side of the village. And again the

questions prompt themselves. Access to the Castle seems barred. A shame. Any plans? A history? On main street the school, the Church, the Parochial house, the Post Office combine to challenge the gang across the river. Ardfinnan does suffer from some dereliction. Inevitable in changing times, but detrimental to your aims. What is your plan of action in relation to dereliction?

### **Landscaping:**

Evidently there is good rivalry in your hanging baskets and window boxes competition. A great idea to develop enthusiasm. But some parts of the upper village, main street, would benefit from more hanging baskets. There are many shrubberies and some picnic areas around the town. The time consuming challenge is to keep them maintained and attractive. Therefore, think ahead and think maintenance before you start into new beds and shrubberies. Residents Associations could be a great help to you in weed control and planting. Where there are shrubberies or flower beds they have to be maintained if they are to create the desired effect. In general, roundabouts are attractive. The Green is the great amenity of Ardfinnan. The goal posts have been painted. The boundary along the park is made interesting by landscaping, the style and the seats. Well done.

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

The Pleasant Way is certainly worth admiration. This is a beautiful amenity in the heart of Ardfinnan. One reads of your determination to 'rectify the water flow'. One flow that seems to be unhindered is that of the Suir, one of your great local natural amenities. The others are the wooded areas all about and, of course, the bog. Herein lie the great potential for wildlife in Ardfinnan. Last year's report proposed carrying out an ecological report of Ardfinnan. Heed that suggestion.

### **Litter Control:**

Well done on the measures you are taking to clean up. Of great importance also is your litter awareness programme in the school. 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 and in your litter awareness programme in the school, make reduction your key ambition. Litter awareness in some estates is also an issue.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

Your plan to conduct a litter survey is most important and useful, and is also a project of the litter section. Well done on encouraging the school to pursue Green Flag Status. You seem to have a good working relationship with the school and this is important in moulding the young in waste minimisation management. The hub caps are an imaginative way to go. If the adults could follow the example of the pupils in electricity and water usage, and in disposing of their obsolete mobiles, our foot print would reduce to size three. One feels that there is greater potential for improvement among you. It could benefit your committee to study the booklet 'Race Against Waste'. Such a study would stimulate new waste elimination projects for you. Well done on the Bring Bank, but regrettably there is evidence of dumping here.

### **Tidiness:**

From reading other sections of this report, you will understand that you can make progress in this section. Weeds create a shabby appearance. These weeds have been referred to. There is some graffiti; a difficult problem to control. The footpaths are certainly an advantage.

### **Residential Areas:**

Ardfinnan is a mix of traditional village housing, established estates and of more modern estates and houses. In general, the residences of Ardfinnan enhance the streetscape and the village vista. Gleann na Suire is developing nicely, the open space is maintained. Keep an eye on the weeds. What could be St. Annes estate, is beautifully situated and for an estate from 1941 looks particularly well. One loved the hanging baskets at Mount Carmel estate, but the estates do represent a challenge. The Residents Associations mentioned in Landscaping could be the answer with another competition, an inter estate one this time.

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

Ardfinnan is fortunate in its position in that one sweeps downhill from almost all directions on arrival. These sweeps provide spectacular views of the village. As one looks out from the village centre outwards, the village is beautifully surrounded by woods and hills, creating a picturesque setting. Make sure that the approach roads into Ardfinnan make it an attractive prospect ever before one arrives. Maintenance and consistent treatment of grass verges is worth the trouble. The walls on approach road are a feature and their appearance improves, if the area at the base is weed free. Shrubberies deteriorate quickly when not tended to and create an impression which is not consistent with your ambitions for Ardfinnan. Ardfinnan is fortunate in that there are

fine footpaths, which create a tidy appearance and also encourage leisure activities in a safe place.

**General Impression:**

As Ardfinnan is a village in transition, with many new residents arriving, it is fortunate for the village that a Community Development Group has been formed and that this group is now compiling an overall enhancement plan for the village. Your input, using the criteria of the Tidy Towns Competition, will have a bearing on the content of that plan. Already the Pleasant Way is a pointer in the right direction. Further exploitation of the presence of a river meander through your village, with its possibilities for leisure activities, must be a key element of any future plan for Ardfinnan.