

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Tipperary** Ref: **520**
County: **Tipperary(South)** Mark: **243**
Category: **D** Date(s): **13/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	39
The Built Environment	50	35
Landscaping	50	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	28
Litter Control	50	29
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	28
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	243

Overall Development Approach:

Congratulations to the Tipperary TidyTowns Committee for participating in the TidyTowns Competition 2009. Thank you for your submission and for the file of explanatory material, that accompanied your submission. When compiling your submission in coming years, you should consider being more discerning in the material you supply. With the office full of documents, there is a danger that relevant, important information could be overlooked by the adjudicator, so keep the documentation supplied ad rem. It is evident that your committee has been transformed in the past year. Not only is your enthusiasm for enhancing Tipperary evident from your submission, but your enthusiastic professional approach to the challenges ahead is admirable. One is left breathless as one attempts to maintain pace with the avalanche of plans, organisation, events and projects that flow through that submission. It is the professionalism of your 'targeted and strategic' approach that impresses most. No space here for vague aspirations. In fact, one cannot wait to witness the fruit of your labours on the ground. It is impressive to read of your representative committee. A concern could be that such a group would not have the close working relationship of a small committee which has been committed to Tidy Towns for many years. Be careful that your committee remains project-focused and does not tolerate mouthpieces for sectional interests. You tick all of the boxes in the ODA section and one is left overwhelmed that a committee can be formed and spring into action in such short time. Pace yourselves for there is a marathon ahead.

The Built Environment:

There have been so many influences, built in stone, on the development of Tipperary. The railway is one such influence. The restoration and preservation of these buildings is now a priority. If achieved your legacy to future Tipperary towns people will be awesome. A look into the railway yard is enough to illustrate the possibilities and the difficulties. From dumping ground to heritage centre. The work at the Workhouse suggests that the railway yard may have a future. St Vincent's Health Centre is a stunning example of

integrating the heritage walls with modern units and shows respect for the town elderly. The ambulance store raises one's expectations for the railway yard. It is wonderful to find the round tower in a commentary position in the GAA pitch.

There are so many buildings that catch the eye. One hopes that Airmount House is not under threat from the march of time. Sacre Coeur is another fine building representing another era. Among the schools, St Joseph's stands out., St Anne's(?), St Ailbhe's school and St Michael's are also very fine. One entrance to Abbey Secondary school is regal, a side entrance not so princely. There are some attractive railings in the town, but the railings at the Church are superb. The grotto across the way completes the ecclesiastical tone. Churches are full of character. The Credit Union building is impressive. Main Street may be slow for the motorist, but at least there are wonderful vistas to enjoy. Shop fronts are exciting. Some need to be brought into line with the traditional shop front image. The old Post Office is a magnificent building and it deserves better than the plastic that now defaces it. The whole area around the casual trading post and the Tipperary Excel is a joy. Thankfully, the town clock still stands. A new coat will restore it.

Landscaping:

The geranium beds at roundabouts ablaze with colour. So much great work is ongoing in bringing summer life to town. Another aspect of your work is the maintenance and improvement of the many shrubberies and beds that already exist. Some of these are neglected, as at the GAA pitch, where there is also attractive planting. It is commendable that all landscaping is being carried out with the welfare of the birds, the bees and the moths in mind. Your discovery that Tipperary had few berry bearing shrubs is a significant one and a situation that can be addressed. There are some older terraces that would benefit from a landscaping intervention. The Gardaí are most successful with the landscaping outside the station, whereas that at the library needs attention.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Giant steps have been taken by your committee already in improving the biodiversity of Tipperary. Commissioning a wildlife survey and having an ecological report on the Tipperary hills is praiseworthy and provides an informed platform from which to plan. Engaging with Abbey school also increases awareness among the pupils of the biodiversity in their surroundings. Lots of promise in this section. Well done.

Litter Control:

Well done on your participation in National Spring Clean Week and in having the active support of so many Residents' Groups. The gum problem is being actively tackled. A similar campaign is needed against graffiti or your work will be tainted. Litter is still a problem in some places. It is most disappointing to find litter in new estates, such as Springfield. There is no dumping at Bring Centres on this day, so one hopes that this is the usual situation. The only experience of dumping was beside the fire station. It seems a wasted opportunity not to have a bin at a school bus stop, as at St Ailbhe's. Or does this reflect a shift in thinking towards reduction rather than collection? If so, the students need to be made aware.

Waste Minimisation:

Well done on the energy saving literature that has been provided for the residents of Tipperary. The first step must be the creation of an awareness or an educational step, so your approach to eliminating waste is a worthwhile one. As the concept and practice are largely alien to our society, keep the message simple, be focussed and do not overwhelm folks with too much literature.

Tidiness:

The town centre presents a reasonably tidy image. The suburbs are not as good as a general rule would suggest. The appearance of many directional signs throughout the town needs attention. Unwashed signposting creates an impression of neglect. Graffitied signs create an unease. At the same time, many of your street signs are a joy. There is clearly a weed control programme in operation. The amount of advertising, much of it of doubtful value, on the Limerick side of the N24 needs to be examined.

Residential Areas:

Private houses are, in general, presented very well and enhance their surroundings by their individual fronts and their landscaping. The standard in the residential estates varies and the standard even within certain terraces varies dramatically. The houses on Murgasty Road really impressed. While some estates are fortunate to be named with name stones, many stand like unknown soldiers. A pleasant aspect of the

residential provision in Tipperary is the number of striking stone terraces that stretch for ages, giving a sense of heritage and belonging to the town. Name plates and dates of construction would help tap into the social history of the town. What an invitation the name stone at Avondale provides. The finger posts lead one into a new world, the sporting centre of the town, here right in the middle of the town. Wonderful, accessible facilities. The Rossmore Neighbourhood Centre is impressive and, hopefully will serve the residents of the vast Springfield estate. This estate looks very well and will improve further when the tree planting develops. The landscaping in the new estates is very fine.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The N 24 approach road, on both sides of town, presents many challenges. On the Limerick side, one sees the level of improvement that can be achieved, while there is no pattern to the approach as yet. Dunnes front is a standard to aspire to. On the Cahir side, the quality of signage, the ad hoc development of business fronts, the lack of a co-ordinated landscaping plan present a cluttered scene. There is an excitement about the Railway crossing approach to town. The walls, the sense of history with the red brick guard station, the pedestrian bridge, the school, the attractive shrubbery and the geraniums at the roundabout generate this excitement. One notes the work that has been done at the cemetery on the Golden side of town. The Emily approach is in need of your attention. A feature of the outskirts of town and also of the town centre area is the ease with which areas link up through the network of roads and streets.

General Impression:

Your determination to enhance the town of Tipperary, to improve the quality of life of its citizens and to improve your performance in the Tidy Towns Competition is best illustrated in the commissioning of your Action Plan for the coming years. The built heritage treasure, that is Tipperary, is the strength that must be exploited. The challenges are obvious. One wishes you well on your journey to the realisation of your ambitions.