

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Ardmore** Ref: **647**  
County: **Waterford** Mark: **275**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **10/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	45
The Built Environment	50	36
Landscaping	50	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30
Litter Control	50	37
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	16
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	37
General Impression	10	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>275</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Welcome to the 2009 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission, which included a comprehensively completed application form with a clear mission statement. The application form, submitted as a report, was well detailed and illustrated, clearly outlined your plans for the coming years and was of great assistance to the adjudicator. The Ardmore committee are to be congratulated in engaging the help of other agencies. It is noted that the net continues to widen in relation to applications for development assistance and community co-operation and this approach continues to pay dividends, in particular the involvement of the local school and Ardmore Youth Club. You are to be congratulated on your strategic and structured campaign and the appointment of five project ambassadors focused on different aspects of community development is commended. Your inclusive approach promoted by regular meetings is already paying dividends in relation to your long term aims. The many initiatives your committee are developing such as the '1 in 10 Campaign Initiatives' and the 'Adopt An Area Campaign' are certainly innovative and it is to be hoped that your aspirations in relation to new developments will be heeded by the powers that be.

### **The Built Environment:**

Ardmore has a wonderful rich ecclesiastical heritage and the challenge for Ardmore is to develop its tourist potential, while protecting the integrity of its historical and architectural character. The historical sites such as St Declan's Well, and the Round Tower and Cathedral have been wonderfully managed over the years by OPW, while the village core largely retains its traditional charm and character and, in many cases, the street buildings have been sympathetically developed. The cobble lock paving, street furniture (newly painted), street lining and public lighting looked splendid. This public realm is hugely enhanced by the subtle, ornate displays of planted tubs and hanging baskets which compliment the colourful array of window boxes on the residences and commercial buildings of the main streets. Bilingual signage is a feature and this is well illustrated here by the high quality signage of the very fine shop front presentation "An Aird Mhor Danlann

agus Stiudeanna". Tig na Foinse is a magnificent introduction building to the street and the free standing sign has a wonderful scale, but is in need of freshening as some rust from the bracket has stained the raised lettering of the sign. The repainting of the O'Raghallaigh Gallery was noted and the cream/yellow house was being painted on the day of adjudication. Overall, the village centre with its two charming thatched houses and well presented commercial premises creates a standard for others to emulate. At An Straillean, there is a well paved area with some commanding views of the sea. Opposite, the derelict houses which were nicely painted blue and white in the past are now beginning to fade. These would make a wonderful, simple reconstruction and compliment the very attractive blue and white single storey house adjoining. Your ongoing liaison with Waterford County Council in relation to derelict sites is noted.

### **Landscaping:**

The results of your strategic campaign are clearly illustrated in the landscaping agenda and new works carried out on College Road and at the school are very successful. The work being carried out at the pedestrian pathway connecting from Quinn's Day Today Store to the beach area is well underway and has opened up a pleasant sense of place. The formal Escilonia and Fuchsia hedge on one side contrasts nicely with the more mixed and informally planted bank opposite. The water cascade at the weir is a nice feature. Generally, Ardmore has a wonderful array of well presented private gardens and well maintained incidental open spaces. This is very well illustrated along the Middle Road which has a huge variety of contrasting displays, from the ornate hanging baskets and window boxes, to the patchwork of enclosed hedged gardens at the Cliff House Hotel. The Memorial and seating area here at the Jubilee Garden is a lovely intervention. A timber rail to the back of one of the seats is broken and needs to be replaced. The seating at the anchor, opposite the attractively presented Ardmore Gallery, was clean and well presented. On the Higher Road, there are spectacular, panoramic views from the seating area and the grass margins here were well maintained, but the litter bin was overflowing on the day of adjudication. Your initiative, in conjunction with the Irish Wildflowers Association and the school children, will help to hugely promote the understanding of general landscaping in the village in the coming years. The Open Space Strategy will be an excellent initiative in the future.

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

The variety of walks is a wonderful amenity for the village. On the various walks, the illustration boards on wildflowers and birds are a good educational tool, add interest and animate the experience. The new improvement works on St. Declan's Way was noted. It was good to see the owner of 'The Manor' cleaning out overgrown weeds and debris from a small attractive stone building on the roadside opposite the Round Tower. Last year's adjudicator looked forward to the production of pamphlets on flora and fauna and it was good to have these nicely produced documents on hand for this year's adjudication. You are to be congratulated on this initiative.

### **Litter Control:**

While litter control was good in the village, some small quantities of litter were in evidence in the small park adjoining the playground. There was also a small scattering of litter and a plastic bottle outside the very well maintained public toilets. Your litter awareness campaign, together with your action plan was noted.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

The objective of obtaining a Green Flag for the local school is a good promotional vehicle to further your waste minimisation initiatives. The committee is obviously very active on all aspects of this agenda and together with Waterford County Council have co-operated on a successful campaign to date. The Recycling Centre is strategically located by the village foreshore and the area is nicely presented with clean signage and a raised area paved in cobble lock, again adorned with nicely planted flower tubs. This adjudicator is impressed by your professional approach to raising awareness throughout the community and agrees with your idea that this is the most effective way to promote change. Well done on this initiative!

### **Tidiness:**

Last year's adjudicator remarked on a number of the difficulties facing the committee under this heading and it is good to see that already some progress has been made. We note the various initiatives outlined in your report from the practical clean ups to the widely promoted awareness campaign. The 'Adopt an Area' initiative is obviously successful. This is amply illustrated by the efforts of the individual residents and business owners who have been encouraged to sweep outside their own premises. The signpost stand at Port na mBád slipway no longer seems to perform any function and could be removed or repainted. At the adjacent An Straillean some weeds are beginning to appear along the kerb line of the paved area.

### **Residential Areas:**

Residential properties are presented to a high standard in general, ranging from the beautiful individual dwellings and nicely presented gardens on the Rocky Road to the thatched houses on the Main Street. In

general, the traditional housing schemes in Ardmore are also maintained to a very high standard. Both The Grove and the Upper College Road housing schemes have some nicely presented individual private gardens and the well maintained open space and central flowerbed to the turning circle was admired. A number of the newer housing schemes remain unfinished and it was noted that approximately eighty further units remain to be developed at the Cloisters. Some of the new housing here and at the Hermitage breaks the skyline particularly when viewed from the Dungarvan entrance. It would be important that the backdrop to these schemes would be heavily planted with woodland planting to soften the impact on the skyline in the long term. Increased planting to the foreground would also have a beneficial visual effect. The small scheme at the entrance to the Cloisters and opposite the well maintained and attractive fire station is an inward looking scheme. Consequently, the backs of these houses and service areas, gardens, clothes lines etc. are now facing on to the Main Road. The recent tree planting along the boundary wall will provide screening for this aspect of the housing scheme, while enhancing the entrance to the village. The Ardmore Holiday Homes opposite Russell Court have a similar concept in that, in some areas, the backs of the houses face the public road on one side, whereas on the opposite side the backs of houses face on to the promenade/waterfront. Generally, new housing should be more sympathetic to the existing character of the village in relation to design, scale, materials and texture. Perhaps the slowing down in the economy will offer time for a rethink!

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

The Youghal approach road has a most welcoming display with the colourful presentations of the themed planted boats and attractive village announcement sign. On the Dungarvan entrance, at Bothar na Trainse, the feature-landscaped bed, surrounded by railway sleepers, box hedging lettering, and gravel surface maintained by the Youth Club was admired. The nearby houses undergoing renovation were noted. The GAA club is an excellent presentation and the attractive name sign with its high quality lettering, Deaglán Naofa Ardmhór, at the splayed stone wall entrance looked very well.

### **General Impression:**

Ardmore is a most attractive and historical village enjoying a magnificent setting on the Atlantic Ocean. The driving commitment of the TidyTowns committee is proving a great asset and will continue to enhance the village's natural advantages. The integrated strands of the promotional literature should prove to be of great benefit to the committee in facing the challenges of the years ahead. We wish you well in your future endeavours.