

Tidy Towns Competition 2011

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ardattin** Ref: **31**
County: **Carlow** Mark: **285**
Category: **A** Date(s): **06/07/2011**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2010	Mark Awarded 2011
Overall Development Approach	50	38	38
The Built Environment	50	40	40
Landscaping	50	38	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	27	27
Litter Control	50	38	38
Waste Minimisation	20	6	7
Tidiness	30	19	19
Residential Areas	40	31	31
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	38	38
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	400	283	285

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the very concise application and welcome to the Tidy Towns competition 2011. The information on your application and the attached sketch map made it easier for the adjudicator to visit all the areas of work in progress. The inclusion of a straight forward action plan on foot of a suggestion made in last year's report was noted. Any plan of action should be tailored to take into account the resources that you have available to you and this is something that you have done. It was my first time to visit this very picturesque village tucked away off the N81, it is the tranquil sort of place that one could re visit just to soak the pleasantness of the adjoining country side and be away from all the hustle and bustle of traffic. Your main committee of 10 is very proactive and this approach has paid dividends as you have done very well in the competition to date. Now that you have reached the number four spot on the Carlow County TidyTowns league table the quest is to sustain and improve if possible on this achievement. Your comments on how you feel that the competition has developed a strong bond amongst all sections of the community is very heartening to hear as that is the key to success in any walk of life. It was also very heartening to note that one of your parishioners was kind enough to make a donation to help you with your work. As regards links with agencies and other bodies maybe you should give consideration to add the likes of Carlow Tourism and Carlow Development Partnership which incorporates TUS and Leader as part of its remit.

The Built Environment:

The work that you have outlined in your application under this category will very much complement the existing buildings which are presented to a very high standard. Replacing the existing wooden name signs that are in poor condition will enhance the entrances to the village even further. As Ardattin is a very small village any infrastructural blemish would be very noticeable and it is pleasing to report that for the most part this is not the case. It has been noted that you are in ongoing communication with the owner of the ball alley to try broker some sort of an arrangement to at least keep that area tidy and maybe agree to have some

remedial work done in the next two years that's if funds allow! Street seating has been placed at the focal point of the village which is the junction at the Ardattin Inn ,the seats were in good condition and looked like they had been painted recently. The Ardattin Inn looks as if it had been refurbished recently, the parking area was tidy but the owners might do well to take faded HB signs from the forecourt as they look a little out of kilter with the local surroundings. The pole housing the finger post signs should be replaced by Carlow County Council as it is rusty and worn looking. Both the National School and the RC Church were in top condition with some very appealing tub type planters at the boundary wall of the church. A number of cut stone houses situated in the core area added to the appeal of Ardattin and the owners must be commended for having them in such good condition.

Landscaping:

The standard in this category was very good and the landscaping and planting undertaken is ideal for a village of the size of Ardattin.

Stone name signs can be very effective if kept in a simple manner and maybe as a committee you might consider putting one at each of the 3 main entrances to enhance existing planting arrangements. The committee should also ensure that the main planting schemes particularly those on both sides of the Tullow Road are tended to on a regular basis as you need to get all year round impact. The arrangement at the Ball Alley and Beechwood Drive entrance was a mass of colourful daisies, geraniums, busy lizzies and poached egg I think! It is quite time consuming to maintain this type of flower bed which is populated by annuals so whoever has that job he or she deserves your gratitude. For such a small place you have really excelled in this category and have earned an increase of one mark.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

This is a category that can often cause some entrants difficulty in terms of either identifying and or developing relevant projects. Key to this category is an understanding and appreciation of existing habitats and species within ones area. Your application stated that you have been in touch with Carlow County Council wildlife ranger to help you devise a wildlife conservation strategy. Another suggestion would be to identify a local person who has an in depth knowledge of the wild life species and their habitats in the immediate locality and to ask him or her to work in tandem with County Council personnel. Last year's adjudicator suggested a possible heritage trail in conjunction with the National School pupils, this idea should be incorporated into your proposed plans.

Litter Control:

The standard of litter control was very good and this is due to your efforts as a committee in informing the local population of the practical benefits of regular litter picks. Participating in the Carlow Litter League offers you an opportunity to compete, if that is the proper word, against other centres in the county and this can only be of benefit to all communities that have signed up to this initiative. Getting the school involved is a very positive move as the children will embrace the idea of anti litter with enthusiasm and can contribute in a practical manner by devising poster competitions or organising junior litter picks on a regular basis. Keep up the good work.

Waste Minimisation:

This is a category that offers the opportunity for villages like Ardattin to gain some additional marks by putting in place mini projects that contribute to the reduction of waste. The list of ideas that one can work on is varied and can range from a simple waste audit to a more comprehensive community waste management programme covering recycling, communal composting down to waste management education programmes. This year you have started the ball rolling by producing your own waste minimisation leaflets and operating a segregation policy.

Tidiness:

The hub area of the village was very neat and orderly and credit is due to homeowners who have kept their front, back and side areas tidy. Some weed growth was observed at kerbsides in Beechwood Drive and if not controlled could be problematic. Is it possible that one of the residents of the estate could be prevailed upon to ensure that issues like weed control are dealt with on a regular basis. The Ball Alley has already been mentioned in a previous category but it is no harm to keep the lines of communication between you as a committee and the owner to ensure that at the very least the place is kept in order and free of litter and weed growth. The condition of the pump was mentioned in last year's report and this has been addressed this year so well done on that. All directional and name signs were clean and painted and more importantly visible and recycling receptacles were well appointed and accessible.

Residential Areas:

The standard of presentation in this category was very good, some fine homesteads were viewed and these were complemented by most attractive gardens. Credit is due to the owners of these for making the effort to

maintain their respective properties on an ongoing basis. The entrance to the Temple View estate was striking and the residents are to be complimented for maintaining this area of the village. Beechwood drive was acceptable but one felt that it needed some revitalisation as boundary walls seemed somewhat grey and would benefit from a mix of colour. The green area in Beechwood was somewhat bare also and it might benefit from additional planting arrangements to add colour to it.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The road in from Clonegal was acceptable but the traffic sign referred to in last year's report seemed to be still missing and this needs to be replaced as soon as possible. The Tullow Road entrance was very good with verges maintained in line with recommendations for the preservation of wildlife and insects. The signs on this road were in good condition. It is noted that you intend to have trees lopped next year and it is presumed that you have been in touch with the local authority to have this work sanctioned.

General Impression:

Ardattin has that idyllic rural charm that we like to associate with rural Ireland. It has prospered in a fast growing era without having to subject itself to the down side of so called progress – mass development. You are to be commended as a committee for your work over the last number of years in trying to ensure that the Village achieves its maximum potential in the competition. You are wished well for the future and one hopes to see Ardattin up there with the best in the years to come.