

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ardmore** Ref: **647**
County: **Waterford** Mark: **305**
Category: **B** Date(s): **08/06/2012**
01/08/2012

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	46	46
The Built Environment	50	39	39
Landscaping	50	39	40
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	23	34
Litter Control	50	39	40
Tidiness	30	17	17
Waste Minimisation	20	12	13
Residential Areas	40	28	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	39	39
General Impression	10	9	9
TOTAL MARK	400	291	305

Overall Development Approach:

You are very welcome to the 2012 National Tidy Towns Competition. The committee, comprising of over 30 members, is an impressive number of volunteers for a village of your size. You obviously get great assistance within the community as instanced by the provision of an area at the Cuilin by Keevers Village Pub for the development of your nursery garden. Your co-operation with Waterford County Council and engagement with a FAS scheme is commendable and the results are to be admired throughout the village. Your plans are clear and well-focused and you have engaged successfully with other interested agencies in relation to development assistance and community co-operation. Your links with the schools and youth clubs are strong and it is encouraging to note that one of your members is a leader of the Youth Club. The before and after photographs were of great assistance during adjudication and provide an instant understanding of your recent achievements at various locations. Your community communication agenda makes impressive reading with the K.A.T.S. initiative being particularly commendable. You have a fine range of festivals, activities and events hosted by the community throughout the year, considerably adding to the vitality of village life.

The Built Environment:

Ardmore has a unique character, in that it combines a strong historical and ecclesiastical heritage, with a modern-day seaside tourist resort. This environment has been carefully developed and protected particularly in the village centre and in the older streets. Main Street presents an attractive colour scheme, some very well presented, individual, commercial buildings such as Ardmore Studios, an Tobar, Halla Douglan, the Village Pub and Matt's Take-away, to mention a few. The Post Office, now also providing tourist information, has a very pleasant colour scheme. Tig na Foinse B & B is superb, retaining its fine architectural features with a good colour scheme and high quality signage. Nearby the sculpture and mural were admired at Quinn's Food store. At the upper end of Main Street, the red rose bed at Perk's, with its array of flags, provides a very colourful vista. At the opposite end of the street the boat presentation at the roundabout is a nice visual link to

the waterfront. The Cliff Hotel sets a high standard in contemporary design and integrates very well with its cliff side setting. On the descent to the town proper, the Art & Design Studio and the Anchor were admired for their very attractive colour schemes and good quality lettering. The adjoining terrace of cottages has a magnificent scale and their presentation makes an important visual contribution to the character of your village.

St Declan's Well and the Round Tower and Cathedral give the village its important historical status and they have been wonderfully managed by the O.P.W. over the years. Your application outlined 14 projects under this heading, some illustrated with photographs, and all of these were visited by the adjudicator.

Landscaping:

Your village contains some fine hard and soft landscaped areas, ranging from traditional beach cobbles at the roundabout, and cobble locks at various areas at the promenade, to the newly planted trees and shrubs at different locations and the mature woodland backdrop containing a variety of native tree species. Imaginative and colourfully planted displays and interventions were observed throughout. St Paul's, Church of Ireland were very well presented and the planted area opposite the Round Tower is excellent, as are the landscaped areas at College Road and The Grove. The propeller feature at the car park and display of milk churns at the Dungarvan Road, are imaginative features, a visual reminder of times past. An Cuilin is an impressive development and a considerable achievement towards the sustainability of your planting programme. The adjudicator was very impressed with the quantity of plants grown here to assist your programme of window boxes and hanging baskets.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Ardmore is surrounded by an abundance of impressive habitats and this fact is well acknowledged by some very informative, interpretative display boards. The Cliff Walk and the Lookout Post are popular amenity areas and were well attended on the day of adjudication, notwithstanding the inclement weather at the time. You have developed well under this category and are to be commended on seeking appropriate professional advice on your proposed future projects.

Litter Control:

Your litter campaign is well organised with input and rotas involving committee members, the K.A.T.S. initiative and FAS workers. The village was virtually litter free on the day of adjudication although a number of discarded bottles were observed on the ground at an otherwise excellently presented playground. Well done on engaging with Waterford County Council to have a road sweeper available to assist with your clean up on a once weekly basis during the busy summer season.

Tidiness:

Ardmore is undergoing major disruption at the present time due to the necessary work being carried out on the sewerage scheme. No doubt, when these works are completed and surfaces reinstated, the village will receive a new 'carpet'. When this work is completed it should provide an immediate visual improvement, especially in the areas currently affected. Some seating at the promenade needed repainting. The bus stop opposite the Post Office needs a freshening up and the bollards here need painting especially around their base level. The public toilet, though clean, had some boarded up windows (needing painting), with broken glass scattered on the window sills inside. An Sean Scoil is an excellent project and a plaque was observed being erected here by Kiely's of Dungarvan during this visit.

Waste Minimisation:

You have progressed well under this agenda and you have received great co-operation from Waterford County Council, your Green Flag schools, local hotels, businesses and the community at large. The programme at the Cliff Hotel, which the adjudicator visited, is very impressive and to further efforts a new electric car for ferrying guests, had just been delivered to the hotel.

Residential Areas:

The Grove and Upper College Road housing schemes look very well and many individual private garden presentations were admired here. The new flower bed at The Grove looks great. The older housing schemes are generally set against a backdrop of mature trees and contrast starkly with the rather barren appearance of newer housing areas. The Cloisters need substantial tree planting to soften its visual effect on an elevated site. Well done on your success in having Waterford County Council complete landscaping at Gort an Uisce and having a name sign erected. We look forward to the paint scheme proposed for village houses to celebrate the 50th Anniversary in 2013.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The Youghal approach road, containing the themed planted boats and attractive village announcement signs, is most welcoming. The Dungarvan approach road containing the box hedge feature at Bothar na Trainse is a credit to the Youth Club and their maintenance programme here. The roadside surface was disrupted here due to recent excavations and we look forward to its restoration in the near future.

General Impression:

The historical village of Ardmore enjoys a panoramic setting overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. The commitment of a hardworking and focused committee is to be seen throughout. This commitment has resulted in your high placing in the national Tidy Towns competition.

Second Round Adjudication:

Your 2nd round adjudicator had not visited Ardmore for some years and was delighted to have the opportunity of getting to know this attractive seaside area. Unlike many seaside resorts in Ireland Ardmore has managed to preserve the essential village qualities without compromising the built environment to the needs of seaside resort visitors. The KATS initiative is creative and a great investment in the future of Tidy Towns in Ardmore. Not all new projects for 2012 were indicated on the map and these should be keyed to the entry form text, numerals work quite well. On the day of the visit great work was underway on the painting of the road boundary wall at the Round Tower Hotel and the colourful railings at the nearby School also caught the eye. It was encouraging to see that timber casement windows still survive on a number of properties and the two thatched houses were greatly admired. These are really beautifully presented and a credit to the owners. Hand painted retail signs were noted at a number of premises and this should be encouraged where possible. The ship's propeller is an interesting reminder of village history. However this would be more effective if mounted vertically together with some interpretation. The area of the Round Tower was visited and what an attractive peaceful area this is with a great sense of history. The landscaped area with the boat at the Playground looked a little untidy and needs some further work. At the Catholic Church the two wildlife panels were read with interest. These are well illustrated and are extremely informative. Just a little litter was evident at the Bring Centre but the overall layout of this area is visually effective and is commended. The approach road along the R673 from the main road is impressive and work here has continued well out from the 50 KPH signage. Just a little verge damage was evident. On this approach the Cat's House is imaginative and unusual. As your committee looks forward to your 50th Anniversary in 2013 this adjudicator wishes Ardmore continued success in the next 50 years.