

Tidy Towns Competition 2013

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ardpatrick**

Ref: **441**

County: **Limerick**

Mark: **302**

Category: **A**

Date(s): **16/06/2013**

28/07/2013

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2012	Mark Awarded 2013
Overall Development Approach	50	39	40
The Built Environment	50	42	42
Landscaping	50	43	44
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	28	29
Litter Control	50	41	41
Sustainable Waste And Resource Management	20	13	13
Tidiness	30	19	19
Residential Areas	40	29	30
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	35	35
General Impression	10	9	9
TOTAL MARK	400	298	302

Overall Development Approach:

Many thanks for your entry in this year's TidyTowns Competition. Thank you for a most complete and interesting submission. Thank you for the excellent map which was most useful on adjudication day. The before and after photos were much appreciated. The story of Carraig Mhor gave great context for your major project. Thank you for the updated plan.

It's great to hear that your committee is still strong in numbers and that your links with the national school are good. You also speak positively of the supports that you receive from statutory and development bodies. In turn you give them Ardpatrick as we see it today and this is what makes the competition the success that it is.

The Built Environment:

Some of your key buildings are being made over or enhanced which is great. The work on the former Inn is being done sensitively. Can the signage be removed from the front of the building? It looks poor. If the old red sign could be touched-up that would be a real enhancement. The look of the windows, even in the interim could be improved. The Greenwood Inn looks really well and ready for business. The owner is to be commended for the standard of presentation here including the abundant planting. The chairs on the decking did however remind the adjudicator of school days long since past... The church is beautifully kept and the children's artwork was admired. The very low, almost humble planters at the church door were very suitable. The community centre is beautiful. O'Sullivan's garage is as neat and as well-painted as could be asked - well done. There are a couple of old wheels that could be removed from the forecourt.

Landscaping:

Well done for taking on board the suggestions of last year's adjudicator. Your village is very small and is thus sensitive to any unsuitable or unnecessary features or items. The flower bed you 'appealed' is very attractive. The preceding adjudicator's point was equally valid as it echoes the field boundaries nearby. Bright and vibrant colours made a great impact on an otherwise dull day. A high level of care was noted in the planting. If stones are to be used on corners or roadside they should be used on both or not at all.

Carraig Mhor is tremendous. The adjudicator especially liked the bog area. Does this require much care? Among the riot of colours and shapes of the little park are several bee and butterfly-friendly plants. Well done. Little details really impacted upon the adjudicator: the steps up to and paths around the flower beds, the sincere thanks on the stone and the chunk of the old creamery wall. The lookout was used by the adjudicator when the

rain became more determined in its plans. The townland board is very good. This would make good raw materials for a children's quiz. Bishop Murphy Park is superlative in its neatness and spectacular in its colours. Is the fountain in operable condition? The work at the church is excellent. Nearby, fewer old agricultural implements is more this adjudicator feels.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

You are to be commended for the creation of the new hawthorn hedgerow. This will benefit bird life for many years to come, it is hoped. Of which, you have good records of nesting birds. Our changing climate, it is feared, plays havoc with migratory patterns and breeding birds' success. A small point: bird boxes don't need to have a perch at the front - this can actually facilitate predation. Under the towering rookery, the bird poster here is excellent in both location and content.

Litter Control:

Well done on anti-litter actions, the Spring Clean and the regular patrols. Thank you for giving credit to all of those who have helped Ardpatrick to such a high level of cleanliness and care. A single piece of litter was found. This was almost certainly car-borne.

Sustainable Waste And Resource Management:

Thank you for your information here. A sixth Green Flag the next target - fantastic! Although you do not have a shop there are many initiatives which are community-based or apply to the householder. You are invited to consult the literature provided by the Tidy Towns Unit on Sustainable Waste & Resource Management and the guidelines in the entry form. In these, you will find many examples of suitable projects and initiatives. Composting is perfectly valid as is the 'added value' of making bird nesting habitat from old wood.

Tidiness:

Your efforts at the several aspects of this category are noted. Herbicides should be used as little as possible. The traffic calming is welcomed, however the solar powered sign was not working on day of visit. The lack of solar energy may have been accountable. A 60kph warning sign on the south side of the Ballyhea Road is damaged and askew.

The bottle bank was nearly spotless but there were a few cans squashed into the base of the bins. The white paint should be cleaned off the edge of the sign here. The crossroads sign pole was in need of a little painting.

Residential Areas:

In a way, in Ardpatrick, very much of the village falls within this category, as there are residences throughout and just about everywhere is accessible as you state. It's good to read that your expertise is on hand for residents if needed. A garden wall was noted as missing a stone and another is in need of cleaning. This aside, a high standard was evident throughout.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Your attitude to strimming is to be commended. The warning on road works is noted. The approach road from Kildorrery is excellent: strimmed but not too much. There is an unused sign pole here and one of the speed limit signs is askew. The Kilmallock road is very nice and understated. The earth banks should be planted up with hawthorns, this adjudicator feels. The community alert sign is in need of painting soon. Recent tree-planting was noted with approval on the right hand side on way into the village. The far side looks bare by comparison, even perhaps unbalanced.

The Ballyhea approach road is just about perfect. A few hawthorns on the earth bank here (N side) would enhance it. The National Cycle Network sign is excellent. It is slightly damaged though, probably by being hit by a lorry.

The path to the graveyard is just as it should be - low key and rugged. The breeze blocks on the way though don't look good. The interpretation board at the gate of the graveyard is excellent. The Limerick County Council sign was clean. The wildflowers - dominated by creeping buttercup still were lovely. The stile here is in good order but the gates will need to be looked after soon. The views from the graveyard were fantastic.

The stone walls on the way in from Kilfinane are really nice. The replacement beech planting was noted here and the verges were well-trimmed. There is a stone missing from the bridge over the Noinin stream. There is an excellent heritage interpretation board at the community centre. The sign was a little dirty though, on inspection. The Ballyhoura forest information board (hand-painted) was much admired. Have you thought about using the reverse side for MTB trail maps?

General Impression:

A high level of care and attention to detail is the overriding impression. Little touches though also speak of high participation and co-operation here. Good luck.

Second Round Adjudication:

It was a number of years since this adjudicator had the pleasure of visiting Ardpatrick, and so it was noted, with great pleasure, that the village has maintained its unique charm despite the hectic building and development

that took place throughout the country over the last number of years. All of the landscaped areas looked as well cared for as usual, Bishop Murphy Park being of particular note with its mix of permanent planting, freshly cut grass, colourful flowers, freshly painted grotto and jaunty flags! The park displaying antique farm machinery also looked extremely well. Approach roads were well maintained and welcoming. The buildings of the village, both commercial and public, were fresh and well presented, including the prominently located church and community centre, and the Greenwood Inn. The garage had been painted a deep red as had the farm gates to a nearby garden. The Sunvale Inn beside the church is a marvellous traditional vernacular shopfront which would benefit from a coat of paint. Carraig Mhor was admired with its display of milk churns. Litter control was very good on the day. A swift's nest was noted at the eaves of the church! Ardpatrik is set in the magnificent scenery in south Limerick with a splendid backdrop of the Ballyhoura mountains, and looked extremely well on the second adjudication day.