

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Monaghan Town**

Ref: **615**

County: **Monaghan**

Mark: **173**

Category: **E**

Date: **07/06/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	29	28
The Built Environment	40	28	27
Landscaping	40	19	18
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17	17
Litter Control	40	20	20
Tidiness	20	13	12
Residential Areas	30	19	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	22	22
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	173	169

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for the entry form accompanied with a very comprehensive document outlining the work in progress in Monaghan town. With the information it would be valuable - for this competition, to have a plan based on the next three years objectives. This could act as an assessment of progress as well as focusing on all the priorities and placing them in an order. The tidy towns committee has evolved well to undertake the work involved in a large town – which is often quite different from the role in a small village. The work and cooperation with public bodies and the sponsorships gained are a marvelous achievement and credit is well due to the committee in this regard. Work with resident associations is also very valuable as the results are very dramatic and help to develop a community spirit in districts and estates.

The Built Environment:

Over the past few years there has been a great upgrading of buildings in Monaghan town. This continues with the refurbishment of premises and the better standards of upkeep within the town. Derelict sites are becoming smaller in number as progress is made in this regard. Working with the Council is helpful in identifying these problems and in finding a way to pursue a resolution. The monuments look well. The new monument to remember the Dublin and Monaghan bombings occupies a very significant place in the town. The Dawson monument looks very well having been refurbished (a little attention to the weed grasses growing by its plinth would help also removal of the stains by scaffolding) and the work on the Rossmore monument is welcome. The redevelopment

of the Westenra Hotel is also very welcome as it helps to enliven the town centre. The County Council offices, Social Welfare office and Court House are prominent features of the built environment and contribute well in this respect. The Court House in particular looks very well. There is an improving standard of business premises with many premises well presented with good quality shop fronts, well painted and some with original designs. Those in need of refurbishment become noticeable as the surrounding standards are raised. The second story of many business premises needs attention as most of the emphasis understandably has been on ground floor developments for the shops. The House in Hill Street known as "Dr. Killeens house" is a beautiful buildings and local information says that it is one of oldest houses in Monaghan – this is in a sad state at present and hopefully a restoration will be done to bring it back to its full glory. The Monaghan shopping center occupies a sizable portion of the centre of the town.

Landscaping:

The Ulster canal project is a very adventurous and valuable project for the tidy towns committee to become involved in. This is a great opportunity to develop a new amenity so central within the town and the committee deserves to be complemented for their endeavour with the public authorities in this important venture. At present the site is in its very early stage of redevelopment and hopefully progress will follow soon.

The area at the carpark at the old gates to the St. Louis convent at the top of Market Road is well surrounded with trees and very pleasant – so also the backdrop to the nearby roundabout. At St. Peters Park the lake is a fine feature – with the new building development beside Fleming's, tree planting is now important to screen these buildings from the lake and such planting would in time give a much more pleasant aspect to the lake. The planting at the Monaghan shopping centre is particularly good – especially around the building itself. Some tree planting in the islands within the carpark would help break the vastness of the carpark space. Also attention is needed to some areas of shrubbery especially towards the back of the Credit union and Bottle bank.

Containerised plantings through the town and the small islands of plantings bring great summer colour to the town and are very welcome.

Tree planting is vital to the life of the town and while there are a number of trees present – there needs to be a continuity of planting so that future generations can enjoy trees in the same way that we enjoy the plantings of our previous generations.

Gardens play a valuable role in the landscape of the town and surrounds. The many roadside gardens and the greens and entrances to estates are all important for this contribution to the landscape.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

St. Peters lake is a marvelous asset in the town – so near the centre yet a haven for nature. The appreciation of this facility to as many people as possible is vital. Information about the range of wild life needs to be readily available. Access to the area and the provision of paths is all-important. This lakeside is very accessible from both sides. Expertise is needed so that people will know what to look for, when and where. Local knowledge is also important in building up a fund of knowledge. Next, encouragement to schools and individuals needs to be given to make use of the facility. The Ulster canal regeneration project will also provide wild life opportunities – the idea of leaving one bank to sustain the wildlife currently there is a very good approach. Efforts to make the convent lake accessible are very necessary as this offers such a wonderful opportunity within the town.

Litter Control:

The work of the litter control crew of the tidy towns committee is admirable. Even though the local authorities do their job there is always a need for extra clean-ups and for dealing with places that may not be a priority with the local council. Campaigns to alert people to keep places litter free are always needed. Awareness of litter problems must be consistent. Many studies of litter show that children's crisp and snack wrappers form a sizable part of the litter – this emphasises the need for school campaigns. Fast food outlets and petrol station late night shops are also serious. The gum

blaster machine acquired is a good asset. Litter levels were disappointing in the Monaghan – with much litter noted in the Monaghan shopping centre carpark, bins were overflowing there, some shrubberies were badly littered, there was litter by the bottle banks and the alleyway to the Dublin Street was badly littered. Litter was also noted in St. Peters Park, the Diamond Shopping centre and in various places along streets.

Tidiness:

Good efforts are being made in this regard. The litter as mentioned above is not helpful. Dublin Street needs a serious upgrade with many side alleys and shop fronts in need of refurbishment. The buildings taking place naturally cause some untidiness as at the St. Peters park area. The Old Cross Square is also in need of tidying. The Lucas Service shop occupies a very prominent spot and needs attention Also the Scoil Enna yard as visible from the roadside

Residential Areas:

The combination of on street housing, housing estates and individual houses along the approach roads gives Monaghan a wide range of home ownership. Generally the houses along the approach roads are well tended and they make a good contribution to the appearance of the surrounds of the town. Attention to hedges, gates and walls is important. Some improvements could be made in this regard. On -street housing is valuable as it brings life to the town centre. Paining and decoration as well as retaining original features of buildings is important here. The Glenview/Fairview estate was looking well with very good entrance treatment. Also the Tully estate has a very attractive entrance green, which sets a lovely picturesque entrance. The appearance of the estates depends on three aspects – the individual care of the house and garden. The maintenance of the roadways within the housing estate and thirdly the entrance greens and open spaces within the estates. A look around housing estates with this in mind reveals a range of standards. The work of residents associations both to encourage residents to improve their own places and to lobby public authorities is very valuable.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The entrances to Monaghan from the Dublin and Clones sides are well treated with good road surfaces and well-tended hedgerows and verges. The Ballybay and Cootehill entrance road is attractively treated and the houses along these roads add greatly by the maintenance of their grounds. As mentioned above the Dublin Street is in urgent need of upgrading. Footpaths are in various states of condition through the town from the excellent around the courthouse and central areas to less satisfactory along some of the peripheral streets.

General Impression:

There is a very active approach in Monaghan town and the rewards of this are now evident. The continued work with public authorities and the achievement of sponsorship will progress developments well. Traffic control, parking, litter control and the provision of amenities as well as the overall presentation of business premises and residential areas must all advance in order to take Monaghan to its full potential.