

# Tidy Towns Competition 2008

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Adare** Ref: **440**  
County: **Limerick** Mark: **291**  
Category: **C** Date(s): **10/06/2008**  
**21/07/2008**

|                                | Maximum<br>Mark | Mark<br>Awarded 2008 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Overall Development Approach   | 50              | 46                   |
| The Built Environment          | 50              | 37                   |
| Landscaping                    | 50              | 41                   |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 50              | 29                   |
| Litter Control                 | 50              | 33                   |
| Waste Minimisation             | 20              | 9                    |
| Tidiness                       | 30              | 17                   |
| Residential Areas              | 40              | 32                   |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas  | 50              | 38                   |
| General Impression             | 10              | 9                    |
| <b>TOTAL MARK</b>              | <b>400</b>      | <b>291</b>           |

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Thank you for submitting your completed entry form for this year's competition. The accompanying documentation (and memory stick version) was excellent, particularly the very detailed and helpful location map and work programme for 2008. Your 5 year Work Programme 2008 – 2013 was very professionally presented and the clarity of purpose, within the various categories, was commendable. It was particularly encouraging to note that serious consideration has been given to issues raised in previous adjudication reports. It is very creditable that Adare has a highly motivated committee of 28 members, holding monthly committee meetings and 4 meetings with Limerick County Council and Adare Business Association per annum. Your enthusiasm and hard work have ensured that those bodies, together with Mr Binman, have supported your projects.

### **The Built Environment:**

Adare has been blessed with a wonderful range of historic landmarks and there is great credit due to the community in its caring stewardship of these fine examples of our heritage. It was encouraging to see the completion of the Desmond Castle conservation and restoration programme under the OPW and the guided tours, being organised through the OPW and Adare Heritage Centre, afford visitors an opportunity to appreciate this superb structure. The Augustinian Priory nearby (now St Nicholas Church of Ireland) was looking very impressive and construction of the new school building was progressing apace, however, we did notice that the little courtyard to the front of the original building was looking rather neglected and overgrown. The Trinitarian Church (Holy Trinity Catholic Church), the Grotto nearby with its neatly painted railings and planted containers and the Methodist Church were all very well presented. The Town Hall, at the top of the street, attracted the eye following its recent restoration. The new gated entrance to Adare Manor Hotel and Golf Resort was an imposing development and created an expectation which was certainly fulfilled by the

actual manor house and its magnificent grounds. The famed thatched cottages on the main street continue to work their charm on visitors, although the recent addition of glass doors with metal handles on The Good Room Café did not quite fit the image. The Heritage Centre, with its attractive new clock and welcoming services offered by the Tourist Office, Library, retail units and car park, provided an appropriate welcome to the facilities of the village. The work you have carried out on the fountain and its surrounds definitely made an impression. It was good to see that the weeds had been cleared and the area landscaped and it should be magical when the fountain starts to flow. All the village schools were in good order and had neatly presented grounds. The Pitch and Putt Course and the GAA grounds and clubhouse were well presented. Businesses in the village were very well maintained and in addition to the very eye catching ones operating from thatched cottages, we noticed the new units on the Station Road, The Arches Restaurant, Foolish Fairy, Chawkes Pub and Aibheil Bridal Shop. The use of Irish signage on several businesses was heartening.

### **Landscaping:**

It was obvious that a lot of time and effort had been spent on the various displays throughout the village. The magnificent rose beds on the Limerick approach were particularly appealing and the roundabout at Lantern Lodge, with its new shrubs and trees, was a good introduction to the village. The new kerbs, grass verges and planting at Murphy's Cross were taking shape. The Main Street and Rathkeale Road were festooned with colourful hanging baskets and sponsored flower tubs. Well done to all involved. The front gardens of the Dunraven Arms Hotel were striking and the Heritage Centre and AIB gardens were beautifully landscaped. The Town Park was very appealing with the river flowing and lovely seating areas, shrubberies, and an attractive Pagoda. During our visit the park was almost clear of litter, with just a small problem area, around the bench nearest to the road, spoiling the picture. Drews Quay car park on the Station Road was clean and tidy with green metal bollards and neatly cut grassed areas. It would be nice to see the old Station House renovated under a future project.

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

The Riverbank Walk was a very enjoyable experience. The tarmac footpath, well painted white benches and fencing nearby were all of a very high standard, although we did notice one damaged top section of the fence behind one of the benches. The mixture of trees and shrubs planted along the riverbank walk should certainly provide suitable shelter for a wide variety of wildlife and your continuing discussions with Limerick County Council and the OPW should ensure a very successful wildlife amenity area. We did not observe the wildlife display board during our visit but it is sure to enhance the visitor experience when it has been erected.

### **Litter Control:**

Your litter management programme, involving litter patrols organised by the Tidy Schools Committees, seemed to be working fairly efficiently. The large number of litter bins throughout the village were handling the volume of litter well, although the bin outside the Pink Potato did need to be emptied at the time of our visit. Obviously there can be more pressure on some bin locations than others, so it is important that this is factored into the litter collection process. The Town Park was generally clean, however, there was some litter around the bench nearest to the street. The washing pool area was clean and litter free. We were concerned about the quantity of cigarette ends spoiling the Main Street near the supermarket. Perhaps some suitable bins could be installed specifically to tackle this problem. Litter did not seem to be posing any major problems in the various housing estates we visited.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

Congratulations to your 3 schools which have already achieved their Green Flag status and we wish Scoil Naomh Ioseph success in its endeavours to gain its Green Flag. It is very encouraging to note that your schools are all involved in recycling projects and this augurs well for the future of your community. The fact that Adare Manor, Dunraven Arms and Woodlands House Hotels have all achieved waste minimisation awards is also a very positive sign. The provision of free composting bins by the Developer to all households in the Manor Village development is a novel and commendable initiative. The County Council Recycling Centre, at the back of the Heritage Centre, was clean and tidy but someone had left 2 empty beer kegs in front of one bin. In your 5 year Work Programme you refer to some very good initiatives from Limerick County Council and by working together you should make good progress under this category.

### **Tidiness:**

Traffic signs on the approach roads were generally in good condition and it was good to note the new signs at the Heritage Centre. On the Rathkeale approach, however, the brown Adare sign, listing the facilities of the village, was in need of repair. While the village was fairly well presented overall, there were a few areas requiring attention. The windows and door of the building (c.1830) opposite Embury Close were in need of

maintenance. An old gate and pipe lying behind the beautifully renovated Town Hall were detracting from its appearance and should be removed. Near the back of the Heritage Centre Car Park there was a small section of broken kerbing which should be replaced and there were red/white tape strips (hanging from the car park entrance gates) which should be removed. The graveyard was immaculately maintained and a fitting tribute to the previous guardians of the village. The Dovecot, with its new directional signs and pretty tree lined approach, was very impressive. A couple of the stone commemorative plaques in the Town Park and the foundation stone at the Riverbank Walk would look more attractive and would be easier to read if they were cleaned.

### **Residential Areas:**

Adare has a lovely blend of traditional cottages and new homes, providing a high standard of accommodation. On the Cappagh approach, Deerpark estate was well presented and the repair work to the gate pier was noted. In the attractive, new Black Abbey Gate development, it was good to see that landscaping had already taken place even though the houses were still under construction. Desmond Drive was a well established estate with good landscaping. On the Rathkeale approach, The Village new development was taking shape and the open green areas were well maintained. Embury Close was very tranquil with neatly planted gardens and Park Avenue looked well following the improvements to the kerbing and entrance pavements. The Avenue, with its lovely terrace of estate cottages adorned with hanging baskets and window boxes, was very attractive. The more recent Lime Tree Avenue development was maturing nicely but there were some small pockets of weeds near the kerbside. On the Station Road Abbey Estate, Manor Court and Abbeyville were generally well presented with open areas neatly maintained and many houses with hanging baskets and planted containers.

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

The main approach roads to the village were in good condition and the Rathkeale approach was appealing, with the very attractive newly constructed wall and mature trees along the roadside. The Estate Wall along the Limerick approach was litter free and had relatively few weeds at its base. The bridge near the Desmond Castle was very impressive. Back areas and streets in residential developments were in pretty good condition.

### **General Impression:**

From the documents you submitted and our visit to Adare, it was obvious that a considerable amount of work had been undertaken in the past year. The fact that Adare has hosted the Irish Open Golf Championship for the past two years must have been a wonderful catalyst for the various projects undertaken, however, the traffic created by the same event must have had a huge impact on the environmental and safety challenges already facing the village. Your entry has been performing well under the Overall Development Approach and Built Environment but it is vital that you continue to pay attention to the litter control and tidiness aspects of the village. Your proposal to draw up a Litter Abatement Plan with assistance from Limerick County Council and to circulate litter control booklets to all households in the village are very worthwhile projects. Well done on all the achievements to date and success with future endeavours.

### **Second Round Adjudication:**

Adare looked beautiful on the occasion of our second visit also particularly in terms of landscaping and the built environment. The most serious problem encountered was a lot of dumped material / bags at the recycling point behind the Heritage Centre, this was quite shocking given the status of Adare in the Tidy Towns Competition! In addition some of the containers were in need of cleaning urgently. The (almost) wirescape free aspect of the village is acknowledged however the service pole at The Gift Shop premises looks dreadful with its cables radiating in every direction. The village was litter and weed free, well done, your initiatives in litter management are noted. There are many attractive shopfronts in Adare and the new Rococo premises has been considered for an award. The Sean Collins & Sons premises was admired also. consideration might be given to using container plants to the boundary fencing of the B & D Adare yards however it must be said that these are being neatly maintained. Road and footpath surfaces are good in general but some stretches of footpath need repairs to the flagstones along the Main Street. Improvements could be made to a number of boundary walls, fencing and gates. Landscaping to residential developments was admired. It was a real pleasure to see the Rowan trees in berry.