

# Tidy Towns Competition 2012

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Scotstown** Ref: **542**  
County: **Monaghan** Mark: **239**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **06/06/2012**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2011</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2012</b>
Overall Development Approach	50	27	29
The Built Environment	50	28	30
Landscaping	50	31	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	27	27
Litter Control	50	34	35
Tidiness	30	14	15
Waste Minimisation	20	7	8
Residential Areas	40	26	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25	27
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>239</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

This is the first year of your 3-Year Development Plan, a well thought out document that has the advantage over several others seen elsewhere in giving year-by-year goals rather than simply a wish-list of work that needs to be done at any time: all the same, do not be disappointed if every project is not achieved within the timescale given – the important thing is the quality of the work. The Progress Report is impressive, and the numbered photographs helpful in identifying locations. This adjudicator had not been in Scotstown for 6 or 7 years and the extent of the improvements seemed remarkable. The picture of Scotstown in 1915 on the current Monaghan Museum calendar shows how much less prosperous the village was then: the people of that time would think our whingeing about financial constraints quite absurd!

### The Built Environment:

The church, which was not seen by last year's adjudicator due to a wedding, is really beautifully maintained; it is a curious design and one would like to know more about its history. Its setting in the well kept churchyard surrounded by mature trees is most attractive. The GAA Sportlann is also well looked after. The Community Hall will need freshening up with paint before next year. The School was spic and span on the date of the visit with its bright blue logo a discerning feature. The factory opposite is unusually well presented for an industrial premises. The bridge, like the church, is a handsome structure from earlier times, well maintained. Of the business premises the Pharmacy frontage is exemplary.

### Landscaping:

The central lawn where 5 roads meet is neatly kept, enhanced by the flower pyramid. What struck this visitor particularly was the imaginative choice of tub flowers in only one colour (yellow) – so much more interesting than a general hotchpotch of annuals in pots. Roadside planting at St Dymphna's Terrace was more traditional

but none the worse for that. Well done to the committee for clearing the Presbyterian graveyard with its fine sculptural tombs – being at the centre of the village it catches the eye in an impressive way and the illustrated board recalls an almost forgotten era of local history. The yews are probably more than a century-and-a-half old. Thank you for mentioning that you plant bulbs for spring showing which we would otherwise be unaware of.

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

The Millennium Garden is a pleasant and imaginative feature but more careful maintenance is needed: half-a-dozen dead trees should be removed and several small oaks and beeches need to be freed from weed growth. This is something that should be permanently watched. Many trees along the roadsides and in private gardens planted 15 or 20 years ago are now showing their worth. Nothing helps to alleviate the bleakness of the early photograph of Scotstown than what were then young trees, and it is good that the tree-planting tradition continues. It is also good to read that the insect hotel in the Millennium Garden is a great hit with the school children – it would be interesting to know what insects book rooms there. Have the children undertaken an inventory of birds seen in the neighbourhood? This could add to absorbing activities under this heading where the information is rather sparse.

### **Litter Control:**

Litter was not conspicuous on the date of adjudication. It is very encouraging to read how volunteers ceaselessly set themselves the task of litter-picking and that the school children also assist: this is highly commendable but one wishes it was not necessary for these civically minded citizens to clean up after the irresponsible. Have you any idea what is the chief cause of littering in Scotstown and is there any way of stopping it at source? Well publicised prosecutions have been successful elsewhere.

### **Tidiness:**

Weed control is good throughout. The boundary wall of the graveyard mentioned last year as requiring painting has been painted an attractive maroon. A weed infested hut on the Knockatallon road does no favours to the village. The handsome abandoned house next the old graveyard is very prominent – it is obvious that attempts have been made to keep it painted and this is probably the only solution bar its being occupied which is the only real solution. By agreement vacant or unfinished houses left derelict due to planning blight are not being included in the marking pending a decision on what to do with them nationally. Fortunately those on the Smithborough road do not interfere with the appearance of the village centre.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

It is encouraging to read that children are involved in the Green Flag movement and we wish them every success. It is also interesting to read that many residents of Scotstown buy from a farmers' market resulting in a diminution in the recycling process. Certainly the aim should be to eliminate waste before it is produced. It is assumed that segregation of litter is now part of the annual clean-up that is undertaken with the encouragement of the County Council. Energy-saving themes inform the highly competent and amusing posters by children from the National School displayed in the pharmacy window, really getting the message across. Congratulations to all who took part in this worthwhile exercise.

### **Residential Areas:**

The traditional houses of the village street were observed to be well presented. Some may at one time have been thatched. Many pleasant individual homes were seen, particularly on the Tydavnet road, mostly with very pleasant gardens enhancing the neighbourhood; one has a wonderfully well nurtured high beech hedge. The homes of St Dymphna's Terrace – a typical mid 20th century development that has endured the years remarkably well – are also looked after with pride. The Ferns obviously has a very active Residents Association judging by the documentation and pictures provided; young trees were seen to be doing well and they will make all the difference in a surprisingly short time; the central lawn was trim and the name stone a real work of the sculptor's art. It is hoped that a solution will be found for the unfinished house. (Where, one wondered, were the ferns?)

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

Resurfacing of the main roads appeared to be complete; road markings were very clear. The strong wooden fencing on many roadsides and also at The Ferns was much admired, giving a sense of cohesion. Admirable wall building had been completed in the past and at the time of adjudication was continuing above the bridge on the Tydavnet road. Elegant lighting standards were favourably noted.

### **General Impression:**

There seemed to be a particular spurt in activity this year and last, occasioning a substantial increase in marking. Congratulations for the leadership of the Tidy Towns committee and to the Local Authority for

responding to the needs of the village so well. Most of all congratulations to the business people and residents, and especially to the schoolchildren whose input has been so marked.