

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **COORACLARE**  
County : **CLARE**  
Category : **A**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 13-06-1999

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	31	31
The Built Environment	40	27	24
Landscaping	40	27	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	21
Litter Control	40	25	25
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	18	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	23	23
General Impression	10	6	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>188</b>

## **Cooraclare, County Clare**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Cooraclare is welcome to the 1999 Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your completed application and sketch map. Well done on the level of support from local business, residents, farming community and also on your links with Clare County Council and FAS. The involvement of local schools is a fine achievement. There are some lovely scenic views from the village to the surrounding countryside, for example the view of the surrounding hills from the carpark of the sports grounds and, of course, there are wonderful scenic views into the village from some approach roads, particularly the higher approach roads (i.e. the one coming down from the sports grounds). A footpath from the village up to the sports grounds would be appropriate for this narrow winding road.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

Most buildings in the village are presented to a very high standard and there are many attractive shopfronts. Perhaps the strongest point for Cooraclare in the competition is its excellent use of colour. The majority of buildings were well painted and colours were well mixed. The school looks exceptionally well as does the church and other public buildings. Well done on the painting of the old Creamery also, though its rear façade should be brought to the same high standard and timber or other solid gates provided. Well done on the completion of the Community Hall and on its excellent presentation. Its adjacent weather-stained wall should now be cleaned or painted, preferably the same colour as the hall itself. There are so many well painted buildings that it is difficult to single one out for attention, however the presentation of the Post Office is excellent and it is particularly good to note that its gable wall has received the same attention as its roadside façade, (the weeds up around the chimney take away from it a little). The adjoining incidental amenity area is beautiful. The building across from the Creamery could be painted to freshen its appearance.

### **LANDSCAPING**

Well done on the riverside amenity development. The newly constructed stone flower beds around the village and on approach roads look well and flowers were in bloom for adjudication. Further landscaping should focus on permanent trees and shrubs, native in origin, to attract wildlife. The wire and post fencing to the yard which stores farm machinery could be planted with a climbing plant or wild flowering hedgerow to give greater screenage and to improve its appearance. The wire fencing at the shrine, no doubt will be replaced with a more attractive form of enclosure, perhaps a low stone wall or attractive fencing.

## **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

You are aware, of course, of the abundance of wildlife in the village and its hinterland. Perhaps the community could undertake a project that would heighten awareness of the wildlife value of your beautiful village. The new Tidy Towns Handbook has excellent advice and guidelines and is a wonderful source of ideas for such an undertaking. Lush stands of Dogrose were noted on approach roads and in several locations around the village. You might consider adopting a wildflower theme for a wildlife project. The small riverside amenity development is very beautiful. Well done both on the development and its standard of maintenance!

## **LITTER CONTROL**

Both the new litter bins and the weekly County Council sweeping and washing together with the daily sweeping by FAS, have all played their part in achieving a very good standard of litter control for Cooraclare. Litter bins appear to be adequate, one across the road from the creamery had been knocked over and needs to be straightened.

## **TIDINESS**

The level of voluntary work on the part of shop owners, householders and school children is reflected in the tidy appearance of Cooraclare. You are, of course, aware of the problem presented by derelict sites. We appreciate the difficulties with absentee owners. Have you approached the County Council for help in this respect? No doubt the open storage of building material in the carpark of Páirc Chuar an Chláir is a temporary arrangement.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

The majority of properties are presented to a very high standard under this heading. Some boundary walls need to be treated, for example one near the junction for the sports grounds should be plastered or stone faced and the roadside area to the boundary wall grassed or resurfaced. A weather-stained gable wall of a semi-detached house on the road down from the sports grounds towards the bridge needs treatment as it is highly visible on entering the village from this road. Some fencing to residential properties is in need of attention also. Encourage all householders to maintain the side and rear areas to their properties, which are visible from the public road, in as tidy a manner as possible. The large double-fronted residential property on the Tir na Glohane road is a particularly handsome building and it is hoped that its fine traditional features will be retained upon refurbishment, it currently looks as if it is vacant. A co-ordinated colour scheme is recommended for the terrace of three houses near the bridge at the entrance from the Kilrush road. The roadside

area to the boundary wall of a residential property near the shrine is to a very high standard having being recently tarmacadamed. This is the standard that should be achieved throughout, alternatively roadside areas could be grassed with neat roadside edges.

### **ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS**

All approach roads to the village have been recently trimmed for adjudication and looked neat. However cuttings had been left behind in many cases to become discoloured and this looks unattractive. Can these be removed after cutting as part of the cutting process? The carpark at Páirc Chuar an Chláir needs to be resurfaced and offers further opportunity for landscaping. The whitewashed walls could be planted with climbing plants or shrubs. A number of roadsigns needed to be cleaned or refurbished. The phone box could have been better presented.

### **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

The view of the village nestling amongst the trees and situated on the river bank when approaching from the Tir na Glohane road is quite striking with its well painted colourful buildings and its backdrop of mature trees and shrubs.