

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **COOLANEY**
County : **SLIGO**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 21-06-99

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	32	31
The Built Environment	40	27	26
Landscaping	40	31	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	22	20
Litter Control	40	28	25
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	22	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	31	28
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	214	203

Coolaney, County Sligo

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for your completed questionnaire, colourful map, and "Coolaney Area Action Plan". It was all very helpful in setting the scene for adjudication. Your fund raising ventures and community involvement, along with your continued co-operation with the County Council and other interested bodies was again noted, and the benefits of these partnerships will continue to enhance and enrich the village and its community. It is unfortunate that you lost your FAS Scheme but your interim solution will also be effective. Your new booklet also looks well, congratulations to all involved. As part of the competition, the Tidy Towns Committee are requested to include a proposed long-term work programme, incorporating the various aspects of the competition headings for the village. Whilst acknowledging the very detailed Area Action Plan is an excellent document, a clear and simple 3/5 year plan, outlining achievable targets specifically for the committee, will help focus your work in the future, and also helps the adjudicator to measure your progress.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Coolaney has many fine features within the village that contribute to its overall appearance. Once again many of the public, business and residential properties in the village are attractively presented and maintained, with attractive floral features. J.J.O'Grady's caught the eye, and the Happy Landing, Sproule's, Community Centre and Post Office also looked well. The Riverside Inn was freshly painted although the rear of the premises needs a little more attention as it is obvious from the river walk. The committee must also encourage business people to keep the areas in front of their shops and pubs clear and tidy to avoid interfering with safe access for those with disabilities. Once again last year's comments apply re: some properties needing attention and having their paint work refreshed.

LANDSCAPING

Once again, some nice landscaping features, attractive window boxes, tubs, and hanging baskets were evident, providing a lovely splash of colour to the whole streetscape. Your tree planting throughout the village looks well but ensure that all your trees are properly staked and supported. The whole area around the fountain looks very well, but the fountain itself could be cleaned, with the algae removed to highlight the lovely stone. The monument is also a focal feature at this end of the village, the paving still

needs a little repair work, and the trees and adjoining banks behind it also need some attention. Your careful choice of seasonal/perennial plants in your landscape features, provide a good mix of colour and content to last the whole year round.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The riverside walk looks really well now that it is fully finished, it was tidy and litter free and the sign was also admired. There is a great selection of bird life on this river walk. While you have acknowledged last year's comments, they still apply in part. Do not be tempted to over develop or excessively clear away growth along the river, as the river banks' wild grass and flowers are as worthy of preserving as a view of the river. There are some Leylandii trees planted as a screen in the field between the river and fountain, and this adjudicator wonders about the effect of their growth/height in the future as they may darken this whole area. Well done for acknowledging and enhancing your lovely river and I hope the community enjoys your efforts.

LITTER CONTROL

There was virtually no litter in the village on the day of adjudication, your Litter Awareness Programme is proving very effective. Your voluntary clean up days, household circulars and school project are all commendable. This programme along with your well maintained bins and effective results all contribute to an increase in marks in this section. Your new "Keep Coolaney Clean and Green" sign were also admired, well done, but the committee and community must remain vigilant in this important area of the competition.

TIDINESS

The village presented a tidy appearance on the day of adjudication, with attractive landscaping and many well maintained features adding to the overall appearance. The many effective gates screening back yards were noted, but there is still an odd side alley/back yard that need similar treatment. The area at the entrance to the football pitch remains untidy and could be tidied by the organisations using it as a depot area, including removal of the empty cable reels. Although it must be said that the removal of the telephone poles themselves will certainly enhance the streetscape. The level crossing area could be an attractive feature if tidied. The derelict house (ref-6) was once again very well presented, having acquired some painted curtains flowers and a door. The other painted derelict house was also noted, and your ongoing challenge with the remaining derelict/untidy properties continues. These properties continue to detract from the overall appearance of the

streetscape and you must persevere with solving this problem. It is important that all areas of the village are appropriately maintained and kept tidy and litter/weed free, including forecourts, back yards, kerb edges, all open spaces, and areas between properties.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The majority of houses throughout the village and on the approach roads, were generally well presented. The attractive hedges, lawns and colourful flowers in some individual gardens were noted, as were some attractive tubs and window boxes, and hanging baskets. Well done to all concerned for their hard work. Once again the lovely garden in the home adjoining the fountain, the small gardens opposite the Garda Station, and the flower features at the house next to the river walk lane caught the eye. The refurbished cottages look well, especially as they are in a block on their own and adjoining a similar stone building. It is fortunate that the stonework on the cottages was good, after the traditional plastering had been removed. This process is not always to be recommended as sometimes the stone work is poorly finished, hence the plastering with its often unique rendering is used to improve presentation, blending in with the similar traditional appearance of the streetscape.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Once again all the major approach roads were well presented with some nicely faced hedges, tidy verges, and tidy stone walls. All the signs looked well, particularly the attractive bi-lingual welcome signs, as did the bridges, landscaping and trees. The small approach road in the centre of town still needs to be tidied up. The riverside walkway looked very well, and the new bollards were noted. The standard of presentation of the back gardens here, has also improved, but the Community Centre, and butcher shop rear gardens still need to be tidied or screened. The completed stone wall, landscaping and footpaths at the end of the village look really well, as will the remaining footpaths under construction when they are continued up the length of the village. Road surfaces were good, and also contribute to the presentation of the village. The graveyard area was also tidy and well maintained.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Once again, the committed enthusiasm and hard work of the committee and community is evident throughout the village. Your obvious pride in your village is commendable. Continued partnership with local bodies, perseverance in overcoming the challenge of dereliction, and a commitment to attention to detail, must be sustained, to allow Coolaney develop, to its optimum potential.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (06/08/99)

Coolaney, set against a backdrop of mountain and located on the banks of the Owenbeg river, was presented to a very high standard on the evening of our second adjudication. Litter control was excellent, flower displays were in bloom and the village exuded a rural tranquillity that is becoming more and more rare these days in Ireland. Well done on the ducting of service cables, we look forward to its completion. There is scope for further landscaping along the main street. You might care to consider planting trees on footpaths along the main street. Has any consideration been given to adopting a co-ordinated colour scheme for buildings? Rockfield Cemetery was neatly presented with its attractive stone boundary wall. All approach roads to the village were presented to a very high standard. The nameplate on the Rockfield entrance to the village was dirty and the mound in which it is established looks somewhat unattractive, no doubt this problem will be rectified for next year. The new fountain is an attractive feature of the village together with the adjacent monument. Residential properties under construction will be finished to a high standard. One or two existing properties were in need of cleaning and/or painting. The Riparian Walk is most impressive, well done! Some of your road signs, (for example speed limit signs) need to be refurbished.