

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **ARDGROOM VILLAGE**
County : **CORK**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 06-07-2000

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2000	Mark Awarded 1999
Overall Developmental Approach	50	39	39
The Built Environment	40	32	32
Landscaping	40	30	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	19	18
Litter Control	40	33	33
Tidiness	20	13	13
Residential Areas	30	24	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	19	18
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	216	214

Ardgroom, Co. Cork

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Ardgroom is a most attractive village which sits very happily in its rural location. The village integrates excellently with the surrounding landscape, and there are some fine views from the centre of the village that help to reinforce this. Progress in the competition will be dependent on everyone working towards the same ends. With this in mind you should prepare a "3 /5 Year rolling Tidy Towns Work Programme". This programme should have the support of the community, local groups, other agencies and the County Council. It would therefore guide your Tidy Towns actions for the next three to five years. The Work Programme will detail the Tidy Towns objectives to be achieved by your committee in the years ahead. The preparation of such a Plan that is updated annually is now an important aspect of the Tidy Towns Competition. Your Plan does not need to be longer than about five pages and it should be realistic in the objectives contained therein.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Your Application Form points out the difficulty that there is in regard to the prominent building in the centre of the village. This building occupies a critical location in the village as it is located at one of the main road junctions. The resolution of this difficulty will mark a major step forward in progress in the competition for Ardgroom. The National School presents a further challenge for you. Can you try and have the walls white-washed a few times each year, while plans are developed for the future use of this building. The Post office building is another key building in the village and again this year it looked very well as did the Church and grounds. The streetscape in Ardgroom is an interesting one and the village has an atmosphere of a traditional Irish village, much admired by visitors. A good use is made of colour and this is to be encouraged. Watch out for the growth of weeds and grass in the gutters on one or two buildings. A few projecting shop signs still exist – are they really necessary and do they help to attract additional business – the adjudicator does not think so. The Mural on the end wall of the Holly Bar is well done and draws attention to some of the archaeological history of the area. Some of the buildings on the "Old Road" are in need of attention, and a general tidying up.

LANDSCAPING

The developed amenity area at the road junction by the Glenbeg turn is well done and adds an excellent feature to your village. You are to be congratulated on this. The Wild Roses here help to give a very natural feel to this small area.

Can you consider extending your amenity area up the stream behind the water-pump feature? The timber railings on the way down to the amenity area are in need of re-painting. The work that you have done in this area helps to integrate the river into the life of the village and this is most important.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

On your approach roads the banks have been handled very well in terms of providing some wild areas for birds. There are some good low small walls in your area and these too have encouraged the growth of wild plants and also provide an area for birds and other wild-life. The hanging baskets and window boxes looked well on adjudication day. As last year's adjudicator pointed out, please do not be tempted to over-do the provision of window boxes. Do let the character of the village speak for itself.

LITTER CONTROL

On adjudication day litter control was good and only occasional pieces of litter were noted on some of the approach roads.

TIDINESS

The barbed-wire fencing noted on the Lauragh and the Coast Road approach roads did not look well. Have you considered having this replaced by a simple timber post and rail fence painted matt black? The corrugated iron building that can be seen from the Church car park needs attention, and the painting of this roof green would be a major improvement. On the Coast Road approach to Ardgroom, an untidy area was noted by the signpost at the small open space on the left hand side of the road. The piles of stone here should be removed and perhaps this area could be landscaped as part of your overall Plan for Ardgroom. As you are aware the area surrounding the old National School is very untidy with long grass and weeds. By the amenity area at the Glenbeg road junction the timber and corrugated iron shed needs attention in terms of painting, especially on the river- side. A number of the poles used for road-signs are unpainted and these should be painted matt black. An apparently abandoned white van was noted in an opening on the Glenbeg road.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Private houses and gardens were very well presented. Here and there weed growth at the bottom of boundary walls was noted. A number of excellently presented private gardens were noted and much work has obviously gone into the maintenance of these.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The excellent road surfaces on the Lauragh and Castletownbere approaches were noted. On the Lauragh approach the Ardgroom sign could not be seen due to the growth of vegetation, and some trimming back here is required. Generally the main approach roads were well presented and they had not been over maintained, and this is important from the wildlife point of view. Some good low stone walls were noted on some approach roads and these help to echo the rugged surrounding landscape of the Ardgroom area. In one or two instances the speed limit signs were partially obscured by growth.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Ardgroom is a village that has managed to preserve some excellent features and the village as a whole fits well into the surrounding landscape. There are two major problems as this report has earlier identified, and the resolution of these must be key objectives of your Tidy Towns Action Plan.