

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **DONEGAL**
County : **DONEGAL**
Category : **D**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 05-08-2001

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2001	Mark Awarded 2000
Overall Developmental Approach	50	27	29
The Built Environment	40	35	35
Landscaping	40	30	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	11	11
Litter Control	40	23	23
Tidiness	20	14	12
Residential Areas	30	27	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	24	24
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	198	199

Donegal Town, County Donegal

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for your completed questionnaire and map, these were very helpful. As part of the competition you are requested to include a proposed long-term work programme, incorporating the various aspects of the competition headings for the town. A clear and simple 3/5 year plan, outlining achievable targets for the committee will help focus your work in the future, and also help the adjudicator to measure your progress.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Donegal has many features within the town that contribute to its overall appearance. Many of the public, business and residential properties in the town are attractively presented and maintained, however there are a number of derelict premises in the town that look very unsightly. Corrigan's close to the railway station, a site close to Magee's, and the mart area are some examples. The varied Churches in their focal positions looked very well. The F.C.A. headquarters, Adult Education Centre and Castle all looked tidy. The schools in the town looked well with some nice landscaping noted particularly at the Secondary school on the Sligo road. The Masonic Hall needs its paintwork refreshed. The railway station was an admirable site for restoration and the building looks well. It was nice to see Magee's hanging baskets in the middle of a very derelict area. Some premises on Upper Main Street had some lovely window boxes while closer to the Diamond some premises had some empty boxes that need to be removed. Similarly some premises in this area need to pay attention to the upper levels of their buildings and maintain their original sash windows and remove weeds from gutters and chimneys. The Atlantic Restaurant with its lovely flowers caught the eye and was among some of the town centre premises that had some flower features. The Co. Council Sanitary Services premises needs to be tided. Rowanfield House looked well as did the Eircom Headquarters with its local stone sign. Lidl also have some nice landscaping. The old District Hospital Building with its original windows is worthy of some appropriate preservation.

LANDSCAPING

The landscaping features in the town were not particularly consistent. The Diamond is an important focal point and amongst the large crowd using it, looked well. The Famine graveyard and by-pass picnic area looked tidy. Last year's comments re the Churches, public and business premises contributions still apply, with Abbot and the Craft centre looking very well again. A mix of perennial planting was noted in some beds in the Car Parks and some tidy open grass areas were also noted but there are further

opportunities for some landscape features throughout the town available.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The T.T.C. have an important role in preserving and suitably enhancing the natural environment within their community. You have sites for conserving wildlife habitats including the estuary, river and some lovely mature woods all within the town. A wide variety of birdlike was present at the estuary and this adjudicator found some wild military orchids at the top of the Ardeskin Estate demonstrating the varied fauna you already have. Wild flower meadows / grass areas, nesting boxes, pond/water features, trees and hedgerows offer additional opportunities. The local children and their school and grounds are an option for developing some of these opportunities. Work in conjunction with relevant local bodies, ENFO, or a local wildlife expert to develop this area.

LITTER CONTROL

There was some litter evident on the day of adjudication, at the entrance to the Ardeskin estate, at the Post Office, in the Diamond on Upper Main Street and in the Car Parks. There was also litter in Bridge St. and last years comments still apply about your litterbins. A Litter Awareness Programme and appropriately maintained and sited bins, also contribute to the marks in this section. The committee and community must remain vigilant in this very important area at all times.

TIDINESS

The overall impression of the town was a mixed one with some premises and areas detracting from the areas that had made some progress in this area. Some rubble close to Boyle Tiles needs to be cleared.

There is graffiti on a fine stone derelict building behind the bus station, on the Driving Test Centre building and on the Car Park signs in the town centre. Some rubble past the scruffy sheds at the County Donegal Educational Centre needs to be removed. Dereliction was mentioned earlier in the report and is a problem faced by many entrants often imaginatively, using simple cosmetic tidy ups to improve the presentation of untidy sites. It is important that all areas of the town are appropriately maintained and kept tidy and litter / weed free, including forecourts, back yards, kerb edges, all open spaces, and areas between properties. Back alleys/yards, should be appropriately screened particularly in areas that will attract rubbish or dumping.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The majority of houses throughout the town 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, in some of the

town houses. Some fabulous roses caught the eye at a house in Waterloo place. This splash of colour is very welcoming and always brightens up a streetscape, well done for the hard work to those responsible. However the nicely maintained homes highlight those that need attention or their paintwork refreshed both in the town, housing developments and on the approach roads. Drumoosk Estate had some lovely trees and a good road surface and St. Josephs Ave. also had a nice green area and play area with some lovely individual gardens. Some of the other residential areas had some nice open areas but some roadside weed clearance is needed in some areas.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The approach roads are the first impression of any town and require particular attention for this reason. Some nice stone walls, nicely faced hedges and tidy verges that did not compromise the flora and fauna were noted on some of the approach roads. The by-pass has some impressive tree planting. The roundabout at the Mountcharles road needs attention, and some lovely tree planting and beech hedging were noted at this road. The metal bridge needs to be repainted. The Laghy road had a good road surface and tidy verges. The Town Centre Car Park looks well with some good screening gates and a nice little landscape feature at the rear of Millcourt.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The adjudicator was impressed with many aspects of Donegal Town. The committee need to foster co-operation with local bodies and organisations that may be able to help with advice and ideas in many areas of the competition. Do not be discouraged, “good housekeeping” perseverance and attention to detail will allow Donegal Town to optimise its full potential.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (05/08/01)

A large new development was underway at the riverside car park area leading up to the Diamond on the day. Hopefully it will be in keeping with the town’s unique character and atmosphere. Although the Garda Station looked well, its window boxes looked extremely neglected and the flowers contained in them appeared to be dead. Graffiti was noted to litter bins. There was a severe litter problem on the day, in particular, at the Diamond. Papers and cans were noted even in the planters and had evidently been there for some time to judge by the litter under the tree grilles. Do discourage advertising hoardings on approach roads as they can give the approach roads a very cluttered appearance. Donegal is an attractive town with much to offer the visitor – do increase your efforts in relation to landscaping and litter control.