

# Tidy Towns Competition 2004

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ardara**

Ref: **292**

County: **Donegal**

Mark: **179**

Category: **C**

Date: **25/06/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33	32
The Built Environment	40	24	23
Landscaping	40	23	23
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	14	14
Litter Control	40	26	26
Tidiness	20	10	10
Residential Areas	30	20	17
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	23	22
General Impression	10	6	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>173</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

The 3-5 year plan submitted with the application & concise map was very useful. There are always more things to be done but as with any active committee a plan will focus and prioritise what needs to be done urgently and form a basis for what can be achieved in the future, putting a specific time frame around that plan would also be very effective.

There is a challenge for the committee within a town where some properties are striving ahead with upgrade and developments but they stand alongside even a few derelict or non operational buildings. The Town is quite spread out as it is on Front Street and Main street but it is holding its own and indeed work on some of the commercial fronts have added to the attractiveness of the town.

### The Built Environment:

The towns mix of buildings old and new is quite a challenge from a visual look but great strides have been made with regard to the commercial buildings and some notables were The Beehive Bar, Chas McHugh, The Hotel, Bosco McGill and The Medical Hall. There are a number of properties on Main Street and Front Street that need attention and that are now maybe all the more obvious based on the upgrade of buildings. The House beside the bank that is burnt out is particularly noticeable as is the Cinema and previous known Lobster Pot restaurant all in need of attention. The Heritage Centre at the bottom of Front Street is an attractive focal building but I would look to see about cleaning the stone work outside and adding the missing letters to the Sign "Heritage".

## **Landscaping:**

The Diamond area is a focal and attractive area for the town as is the Bridge area over the Owentocker river. Hanging baskets and planting are particularly nice in both these areas and certainly where buildings have baskets and flowers it adds immensely to the town picture. There could be some improvement on the green areas at the housing estates. Ard Conail looks well but could do with more planting and shrubs and Drimaghy Park could further develop the green areas with some enduring and strong plants. The private houses on the main approach roads to the town are landscaped to a high standard and are very attractive as you approach the town.

## **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

There are plans afoot to develop this area of natural amenity and wildlife within the town. The location of the area with the Owentucker River and country/rural area it would be ideal to develop walks for both. A nature walk at Woodhill would be excellent and certainly if plans go ahead under the Village Renewal Scheme it will be an excellent addition to the town. I would suggest in the interim some signs or plaques in the diamond area highlighting the walks, wildlife and natural amenities for the local area, again involving the school children in Nature Projects and displaying somewhere central like the Heritage Centre would be a start with regard to education and tapping into the natural resources of the area.

## **Litter Control:**

There was small amounts of litter noticed on the main street and front street also in one of the Housing estates. It is very difficult to eradicate litter completely due to external factors with visitor numbers and children now out of school with normal day to day commercial existence. Overall the town was litter free and certainly bins and the bottle bank areas were visible. Every town has the difficult challenge of controlling litter and from an education point of view starting with the children and their involvement is the beginning of such a programme. The art Competition is an excellence initiative and any on going plans to focus in on this area will pay off dividends in the long term.

## **Tidiness:**

There is some building work going on at the Main Street and as such causes some disruption to tidiness. It will always be part of any on going development within towns, but the Tidy Town committee can play their part by ensuring that the site is kept as tidy as possible with most of the building supplies kept away from main public areas and that once work is completed the site is left in a good state of finish. Visually the town scene was disrupted somewhat by the Fish & Chip Van on the main street as were some of the displays on the pavements and overhead from Shop Fronts which were a cause for note.

## **Residential Areas:**

The Committee is trying to involve the two housing estates Drimaghy Park and Ard Connell to be more active in their own area and although there is need for further work there are noticeable improvements, some of the houses have nice paint work and generally are well maintained these do show up one or two properties that could do with improvement. Grass in the greens areas needed cutting, and possibly some planting would be an addition to these areas especially around the sides as you approach the estates. The new houses off Front Street look well and the newness of these is still very much evident. The Private residences on all the main approach roads Narin, Killybegs, Donegal and Glenties are all finished to a very high standard and the foliage is in full bloom with these mature lawns and all properties most properties are obviously very house proud.

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

All approach roads are very good, hedge rows were trimmed and all signs were good and visible. Along Front Street and Main Street there are uneven areas on the roads which could do with some repair. The Diamond area is very well finished and even, and certainly this would be excellent standard at other poor areas throughout the town. Once the daffodil planting comes to bloom this will certainly be a lovely addition as you approach Ardara.

### **General Impression:**

The Plan is to better the town over the next 5 years. Two key aspects to concentrate on would be when the transference of lands have taken place from the control of the Town Trustees to the Parish Council, that the work envisaged can be completed to a high standard. Secondly, when the work is completed on the sewerage system for the town, these two initiatives themselves will create a certain amount of disruption in the short term but will pay dividends for Ardara in the long term. There is quite obviously a good commitment and dedication from the 10 members of the Tidy Towns Committee and work accomplished thus far has reaped benefits for this year.