

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Buncrana**

Ref: **550**

County: **Donegal**

Mark: **223**

Category: **D**

Date: **28/06/2004**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2004 | Mark Awarded 2003 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Overall Developmental Approach | 50 | 36 | 35 |
| The Built Environment | 40 | 34 | 32 |
| Landscaping | 40 | 35 | 31 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 30 | 27 | 24 |
| Litter Control | 40 | 20 | 16 |
| Tidiness | 20 | 14 | 13 |
| Residential Areas | 30 | 24 | 22 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 40 | 25 | 24 |
| General Impression | 10 | 8 | 6 |
| TOTAL MARK | 300 | 223 | 203 |

Overall Developmental Approach:

Buncrana has succeeded in harnessing public, commercial and voluntary bodies to create a dynamic force to improve Buncrana and its environs. The well thought out and creative 2003-2006 Plan, together with the many informative maps and appendices, which you submitted (thus implementing last year's recommendation), were very helpful. You have outlined a list of objectives in your plan which when implemented, should certainly advance Buncrana in the Tidy Towns competition.

The Built Environment:

Buncrana combines a bustling business and commercial town, a seaside resort and a busy harbour. Major development work has been carried out at the harbour and the new ferry is bringing an air of vibrancy to the area. Public buildings are well presented, in particular, the Library, the Adult Education Training Centre, Garda Station, the Catholic Church and Church of Ireland. Most business premises in the Main Street are well maintained and painted. It is nice to see a new shopping street – New Street - being developed in the town centre, rather than building out-of-town shopping malls, which is so often the case nowadays. This adds life to the town. The Festival Park, which is an excellent community facility, is colourful and well presented and was a hive of activity on the day of inspection. Private houses in the older streets are well maintained. You have taken the initiative of writing to the owners of some neglected and derelict premises and it is hoped that you are

successful in your efforts to get them to respond. There are some business premises in the town centre urgently in need of attention. The two Fruit of the Loom Factories are dominant features, but care needs to be taken that the closed factory does not fall into disrepair.

Landscaping:

A major programme of work has been carried out in landscaping open spaces. The landscaping of the Derry Road roundabout, with its magnificent presentation of shrubs, flowers and trees was very impressive. The Seashore front and car park were neatly presented. However, the strip bordering the road could do with some attention.

All open spaces on approach roads have benefited from the landscaping programme that you have implemented. Again, there was a nice shrubbery around the Fruit of the Loom factory, but it contains one dead tree that should be replaced. Residential areas, both old and new, were very well presented. There are some beautifully maintained old private gardens with their impressive display of flowers, shrubs and old mature trees.

The riverside walk at O'Doherty's keep and Swan Park with their magnificent mature trees and wide-open spaces are very impressive. Leisure areas such as the tennis club and Football fields were well maintained although the perimeter could do with some landscaping. There are some nice arrangements of timber flower boxes. The Town Council's ongoing tree planting programme is noteworthy.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

You have made significant and creative inroads into the preservation and enhancement of your natural amenities. The Butterfly Park, which has been created in Swan Park, is to be highly commended. The involvement of so many people, particularly young children, in its development is a very good example of the harnessing of energies for the common good. The very detailed information board is of considerable help in interpretation and informing the public. The tree-planting programme, which is being carried out, is providing good cover for birds. Bunrana's proximity to the sea and the river provides an opportunity for the protection and interpretation of the wild life and fauna of the area.

Litter Control:

The annual spring clean-ups are contributing significantly to cleaning up the town and its environs. However, constant vigilance is required. Apart from a few exceptions, most streets and open spaces in the town were generally litter free on the day of inspection. There were occasional pieces of litter on Main Street, and there was an accumulation of rubbish in an alleyway between the Bank of Ireland and the Abracadabra restaurant. The appointment of a litter warden should be of help in curtailing litter.

Tidiness:

Apart from some premises already referred to, most business premises and residential houses presented a neat and tidy appearance. The harbour area and shorefront open spaces are particularly well maintained. However, the comments made in last year's adjudicator's report are still relevant. There were too many merchandise and advertising stands in the main shopping street, some of which presented hazards to the public. Taxi advertising signs looked untidy and need upgrading. Graffiti on the walls of the laneway leading from the library to Main Street was unsightly. The Courthouse railings could do with a coat of paint.

Residential Areas:

The introduction of a competition for the best-kept residential area is a worthy initiative.

Private housing and residential areas are generally well maintained. Older houses, with beautiful gardens and impressive shrubberies, in roads and streets such as Aileach Road are very well presented and contribute to the character of the town. Open spaces in housing estates were generally well maintained.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach road from Derry looks very well, with the beautifully landscaped roundabout providing a very impressive entrance. Most residential streets had an appearance of being well cared for. You should take on board the recommendations of last year's report, particularly regarding doing a survey of back areas for each street and road.

General Impression:

Considerable progress has been made in achieving the objectives set out in your plan and this progress is reflected in the marks awarded. Main Street should now be given a priority in your plans for 2005 with particular emphasis being placed on solving the problems of neglected and derelict premises.