

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Malin**

Ref: **437**

County: **Donegal**

Mark: **265**

Category: **B**

Date: **06/04/2004**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2004 | Mark Awarded 2003 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Overall Developmental Approach | 50 | 41 | 40 |
| The Built Environment | 40 | 35 | 35 |
| Landscaping | 40 | 36 | 36 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 30 | 25 | 25 |
| Litter Control | 40 | 39 | 39 |
| Tidiness | 20 | 17 | 17 |
| Residential Areas | 30 | 27 | 26 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 40 | 36 | 36 |
| General Impression | 10 | 9 | 9 |
| TOTAL MARK | 300 | 265 | 263 |

Overall Developmental Approach:

Your determination to progress in the Tidy Towns competition is reflected in the detailed notes from the meeting with Caroline Dickson Architects, which you provided. These notes lay out, on a task-by-task basis, the way forward. Of critical importance is your stated wish to develop and implement your three-year plan. The reduction in the number of members on your committee is noted. It is essential that you continue to harness the whole community in order to maintain and improve on the standards that have been set and your achievements to date. The map you provide, whilst useful, would be more helpful if buildings, sites of importance and roads were identified.

The Built Environment:

The Diamond continues to be the main focal point of the village. Most businesses and private premises are well maintained. There were some eye-catching displays of flower tubs, window boxes and hanging baskets. The Church of Ireland is very well maintained and the ivy growth on the front wall gave it added character. There was some building work in progress on the corner of the Diamond, and the building site was kept neat and tidy. The national school is neatly painted and the hanging baskets looked beautiful. The stone walls, which are very much part of the built environment in Malin, have been painted white as have the kerbs stones around the green in the Diamond. While this brightens up the area, it is a colour that needs constant maintenance. In fact many of the white walls are beginning to show signs of discolouring as a result of traffic or weathering. The thatched cottage on the Glengad, with the ploughs on display looked well. You are

to be commended on the provision of disabled access in the public toilets. The exterior of the hall was in process of being painted on the day of inspection.

Landscaping:

The overall standard of landscaping in Malin was very good. Approach roads were well presented, with verges neatly trimmed and shrubberies planted. There was a nice use of local materials in the neat wooden flower box arrangements. The Diamond was extremely well presented, with its combination of neatly trimmed grass, mature and young trees, rose bushes and floral arrangements. The open area beside the Health Centre looked very well. Picnic areas were well presented. Small areas of colour, window boxes and hanging baskets added visual interest throughout the village. The open area in front of the Connolly Homes, with some shrubs planted and a background of mature trees in the surrounding fields, looked very well. This adjudicator considers that this combination presents a beautiful vista. Private gardens looked very well and open spaces in residential areas were well maintained.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The location of Malin, with the sea on its doorstep, and combination of diverse habitats, including mature tree cover and the river, offers excellent opportunities for the protection and preservation of wild life in the area. You have already identified in the report, which you attached, many of the birds that colonise the area. Your plans for developing a river walk are noted. You should also include in your plans some proposals for the interpretation and identification of the flora and fauna of the area. This will add to the education and enjoyment of locals and visitors alike.

Litter Control:

Your work in organising regular clean ups is commendable. There was a very high standard of litter control evident in Malin. There was no litter in evidence on any of the approach roads or open areas in the village. Streets outside business premises were litter free. There were two exceptions - in the car park at the rear of the hotel, which contained quite an accumulation of boxes and rubbish, and, also, there were some empty drink cans thrown on the ground adjacent to the recycling bins.

Tidiness:

The overall appearance of the village was neat and tidy. Your proposal to have cables in areas adjacent to the village centre placed underground was noted and is encouraged. Litterbins in the Diamond showed evidence of rust and need painting. As commented on above, the car park at the rear of the hotel presents an untidy appearance.

Residential Areas:

Private houses in the village and all approach roads were presented to a very high standard. Gardens and open spaces were neatly landscaped, and there were some eye-catching floral displays.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

All approach roads were well maintained and gave an appearance of being well cared for. Care should be taken not to overdo trimming of grass verges. It was noted that a directional sign for Glengad was thrown at the rear of the building site on the Diamond. As commented on previously, the stone walls that have been painted white will need to be cared for on an ongoing basis.

General Impression:

Malin continues to set high standards, but constant vigilance and attention to detail is necessary in order to maintain and improve on the high goals that you have set for yourselves. Your excellent development plan identifies the key tasks that you need to accomplish in order to make the next significant step forward. You should also take account of the comments contained in the reports from both last year and this year.

Second Round Adjudication:

The charming village of Malin is always a pleasure to visit, and this year was no exception! This adjudicator was in agreement with the First Adjudicator in relation to the whitewashed walls of the village-they are a distinct feature of Malin but looked a little less pristine and sparkling than they normally do! It would be a shame to see the tradition lost, so perhaps more vigilance is required for next year's competition? Sensitivity will also be required regarding proposals for incorporating a pedestrian element to the unusual and magnificent stone bridge entering the village, to ensure that it is not compromised in any way. Get your architect to check the local development plan, this adjudicator feels sure that the bridge should be listed as a protected structure in this document. The new picnic area with timber seating and new trees, on the Carndonagh side of this bridge was noted and admired, as was the planted gravel bed opposite. Existing landscaped elements such as the Diamond and that by the riverside at the Health Centre were as well maintained as ever. A rusty tin roof to a whitewashed outbuilding near the Diamond looked unfortunate. The Connolly Memorial Homes were well maintained. Perhaps some consideration should be given to landscaping at the Isuzu garage? Do ensure care is taken when considering removing render from traditionally plastered vernacular street houses as this is incorrect from a conservation point of view.