

# Tidy Towns Competition 2005

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Coolagown**

Ref: **689**

County: **Cork North**

Mark: **246**

Category: **A**

Date: **10/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	44	42
The Built Environment	40	32	31
Landscaping	40	35	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16	15
Litter Control	40	38	38
Tidiness	20	17	17
Residential Areas	30	24	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	32	31
General Impression	10	8	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>241</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Seldom has this adjudicator enjoyed such a succinct submission with clear illustrations and text support. The sketch map was most informative and helpful in identifying the work on hand and planned projects for the future. You can be well pleased with the support of the various agencies and in particular the Blackwater Resource Development for funding your development plans. Such help also illustrates the value of professional advice, forward planning and sustained development, instead of 'quick fix' attempts. It was a beautiful sunny day and the village looked really well from the Killarney approach. Your challenge now is to conclude the proposals in the plan and to maintain your existing work to a high standard. We also noticed a fine article on your Tidy Towns featured in the neighbouring Castlelyons Year Book, so well done.

### The Built Environment:

You are endowed with a magnificent rural setting and happily the through traffic is not excessive and enables you to develop a host of environmental projects aimed at improving the village appearance. The new housing scheme will have a major impact on the area and it also provides you with opportunities to recruit new members. It is important to ensure integration of this scheme into the village core. The pink on the church wall has gone shabby and needs fresh painting, together with boundary walls. The Final Furlong was undergoing some painting during adjudication. The small house beside the church is keeping your marks down in this section, although it was being power-washed during our visit.

## **Landscaping:**

This is certainly your strong point and the variety of tree and shrubbery is commendable. Your close association with the Forest Service is serving you well and the generous tree planting outlined in the development plan is paying dividend. The small wildlife project opposite McDonnell Bros is unique and highly attractive, complete with water spout and lighting. We commend you on your use of water plants. Without exception all approach roads have rich landscaping. We acknowledge the new landscaping development near the approach from the Long Road and also at the new anti-litter signs.

## **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

Few centres have worked as hard as you on promoting wildlife. We were most impressed with the display boards and the bilingual illustrations on each. These display boards are evident in most centres in the catchment area and we commend Blackwater Resource for their sponsorship. The presence of water-crest in the small ponds is beneficial to wildlife breeding. The new amenity park/wildlife reserve will improve when the trees here progress. The forge sculpture is one of best in the region and how appropriate it is to the area. We suggest a bilingual plaque giving short synopsis of how important the blacksmith was to rural Ireland down through the ages. This adjudicator will be using this project as an example of excellence for other Tidy Towns centres to pursue.

## **Litter Control:**

We were impressed with the design and slogan on the anti-litter signs. They are most appealing and richly embellished with flower displays. They are also doing their job as we found the village had excellent litter control. This reflects very favourably on the community. Your close association with other organisations in controlling litter is praiseworthy.

## **Tidiness:**

Your efforts in this category extends to farms and farmyards where the standard is high. The attractive indigenous horse shoe motif on the gates is very effective. You are fortunate to have such a horse tradition in the area which by the nature of the industry demands well presented horse facilities. We found a high degree of clean, neat fencing and farmyards throughout.

## **Residential Areas:**

The new housing at Cill an Óir will take some time to 'blend in' and appropriate landscaping will be necessary. We note the start of developing the open space in front of the scheme and its development will be important to this area. The housing scheme also needs an identify plaque. On an individual basis houses are well presented. However, we would urge you to use your influence with house developers planners and developers and encourage them to use materials and designs compatible with the rural ethos of the area. For instance there are three new houses on the Long Road approach the have removed roadside hedging and the use of pvc windows and doors is out of place.

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

Road structure is good and road surface does not seem to be a problem. Make sure Cork Co. Council develop footpaths in a fitting manner and link the new housing scheme with the village core around the church.

## **General Impression:**

It was an experience for this adjudicator making a first visit to Cúil an Ghabhainn to be met with so much progress indicative of the true spirit of Tidy Towns. You are doing a great service to current and future generations and we congratulate everybody associated with your efforts. Your challenge now is for further attention to detail and complete your development plan. In doing so don't lose track of the high maintenance required to keep up and enhance your standards. You have potential to be a high scorer in the competition and you have raised your marks again this year.

### **Second Round Adjudication:**

The painting of the Church and roadside walls is a notable improvement following the first adjudication and this now looks very well. The newly tarmacadamed roads and attractive roadside treatments of hedges, fences grass verges, welcoming flower borders and trees all make for a very attractive village. The N72 roadside wildlife reserve will prove to be a wonderful amenity when a few years growth develops and this represents great use of the site. Underground cabling has also helped the village greatly The open space to the front of the new housing estate needs good landscaping to help merge this development into the village context. The detail features such as the horseshoe emblems, the sculpture, and water features all contribute to the high quality, care and attention that is lavished on this village