

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Watergrasshill**

Ref: **577**

County: **Cork North**

Mark: **186**

Category: **B**

Date: **01/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	25	
The Built Environment	40	26	
Landscaping	40	28	
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17	
Litter Control	40	26	
Tidiness	20	13	
Residential Areas	30	20	
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25	
General Impression	10	6	
TOTAL MARK	300	186	

Overall Developmental Approach:

Welcome to the competition and you have now made an important fresh start in enhancing what can only be described as a new Watergrasshill. The by-pass has certainly left its mark and left you with many challenges. We were interested to read your submission and outline of your work programme. You will need a more detailed development plan to chart the way forward as you deal with a rapid developing village. The Watergrasshill that many of us were familiar with years ago is no longer in evidence and the enormous amount of house building is now boosting your population and embracing an enlarged area. Of course new housing estates offer you potential for new recruits and we urge you to bring the community with you in your endeavours.

The Built Environment:

The village core remains interesting and has many traditional features which should be maintained. We would have welcomed a more definitive street map as we found it difficult to follow much of the illustrations. The village needs a more defining delineation now to include new developments. The roundabouts will now form established entry points. The acquisition of the Church of Ireland church is an ideal project to tackle over the coming years. Its use will be of importance and you have opportunity to landscape the environs as a show piece. You might consider contacting the developers of the Village Theatre in Kilworth for advice. The church and environs, together with the national school looked well. The derelict building opposite the school is quite an eyesore. Many shopfronts in Main Street have attractive features worthy of protection and high maintenance.

Landscaping:

We acknowledge the new landscaping, especially at the roundabouts and opposite the Hair and Beauty Salon. Also landscaping at the Church of Ireland church is good. You have great potential to raise your marks in this section and with the passing of time Housing Estates will improve landscaping. We urge you to plant more trees as they are the best environmental investment. When planting don't be tempted to plant a wide variety as it is best to plant similar species which, when mature, will be more dramatic. Landscaping should be sustainable and there is no need to engage in large amounts of hanging baskets or excessive window boxes: flowering shrubs and hedging will give more long lasting results.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

We liked the presence of the lake which will be of great benefit as an amenity. It now needs appropriate access, signposting and provision of seating etc. You can then advance the whole concept of wildlife by erecting display boards and perhaps developing a nature trail. We suggest you seek advice on this development.

Litter Control:

You have some problems with litter and the litter bin beside the school was overflowing. There was also evidence of litter at the seating in the landscaped area at the corner of the Hair Beauty salon. Good litter control is a vital ingredient to high marks in the competition and you will need to motivate community alert in this respect.

Tidiness:

Your problems here relate to a plethora of unfinished building sites, poor fencing, temporary buildings, and undisciplined rubble in many areas. We also note a lot of land awaits development so you are really in a transition period for residential building. We suggest you concentrate on the village core with your efforts of litter control and tidiness. The house opposite Watercress Diner is an eyesore. The Bring Bank facility on the Bartlemy approach should be moved to a more convenient location nearer the village centre.

Residential Areas:

New houses now exceed the number of old houses and the first thing necessary is to identify the various estates with appropriate bilingual signs. We found it difficult to identify the various schemes with no names, so this is a project you might attend to for next year. Estates will take time to mature and we urge you to embark on appropriate landscaping without delay. Crystal Place environs are in need of a clean up and flower beds here need attention. Priory Court is well presented but needs some colour.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Main Street could be much improved and surface dressing here is not equal in standard to the new developments near the roundabouts. New road structure is very good and we acknowledge the huge amount of traffic at the roundabouts. Because of these developments many side and back entrances are now more visible and will need attention as they now form a core part of the adjudication process. The Volvo complex is indicative of a modern development and was well landscaped with attractive shrubbery.

General Impression:

Watergrasshill is now embarking on a new beginning and your challenge now is to blend the old with the new. It would be a pity to smother the traditional features of the village with ultra modern developments. We urge you to liaise with Cork Co. Council and formulate a phased development plan that will identify improvement requirements. Such a plan should have the backing of the community and get the necessary cooperation and commitment from the various relevant agencies. Reentering the Tidy Towns Competition is a good start. We wish you well in your endeavours.