

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Letterkenny**

Ref: **734**

County: **Donegal**

Mark: **268**

Category: **F**

Date: **10/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	46	46
The Built Environment	40	36	36
Landscaping	40	38	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	28	27
Litter Control	40	35	34
Tidiness	20	16	15
Residential Areas	30	27	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	34	33
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	268	260

Overall Developmental Approach:

The enormously helpful file that you submitted demonstrates best the effort and enthusiasm that the entire community (business, industrial and residential) of Letterkenny is putting into the competition. The size of your committee, the support of the Chamber and the 60 residential associations says it all and is reflected in your result.

You continue to have major challenges. The rapid expansion of the town and the semi-industrial style of warehouse construction will require careful handling in the years ahead within the competition.

Your close contact with the schools is a real achievement...6 Green Flag schools is a great foundation for the future.

Congratulations on securing a Litter Warden.

The Built Environment:

As noted the current expansion has brought much new building to the town. The Letterkenny IT complex and the iconic new County building sets a standard of modern architecture that should be emulated and developers should be encouraged to reach that level.

As noted last year public buildings (churches, schools etc) are very well presented. The new Fire

Station with its witty sculpture was noted. Unfortunately the Court House remains in need of attention. The industrial complexes and the hospital campus were excellent. The Charles Kelly yards need softening and some roof painting.

Urban shopping centres were particularly well presented. The fore-courts of the three garages at the Dry Stone Arch together with the Clanree were beautifully planted and presented.

Landscaping:

There cannot be a better or more colourful place than Letterkenny. It was wonderful to see roundabouts, estate entrances, private gardens and terraces so richly endowed with planting. The Main Street was mediterranean in its gayness!

Effective screening is beginning to mature and work well. This is important within the commercial / retail mix of the Port Road, Neil T Blayney Rd etc. Noted were the trees at the Radisson, the maturing planting at the TK Mexx center. Regrettably weeding was required at the shrubbery at the Atlantic Homecare Centre. Noted as special was the Masterclean shop, the Ballyraine Estate Pedestrian entrance and St Colmcille Hostel and nearby terrace on Ballymacool Rd.

The addition of the Polestar sculpture is awaited with interest!

The Town Park was a real discovery for this adjudicator ... it is a wonderful facility, very busy on the day of adjudication with families coming and going in great numbers. The Medicinal Garden was aromatic and the Childrens Playground filled. The excellent housekeeping throughout is a credit to the Council.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Green Echo Magazine is a terrific achievement and is clearly engaging youngsters wonderfully. It was great to note the wildlife montage at the national school on Convent Road. The Old Town Bridge is problematic ... could the walls be replaced with railing and the river vista opened up?

Your signage is excellent and a model for elsewhere.

Litter Control:

I regret to say there was some residual litter throughout the main area and especially at the Market Square on the day of adjudication. In balance I also saw a sweeper in action on the Market steps as I passed. Litter was also noted in Tara Court and on the descent to the Dry Arch from Ballybofey.

In mitigation the many rubbish bins were well filled (ie used) but not overflowing.

Residential areas, the Town Park and other approaches were excellent.

Tidiness:

With the rapid expansion, the replacement of services and the commercial mix tidiness will be hard to retain for the moment.

Infill sites (ie opposite the Tourist office, opposite the Radisson etc.) are a problem and if not redeveloped need to be screened. Owners should be encourage to keep them clear of rubble etc. Laybys within the town and some of the public area corners needed attention.

The walls of Old Town Bridge were weed topped and the roof of the nearby Hide Out Bar was similar. The Credit Union Building was unsightly as was the area to the rear of the Fire Station. The County Council Offices, so different, were let down by bad planting and surrounds. The Fortwell Apartment complex and others in that vicinity were poorly presented.

Residential Areas:

All 60 of your resident associations appear to be in full action! Noteworthy were the home at Fr McLoone Tce. , McNeely Villas, the terrace on Ballymacool Rd. Truth to tell all the estates and private housing were excellent.

The derelict houses that were 'window painted' at Leck require attention again and were weedy also. A derelict shed at Caterworld was also a problem.

Glencar, Ballyraine, Ard Colmcille etc. were really lovely.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

With the amount of construction work underway roads and surfaces are necessarily a problem. However Upper Main St., many of the side lanes off the centre, and some private car parks require surfacing and better maintenance. The Ballyraine Road and Tara Court were especially noted.

General Impression:

When you are well up the league the devil is in the detail. With some extra programming and the cooperation of the Council the achievement in landscaping, litter control, etc. can be extended to tackle some of the issues outlined.

That said, Letterkenny is achieving wonderful things and you are to be truly congratulated.

Second Round Adjudication:

Congratulations on a substantial increase in marks this year. The adjudicator for the second round of adjudication used Letterkenny as a base when judging the Inishowen Peninsula and so spent several days in the town; the level of general maintenance particularly in respect of litter control is impressive; work achieved for the removal of gum from footpaths is appreciated, hopefully you will be in a position to extend this to all stretches of footpath along the main street.

While litter control is very strong there are a number of instances of untidiness apart from the problems associated with on-going development; foot high weeds on the old town bridge is intriguing given the overall level of maintenance enjoyed for the town.

It is good to note that the entrance to the sports grounds on the Glenties road is being redeveloped as this is an important focal point in this area of the town. The church car park has to be the best in the country especially in relation to its boundary walls.

Some boundary walls to residential properties on the Glenties road are in need of improvement however flower displays on terraced dwellings on this entrance to the town continue to impress. The boundary walls of the Government Offices are in urgent need of attention.