

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Loch An Iúir**

Ref: **243**

County: **Donegal**

Mark: **236**

Category: **B**

Date: **08/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	39	38
The Built Environment	40	35	35
Landscaping	40	34	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	20
Litter Control	40	32	33
Tidiness	20	14	15
Residential Areas	30	23	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	31	30
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	236	233

Overall Developmental Approach:

Many thanks for your support documentation and detailed map which was greatly appreciated by the adjudicator. Although your committee is small in size it is clear that you have the support of the community, local authority, Fás, Udaras na Gaeltachta, Coillte, ESB, Eircom, MFG and other agencies in delivering your work programme.

Loch an Iúir's commitment to the Tidy Towns Competition is strong and visible in their efforts to action recommendations from last years report. The formulation of your plan for the next 5 years is now essential to scope out your community's desires for the future of Loch an Iúir and put on paper achievable goals for 2010.

The Built Environment:

Casadh and tSugán is the main landmark in the village with it's thatched roof, white washed wall and natural stone facade looking very attractive. A number of traditional thatched dwellings have fallen into a state of disrepair. It is hoped whoever acquires these cottages will restore them to their former glory as they are a truly unique architectural feature of Loch an Iúir.

Work appears to be nearing completion at the School. No doubt the exterior will also be finished to a high standard and the footpath linking it to the centre of the village will be in place before September. While the Handball Alley is an eyesore it is hoped that a mutually agreeable solution can be reached by the whole community. As one of the main public buildings in Loch an Iúir the Irish College needs attention to the Prefab and general presentation. The boarded up boat house and

nearby building at the Pier gives a very bad impression of an otherwise excellent amenity. Perhaps another solution might be sought to restrict access.

Landscaping:

The cross roads are nicely landscaped with circular flow bed at the base of signpost and planted containers nearby. Pot plants were also visible at the base of lights and some nameplates. The planting at the statue, recommended in last year's report is welcomed, however, to ensure it does not appear overgrown it is important that this area is continually monitored. Flower tubs, concrete tables and seating were noted at the School now undergoing refurbishment works. The nearby broken fence needs attention. The stone wall of the house opposite the school was admired. Where possible such stone walls using local material are preferable to metal posts and wooden posts joined together by wire mesh and barb wire which is unsightly and detracts from the overall image of Loch an Iúir. Your extensive tree planting programme throughout the village is commended. It is important that a maintenance and monitoring schedule is put in place to ensure this investment matures.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The information board on lime at the cross roads and the bird feeder sign at the Holy Statue are welcome. Your efforts in relation to bird feeders, planned local wildlife information sign and the fact that the National School have indicated they will enter the Green Schools programme all bodes well for the future. The plans for a boat on Small Lake, stone wall and water feature at the cross roads seems to be well underway. Due to its unique location surrounded by lakes and mountains Loch an Iúir has the potential to do extremely well in this section. A sub committee should now be formed guided by local wildlife and angling experts to firstly identify local wildlife and natural amenities, then formulate an achievable plan for the next five years. Increasing awareness and appreciation of wildlife and local amenities through the schools and community groups should be an integral part of this campaign. The information compiled by Liz and Ralph Sheppard should be utilised in this regard.

Litter Control:

Litter control was reasonably good on adjudication day. However, litter was visible at the Irish College boundary wall although a large number of domestic type black bins were located around the college yard. Perhaps the college authorities could build the importance of a litter free environment into their work with the students. I was glad to read that you organized a clean up day in partnership with the local community and that Donegal County Council cooperated in this regard. Well done for getting the scrapped cars removed and on acquiring the services of a road sweeping contractor this summer.

The provision of a number of uniform bins, strategically positioned along the main through Road should be considered for next year.

Tidiness:

The fore court of the Petrol Station was tidy but marred by the vast quantity of chewing gum on the ground. Although a machine can be hired to deal with this issue now a long term solution must start in the schools and community groups with agreement that this behavior is no longer acceptable. The back of the Petrol Station was untidy and should be screened. Net along the perimeter of the Irish College looks unattractive and needs attention. The area of An Céasán has some very untidy overgrown open spaces. The use of spray paint should be discontinued as it takes away from the efforts of some residents in this area who have window boxes, colourful planting and freshly painted premises.

Residential Areas:

A number of residential properties are very well presented, freshly painted, with window boxes, planted containers and nicely landscaped gardens. The house on the left hand side when leaving Loch an Iúir for Crolly is beautifully maintained as are a number of other properties on access roads. Local suppliers offering discounts for hanging baskets and window boxes is a positive and proactive way to encourage residents participation. Well done. As mentioned previously the restoration of the thatched properties in the village is desirable and should be encouraged. The houses at An tArdán Rua were largely well maintained with lawns trimmed and some use of colour. Some properties still need to be painted and attention to boundary walls and open spaces is important to give an overall good impression. While progress on some derelict buildings is noted this must remain a key priority in your work programme for the next 5 years.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Footpaths and road surfaces along the main through road are finished to a high standard. Work is still on-going, particularly on the Annagry Road where the footpath has gaps and is uneven in places. From a safety point of view it is desirable that the footpaths, in particular, are finished to a high standard prior to the refurbished school reopening. The Loch an Iúir and other Irish place names throughout the village are eye-catching and of an exceptionally high standard. Well done to all concerned. Amenities such as the Angling Club, businesses and private houses should be encouraged to adopt Irish names to support this initiative. The proposed taring of the road down to the Angling Club is critical and I trust that pedestrian access, as this is a very narrow road will also be given due consideration by the local authority. The Min na Mara road is a credit to the Tidy Towns Committee, scheme workers and Donegal County Council who worked together to bring this road to its current high standard.

General Impression:

As you are now in the final year of your four year plan it is an opportune time to have a fresh look at what has been achieved, what remains to be done and most importantly what the Tidy Towns Committee and the community's aspirations are for the next 5 years. Your plans should be realistic and formulated in full consultation with all partners. Congratulations on what has been achieved to date.