

# Tidy Towns Competition 2005

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Roundstone**

Ref: **533**

County: **Galway**

Mark: **227**

Category: **B**

Date: **09/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	34	33
The Built Environment	40	32	30
Landscaping	40	34	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	19	19
Litter Control	40	34	34
Tidiness	20	16	16
Residential Areas	30	24	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	26	25
General Impression	10	8	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>221</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for your interesting documentation. You may be inhibiting your potential increase in marking by not supplying enough information - for example, under 'Wild Life' we need to know about your activities over the past year; and your map does not name salient points (eg The Triangle) and in fact does not include Michael Killeen Park or anything on the Ballyconneely side beyond the RC Church. Your Development Plan is a '3-5 year plan': but which? 3 or 5? or are you allowing for greater flexibility, for there would certainly be merit in that? (Most centres which have successfully completed a development plan set themselves annual targets under each heading, but of course there is no need to follow suit.) The message therefore is 'More information please'. This adjudicator has been visiting Roundstone for at least fifty years and has been immensely impressed by the recent improvements which have happily consigned the rather dishevelled village to the past: the incomparable environment remains.

### The Built Environment:

The Roman Catholic church was truly resplendent with its brightly painted facade and attractive planting. The Church of Ireland church in its picturesque graveyard (school children might do a project on the interesting family names on the headstones, if this has not already been done) is the landmark building as its tower can be seen for a considerable distance. The tower and industrial units at Michael Killeen park were well presented, though some curtilages were in considerably better trim than others. Most of the shopfronts and business premises were well presented in their

variety of styles among those contributing attractively were Eldon's Hotel, Roundstone House Hotel, Beola, the Post Office, O'Dowd's, the Art Gallery, Dalkey Design; some others relied too much on un-necessary mass-produced signage and advertising. Do discourage PVC or aluminium window surrounds on older buildings, where timber frames and glazing bars should be preferred.

### **Landscaping:**

One of the most eye-catching areas under this heading was the grounds of the Roman Catholic church, not merely on account of its prominent position but for its judicious planting of hydrangea, veronica, whin and other shrubs, as well as palms. The display at the Triangle above the harbour was most attractive in this important position. The Fair Green was a traditional outdoor space for which the original purpose has disappeared due to a changing economy; it is good to note your improvement plans, which should be unfussy and should include an important element of tree planting. Window boxes, tubs and other floral adornments were favourably noted.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

You have entered 'Nil' on your form, yet it is clear that the neighbourhood is rich in wild life of many kinds. School children should be involved in the appreciation of the flora and fauna of the neighbourhood - perhaps a competition listing birds and animals seen, or the varieties of fish brought in to the pier. This might result in a poster, or eventually an information board, perhaps at the quay. The proposed environmental audit is a splendid idea, in its practical form inspiring an amenity walk. Tree planting is properly a part of this category (though it overlaps with Landscaping); the best advice available should be taken on what species will flourish in this climate. Do supply information on developments; pending receipt, the mark awarded at present an average that should increase next year (hopefully not decrease).

### **Litter Control:**

The recycling centre was clean. Your plan to move it to another location is applauded. All litter bins were full on the date of adjudication, but none of them overflowing, which was fortunate.

### **Tidiness:**

There were a number of small discrepancies which your committee undoubtedly intends to rectify. Several half-developed sites were seen, inevitably giving a poor impression. Two handsome houses in the main street appeared to be vacant, if not derelict, and will require reinstatement. Avoid post-and-wire fencing, as its life is short and it is hard to free from weed growth. The approach to the community centre was quite weedy on the date of adjudication. These are some relatively minor examples, against which the general tidiness of the village may be measured. It was particularly good to see how the harbour and quay had been improved - it is still a working harbour and attempts to prettify it would be out of place - but clearly it can be kept tidy and this is a major step.

### **Residential Areas:**

Kerbside weed at the housing above the town was prevalent; it would take individual householders no more than a few minutes each month to put an end to this. Almost all the traditional street houses were presented with pride, but there was a set of three badly stained terrace houses which needed attention. Several well looked after homes on the outskirts, with pretty gardens, were noted; further ribbon development should be discouraged, however. It was therefore extremely encouraging to see at least five sets of new or newish terraces, probably for the most part holiday homes, fitting exceptionally well into the streetscape in terms of scale and materials, all of them nicely painted, the most prominent being at the turn down to the Killeen Park; and also some excellent examples of intill housing of the same order.

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

Surfacing and paving have been greatly improved. Street furniture, railings and in particular the smart lighting standards, were admired - though there is still an abundance of unsightly poles and wires. The parking bays were neat and well kept. Stone walls, old and new, were seen; more of this should be encouraged. Traffic control on the date of adjudication was assisted by temporary lights, and was as satisfactory as possible; but even in the short term a relief road at the back of the village must be a serious proposal.

Nimmo could not have foreseen the current interest in his village and could not have planned for the large number of visitors now attracted. If proper steps are not quickly taken, the village will strangle itself.

## **General Impression:**

The committee is to be greatly commended for its sensitive approach to the development of this superbly situated village. Further initiatives will be eagerly awaited.

## **Second Round Adjudication:**

The marvellous displays of fuchsia and montbretia on approach roads, combined with the fine stone walling catch the eye! B&B's contribute well to the competition in terms of their high level of presentation. Litter control could have been better on the day – it was noted that a festival was starting on the day of adjudication but there was little activity and visitor numbers at this early stage to contribute to this problem. A light scattering was evident throughout. The recycling area sported some high levels of dumping which should be curtailed IMMEDIATELY! Other towns have taken the trouble to go through dumped rubbish in order to get evidence of those responsible! You should contact Galway County Council and the recycling company in order to organise a more frequent pick up, due to your high visitor numbers in the holiday months. The Garda Station looked very fresh, as Dalkey Design and the Catholic Church. The gable wall to a house appeared very grubby on the day but this sported a "sold" sign so hopefully this will be resolved in the not too distant future. Some houses on the Clifden side of the village appeared to be rather stained and will need attention before next year's competition. Do ensure that you don't neglect alleyways and archways when considering overall presentation of the village. The lamp standards on the main street were quite scratched and would benefit from a fresh coat of paint. Harbour View Bar and Restaurant looked quite neglected at the Galway side of the village. Discourage the use of curved canopies and encourage their replacement with traditional fabric awnings. Plastic signs should be replaced with ones of a more traditional timber variety. This adjudicator is in agreement with that of the First Adjudicator in relation to your work programme. It is important that you set yourself objectives and set target dates for achieving these.