

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Drumsna**

Ref: **338**

County: **Leitrim**

Mark: **183**

Category: **A**

Date: **25/06/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	34	35
The Built Environment	40	19	19
Landscaping	40	33	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17	17
Litter Control	40	21	22
Tidiness	20	11	11
Residential Areas	30	23	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	18	19
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	183	185

Overall Developmental Approach:

The adjudicator would like to thank you for your documentation and map. Drumsna is an attractive village on the River Shannon that has a lot of Tidy Towns potential.

The adjudicator examined the document Development Plan 2002 - 2005. However this does not meet the needs of the Tidy Towns Action Plan. All towns and villages are required to have a simple straight forward 3 -5 Year Tidy Towns Plan for their area. This Plan is prepared by your Committee in consultation with the appropriate local organisations. It should be no more than seven to ten pages long. The purpose of the Plan is to guide the work of your Tidy Towns Committee and others over the short to medium term.

The Built Environment:

A feature of Drumsna is the fine wide main street but this contributes to high vehicle speed through the village.

The Fisheries building is an attractive restoration and the new wall here is noted. At the Quay the Sculpture has a most appropriate location and this is an attractive piece with a great sense of movement. Have you considered replacing some of the shop front signs in the town with signs that use more traditional materials such as timber and hand-painted lettering. This could be approached on a co-operative basis.

Projecting advertising signs were noted in a number of back lanes in the town centre and this needs attention. The issue is how many of these signs are really essential from a commercial point of view?

A few derelict buildings were noted that detract from the overall appearance of the built environment of your town / village. However there is a way in which perhaps you can make a feature of these buildings pending their removal or restoration. Try and get the owners to agree that they will blank out the window and door openings with heavy waterproof Marine plywood. This should then be painted matt black, and window bars and door panels painted in white. This approach as a temporary measure can look quite effective.

On Quay Street a beautiful restored stone building was noted and presumably this is the new Community Resource Centre.

A few buildings in the village have window frames that are in need of urgent attention, however the majority of the properties were well presented.

Landscaping:

The new landscaped area at the bridge is in a good location but is compromised by the rusty gates nearby. The new flower containers on Quay Street are very colourful but long grass has taken over in one of them. The Shannonside Walk has a lot of potential but there are problems associated with this amenity area as follows (a) users of this area have to use the grass because there is no pathway (b) there is a terrible litter problem (c) dangerous and broken footbridge (d) the walkway should be continued to the end.

The Harbour area was nicely landscaped with good grass areas but this good effort is compromised by the bad litter problem at the Recycling Centre.

The Fair Green area with the new stone seat is a very attractive area and the many trees on this side of the village integrate the built village into the countryside.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

In many towns and villages this is an aspect of the Tidy Towns Competition where there can be significant potential for development. All towns and villages have the presence of wildlife to some degree. It is important that your Tidy Towns Committee would examine the wildlife potential, and see what you can achieve in terms of making your area even more wildlife friendly.

If you have not already done so, the starting point is to have a habitat Survey carried out of the wildlife in your area. Suggested habitats to be considered include the following –

- Urban habitats – gardens, waste ground, walls, graveyards, hedges
- Wetland habitats – rivers, ponds, lakes, canals, reed marsh, bogs
- Woodland habitats – forests, hedgerows, plantations, parks
- Grassland habitats – roadside verges, parks, wet meadows, dry grasslands

The Survey should produce a species list for each of the habitats relevant to your area

This need not be an expensive Survey. Perhaps there is a knowledgeable person in one of your Schools who might undertake this task for you. Basically the Survey would identify the animals, plants, birds, fish that inhabit your area and their associated habitats. It should be remembered that to carry out the Survey properly that it will probably take a year so that all habitats can be assessed at different times of the year.

Using the results of the Wildlife Survey your next step should be to draft a straight forward Plan to preserve the identified habitats in your area, and investigate the possibility of new ones. For

example perhaps there is an old Pond in your area that is disused, but with a little work could be an important area for wildfowl.

It is most important to try and involve your local school children in this project, and in many Schools there is probably a teacher who may have an interest in this area who would be willing to get involved.

As part of the actions to be undertaken in your Wildlife Plan you might like to consider the provision of some weather proof and vandal proof display panels, illustrating and explaining the wildlife in your area. This has been done very successfully in many towns and villages in Ireland.

Litter Control:

Litter control was generally good in the village centre but litter was noted at the petrol pumps area, However the amount of litter noted at the Harbour area and on the Shannonside Walk was totally unacceptable. It is such a great pity that others undermine the good work done by the Tidy Towns Committee and community supporters.

Tidiness:

A number of damaged field gates were noted and these should be repaired and painted a bright colour. The village sign at the river bridge is very dusty and needs to be washed frequently. Some road boundary walls need to be painted including the low wall above the petrol pumps area. Much casual weed growth was noted at the Harbour area.

Residential Areas:

The majority of private houses were well presented. The appearance of Belmont Estate now occupied by residents was quite unbelievable. Hopefully the builders are still on site, though there was no evidence of that on adjudication day. Builders materials was noted in many parts of the estate, general rubbish, building blocks and an old tractor. The existing situation should not be acceptable from a residents point of view.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Damaged green verges were noted on the Jamestown approach. The approach from the Leitrim side was excellent with fine well maintained verges and many mature trees and shrubs. No work was done recently on the Harbour side of Crow Hill.

General Impression:

Drumsna is a village with a lot of competition potential. A lot of good work has been done but there are a number of key areas requiring attention for 2006.