

# Tidy Towns Competition 2005

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Collon Village**

Ref: **591**

County: **Louth**

Mark: **212**

Category: **B**

Date: **13/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	38	38
The Built Environment	40	30	30
Landscaping	40	31	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	18
Litter Control	40	26	25
Tidiness	20	10	11
Residential Areas	30	26	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	27	26
General Impression	10	6	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>209</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

The adjudicator would like to thank you for your Tidy Towns Action Plan and village map that was most useful on the day of adjudication. Your Action Plan is a simple straight forward document that sets out clearly your objectives. It may be useful to add in the details of the organisations or agencies that may be work with you on each of your objectives each year. The time has now come to move your Plan on to cover the period 2006 - 2008.

### The Built Environment:

Several of the beautiful stone buildings in Collon caught the eye. The building with the clock, and the beautiful stone houses with original windows beside the Credit Union property stood out. Development work appeared to be under way in the village centre on adjudication day. Hopefully the external finishes to be used here and the landscaping works will tone in with the existing buildings and landscaping in the village. Seven Oaks House was colourfully presented with the strong yellow colour and excellent landscaping. The Catholic Church building was very crisply presented but there was no landscaping of a sort to be seen from the road. The provision here of some raised beds or temporary landscaping for the summer months would be a great addition to the village.

A few derelict buildings were noted that detract from the overall appearance of the built environment of Collon. 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.

## **Landscaping:**

The new flower bed on the Ardee road looked very colourful and well maintained, and the presentation of the area around the Parochial Hall has improved since last year. The central green area is very attractive with the seating and well maintained grass. However the placing of the road signs here is a little unfortunate. The use of hanging baskets and flower tubs in carefully selected places adds an interesting splash of colour to any town or village. However do make sure that this is not overdone. You should be using hanging baskets and tubs to help bring out the character of your village. The adjudicator was of the view that too many baskets / window boxes had been provided at a few premises.

## **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 further the wildlife potential, and see what you can achieve in terms of making your area even more wildlife friendly. The area around the Parochial Hall certainly has some potential.

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 time of the year.

Using the results of the Wildlife Survey your next step should be do 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:**

Generally litter control was quite good considering the volume of traffic that still goes through the village each day. However litter was noted near the Catholic Church, at the Bring Centre and at the seats in the green central area. It is very important that your Committee would develop a litter control plan for Collon. The issue of litter control is not an issue just for the Local Authority. All citizens and especially your Tidy Towns Committee have a key role to play. Your plan should include such issues as surveying the litter bins that you have in your community and their adequacy, clean up days and the role of your local schools.

It is most important that litter bins are placed in close proximity to the largest generators of litter. The regular emptying of a litter bin is of course essential.

## **Tidiness:**

The footpath opposite the derelict building with the mural was quite overgrown and weeds and long grass had taken over. The hedge here needed to be cut back a little to make the foot path usable. At the Tinure / Drogheda roads junction the sign posts here need to be washed. Opposite the Church of Ireland a small untidy area was noted that needed some attention. On the Slane approach the area at the base of the low stone walls on both sides of the road was suffering from bad weed growth and this looked quite untidy.

## **Residential Areas:**

Residential areas were presented to a good standard and the properties at Brindle Way looked well with their landscaped front gardens of Lillies and Roses among other plants noted. At Papal way across the road the grass needed to be cut back from the tops of the kerb stones. Reference has been made earlier in this report to the beautiful older stone houses that have so much character and add so much to the appearance of Collon.

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

The overall presentation of all approach roads is of critical importance. It is this that gives the first impression of your town or village. With the exception of the Drogheda approach road the approaches to Collon looked quite well. On the Drogheda road the banks and verges had been rather roughly cut, but the cut grass has not been taken away. The result is an untidy appearance with new grass growth trying to grow through the dead cut grass. Can you make a rule for yourselves and your helpers that all cut grass must be taken away on the day that it is cut. Do remember also that verges will need to be cut on quite a regular basis if you are to achieve a lush green well kept appearance of banks and roadside verges. A tractor and mower will not give the neat well kept appearance that can be achieved by a motor mower. On the Tinure approach roads good grassed areas were noted on the left hand side of the road, but again regular cutting is essential - perhaps weekly in main the growth season.

## **General Impression:**

Collon is a very attractive village of character and the Tidy Towns committee are to be congratulated for their good work.

## **Second Round Adjudication:**

