

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dromiskin**

Ref: **433**

County: **Louth**

Mark: **208**

Category: **B**

Date: **13/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	40	
The Built Environment	40	26	
Landscaping	40	29	
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15	
Litter Control	40	31	
Tidiness	20	15	
Residential Areas	30	20	
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	26	
General Impression	10	6	
TOTAL MARK	300	208	

Overall Developmental Approach:

The adjudicator would like to welcome Dromiskin back to the Tidy Towns Competition following their understandable absence in 2004. This is an interesting village with a lot of history. The 2005 - 2006 Action Plan is a really excellent document, clearly presented and the objectives for each year are very clearly detailed. It is time now to move the Plan on to cover the period 2006 to 2007.

The Built Environment:

The upkeep of the old School appears to come within the responsibility of the Tidy Towns Committee and adjudication day the building was looking well. However the grass area in front was rather overgrown. The adjudicator would like to wish the new publican well as they prepare to open for business. The colour choice for this new building is excellent and compliments that used on the Ginnity's property across the road. The "Around The House" property caught the eye with the bold white and yellow colour scheme that works very well with that property in that location. The landscaping here was of a high standard. The adjudicator looks forward to seeing the Viking themes Sculpture. At the Catholic Church the door to the Bell Tower needed to be re-painted. Also at the Church the cause of the iron staining on the Bell Tower should be investigated, as it spoils the appearance of the Granite. At the old school a fine low wall was noted. The area of the old Church and Tower would be improved with some additional interpretation.

Landscaping:

The Biblical Garden near the Church is an interesting idea and the box hedging is coming on well, though one or two of the box plants appeared to be stunted. A sign should be provided to indicate the purpose of this garden. Also the panel with the Crucifixion Panel seems to be quite interesting and a plaque explaining the details and date would be a welcome addition. If it is of major interest perhaps it needs to be protected in some way as it has suffered some damage at some stage. Also the fallen slab nearby should be re-erected and interpreted. The verge at the roadside here was very badly overgrown.

At the side entrance to the Church car park by the Biblical Garden the curved structure above obviously once held nice plants and flowers. The contents need to be removed and re-planted.

At the Church car park the long narrow areas enclosed by kerbing should be landscaped properly and that would add some badly needed colour to the large car park area.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The plans for a wildlife area near the Graveyard are awaited with interest. 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.

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:

Litter control on adjudication day was generally quite poor and litter was noted in a number of areas as follows - near the Post Office, outside TOP, at the derelict building at the Biblical Garden (very

bad here), at the old village pump near the Round Tower, at Church View estate.

Tidiness:

Unfortunately Dromiskin was also quite untidy on adjudication day. A dead grass area was noted at the base of the low brick wall at the centre of the village. The large field opposite with the long grass and weeds looked very untidy. Hopefully development of suitable nature will happen here before too long. On the road to the Church at the chain link fencing on the left the long grass and weeds looked quite untidy. Quite a number of field gates were damaged and need to be repainted. Field gates can become a feature of your approach roads. It may be possible for you to get agreement from the relevant landowners that all damaged gates will be replaced, and that all gates will be painted to a common colour scheme. At the Catholic Church the railing will need to be painted for 2006. An apparently unused vehicle was noted on the approach road beyond the Round Tower.

Residential Areas:

At Church View the grass areas just inside the entrance have become quite worn and needed attention. The grass areas here would also be greatly improved by some tree planting and basic landscaping. At the Innishlinn estate the setting up of the new Residents Association is a great step forward and the adjudicator wishes them well in their work for their common good. Some good landscaping was noted at individual private properties but there was a lot of potential for additional landscaping by private individuals.

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. On the Dundalk approach weed growth at the base of walls and at kerbs looked quite untidy. Some verges here had been cut and others looked rather wild. On the Castlebellingham approach road some of the verges had been cut but the cut grass had not been removed. 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 other approach roads little work appeared to have been done recently.

General Impression:

It is great to have Dromiskin back in the Tidy Towns Competition and the adjudicator wishes them well in their future work.

Second Round Adjudication: