

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Donaghmoyne Village**

Ref: **29**

County: **Monaghan**

Mark: **177**

Category: **A**

Date: **05/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	25	26
The Built Environment	40	25	25
Landscaping	40	24	23
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	10	10
Litter Control	40	29	29
Tidiness	20	13	13
Residential Areas	30	21	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	24	24
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	177	177

Overall Developmental Approach:

The adjudicator would like to welcome you to the 2005 Tidy Towns Competition. The adjudicator notes that a Tidy Towns Work Programme or Plan was not submitted with the entry documentation. 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. Your Plan should detail year by year the work that you intend to do each year. It is recommended that you do not have too many objectives each year – perhaps 4/5 key projects.

The successful Tidy Towns Committees are those that succeed in harnessing the goodwill, skills and experience of a number of different groups and Agencies that have something to contribute to the implementation of the 3-5 Year Tidy Towns Plan. These groups and Agencies include the following –

- GAA
- Local Development Association
- FAS
- County Council
- LEADER Company
- The CLAR Programme (if you are in a CLAR designated area)
- Local School or schools
- Urban & Village Renewal Grant Scheme

The entry form did not make it clear what works had been done specifically for the 2005 competition.

The Built Environment:

The village of Donaghmoynne though small sits perfectly in the countryside, surrounded by lush agricultural lands and many mature trees. The Catholic Church is a really beautiful building and its circular form echos the circular forts and enclosures of earlier times in the county. This building proves as far as the adjudicator sees it that a modern design concept can fit so well into a rural environment. It was encouraging to note that the old Church apparently has a new use and this also helps to preserve this older building. The National School was very attractively presented and had been freshly painted. Some hanging baskets here would add a bit of additional colour. The Post Office is a lovely stone building and presumably the date of 1857 is the year that it was built. The very discreet sign on the building for the Post Office is most appropriate.

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

Landscaping:

A number of small landscaped areas were noted in their stone containers and these looked quite well. Perhaps the use of brighter plants in these containers would give a greater sense of colour. There is potential to develop further the narrow strip with the low hedge in front of the School property. Other well placed landscaping was noted at the junction to the old Church. On the road to the side of the new Church one of the lovely trees has collapsed and hopefully it can be saved.

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.

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 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 on the day of adjudication was quite good apart from the approach road by the Graveyard where a lot of litter was noted. It is very important that your Committee would develop a litter control plan for your village. 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 school.

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

Tidiness:

On the road straight through the village a large field on the left hand side needs to be screened if possible from the road, as does the area behind the old cottages in the village. Generally the village was quite tidy apart from the above locations.

Residential Areas:

The houses in the village and on the approach roads were all presented to a good standard and their landscaping was effective. It is most encouraging to see in Ireland in the past few years how much more individuals have become conscious of good landscaping and what it can do to make an area or property look really well.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Work had been done on most of the approach roads but further on-going work was necessary on each of the four approach roads. The overall presentation of all approach roads is of critical importance. It is this that gives the first impression of your town or village. Attractive well presented approach roads give a great impression of a community that cares about how others see them.

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.

Do make sure that any old stone walls on approach roads are not in need of repair. Gaps due to collapse can look quite untidy. Fences should be kept in good repair and do cut long grass that may tend to grow up through the timber fencing. Hedging on approach roads needs trimming from time to time but do avoid bird nesting time of the year.

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.

General Impression:

Donaghmoyne is a very attractive village and it may have good potential to do well in the competition in the years ahead. However a planned approach will have to be adopted by the community in tackling the problem areas over a few years. This is where the Tidy Towns Action Plan 2006-2008 will be most useful to your committee.

Second Round Adjudication: