

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Rockcorry Village**

Ref: **628**

County: **Monaghan**

Mark: **246**

Category: **B**

Date: **08/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	38	38
The Built Environment	40	33	32
Landscaping	40	38	37
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17	17
Litter Control	40	34	33
Tidiness	20	16	15
Residential Areas	30	26	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	35	33
General Impression	10	9	8
TOTAL MARK	300	246	238

Overall Developmental Approach:

The adjudicator would like to thank the Tidy Towns Committee for the village map and letter that accompanied the entry form. You certainly are a committee with a big vision of what is possible from a Tidy Towns perspective and this attitude is warmly welcomed. It is an approach that could bring the village of Rockcorry far in the competition in the years ahead.

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 letter that was enclosed set out some objectives but it is really useful for your committee if you can identify an annual work programme. From an adjudicator's point of view it is always very useful to know what work is planned for what year.

The Built Environment:

This is really a most attractive village from many points of view but especially the quality of some of

the buildings. The many stone terraced buildings are highly attractive and their appearance has been augmented by excellent landscaping. However there are of course improvements that are always possible. The work under way on the large yellow building at the road junction is noted, but for what future use. This building may have been the village Market House, and the present ground floor window openings are probably not the original ones. During repair of this building it is vitally important that old features are recovered. The colour of this building needs to change - in the adjudicator's opinion the yellow is far too strong and it needs a colour that will tone in with the stone buildings in the village. A few retail signs could be improved also if a more traditional approach was adopted. The appearance of the GAA property was quite good.

Landscaping:

The landscaping both on approach roads and in the village itself was excellent and your extensive flower planting programme has produced great results. The central landscaped area in the village looked really colourful on adjudication day and is a credit to the village. The landscaping on all approach roads added so much to the good bank and verge presentation that was observed. It was so good to see that practically every house in the village had got involved in the landscaping project. The many flower baskets, window boxes and hanging baskets looked so colourful on adjudication day.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The concept of developing a wildlife park in the forest is an interesting one, but do make sure that you get good reliable professional advice before you do anything. 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.

The river must of course\ feature in your wildlife plans.

Litter Control:

Litter control on adjudication day was very good especially in the village itself. Some occasional litter was noted on approach roads, and at the entrance to Cranmore estate.

Tidiness:

Rockcorry Village was quite tidy at the time of adjudication. The large white advertising signs on the Monaghan side of the village did not look very tidy and indeed may be doing a disservice to the retail outlet involved. It is possible that smaller advertising signs using an imaginative design would have an equally good retail effect. There is also the issue of Planning Permission but the adjudicator is not aware of the situation in regard to the present signs. The large site across the wall from the Campbell property was rather untidy and screening may be a possible resolution.

Residential Areas:

Practically all private houses were excellently presented. The stone facing to the properties at the entrance to Dartry Court caught the eye. Here the red brick, combined well with the stone facing and the very colourful baskets and window boxes. The old terraced properties on the Monaghan road - Tea Pot Row - have been imaginatively treated. Indeed on initial inspection the adjudicator was uncertain whether these properties were occupied or not! - the true sign of your success.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

One of the remarkable things about your approach roads is how far out from the village centre you have continued your verge and bank presentation. This is most unusual and highly welcomed. All your verges and banks looked especially well and you have achieved the lush green grass effect that is so attractive on an approach road. The artificial landscaping and the natural landscaping have combined very well.

On the Ballybay approach road the landscaping could be extended out a little further.

General Impression:

Second Round Adjudication:

Rockcorry village has made wonderful progress in its development over the past 18 years and the present day built and natural environments are a credit to the community; congratulations are due for the positive attitude expressed regarding attracting and assimilating new people to the life of the village. Rockcorry looked wonderful for both adjudications and a handsome increase in marks has been achieved; the use of old agricultural equipment for public display is a nice touch and provides a visible link with your heritage.

The boundary wall of the old school is weatherstained and in need of cleaning and / or painting; landscaping is suggested for the car park of the sports grounds, (the stone entrance and boundary wall here was admired).

Your forest wild life park initiative sounds exciting and we look forward to the final result, ensure that full details are submitted.

Landscaping is maturing nicely and flower displays were admired for their colour and profusion.

