

# Tidy Towns Competition 2005

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Cootehall**

Ref: **356**

County: **Roscommon**

Mark: **192**

Category: **A**

Date: **01/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	35	
The Built Environment	40	25	
Landscaping	40	24	
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	
Litter Control	40	24	
Tidiness	20	13	
Residential Areas	30	20	
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	24	
General Impression	10	7	
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>192</b>	

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Cootehall is welcome back into the National Tidy Towns Competition. We note your last year of entry was 1996 and so you will be considered as a new entry this year. The village enjoys a wonderful setting overlooking Oakport Lock and situated on the banks of the River Boyle. Surrounding countryside is rural in character with lush growth of trees and hedgerows. Cootehall is a tiny village but looks set to grow in size, it is hoped that its essential character will be maintained with growth. Thank you for your submission and your excellent plan, both facilitated adjudication. You should refer to your Tidy Towns Handbook for ideas on how to progress in the competition and build on your existing strengths.

### The Built Environment:

The church is the most prominent building in the village and its presentation is simple and beautiful. Both the Water Splash and MJ Henry premises are quite well presented. The premises with the Eircell Agent sign appears to be unfinished to its curtilage area and looks a little colourless, perhaps flower displays in window boxes would lift this rather imposing but colourless building. There are extensive stretches of boundary wall in the village centre which are in various states of presentation. Property owners should be encouraged to upgrade these. Out-buildings in general are quite well presented. Well done on the removal of briars and ivy etc. from stone walls.

## **Landscaping:**

Landscaping is good throughout Cootehall and on approach roads. Trees range in age from saplings to semi-mature, mature and indeed there are some handsome specimen trees also. Flower displays were colourful and well located and the flower filled boat is a nice touch. The picnic site looks neat in its presentation, again it is simple but beautiful, however the retaining wall to the lake was quite weedy during adjudication. The Arigna Scenic Drive sign should now be either removed or refurbished and some of the seating here is in need of attention also. In future landscaping plans, try to feature native trees and shrubs as these encourage wildlife diversity.

## **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

Work in progress on the lakeshore at the time of adjudication was noted, hopefully this will add a new dimension to the amenity status of Cootehall. The quayside with its slipway and moorings was very well presented and is being nicely maintained and street furniture here such as lampstandards, bollards and moorings appear to be new. The carpark is well surfaced and delineated. An information panel here might be appropriate on the wildlife of the lake and indeed the River Boyle. We note from your plan that you are exploring local walks, some woodland areas were noted in the distance together with low hills, perhaps these could be incorporated into walks and their wildlife highlighted as a feature.

## **Litter Control:**

Your regular litter clean-ups are effective, well done to everyone who participates. Litter control was strong on approach roads and inside nameplates. The only weak point being the car park at the quay, this was quite littered but appears to have come from the bins here. We note your intention to be part of the National Spring Clean Week and the provision of bins from Roscommon County Council. Well done on these initiatives. We look forward to hearing of further litter control activities over the coming year.

## **Tidiness:**

Weed growth along walls and kerbs was quite prevalent throughout, however we do note your activities in this respect from your plan; you are aware of the problem and are striving to deal with it. An untidy site opposite the quay car park (for sale) which features an old car, caravan and boat is problematic in this particular area. Hopefully by our next visit you will have the recycling point up and running. The business community might be encouraged to participate in the Race Against Waste project.

## **Residential Areas:**

The new development of stone faced houses looks especially well with its nicely maintained green areas and young trees. Some weed growth was noted to kerbs, however it was not excessive. Work in progress has been noted on an adjacent site, namestones should be provided for both developments. Development work was observed on two new detached houses behind the derelict house on the Carrick On Shannon road; we look forward to the completion of these. There are some excellent presentations of individual houses on all approach roads and there are no major problems under this heading.

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

Roadside verges inside nameplates were overgrown. Whilst this is an acceptable state on approach roads, verges within the limits determined by the speed signs and nameplates should be maintained neatly trimmed. The bridge enjoys an excellent presentation. From your plan we note that you are aware of the need to have road edges and footpaths resurfaced and new footpaths put in place. New lampstandards look well, hopefully at some stage in the future wirescape in the village centre will be ducted. Good luck with the refurbishment of stone walls on approach roads and within the

village.

**General Impression:**

The village offers the advantages of a quiet oasis just off the N4; it has excellent amenity status due to its location and to the obvious commitment of the community to their home environment, well done!

**Second Round Adjudication:**