

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Collooney**

Ref: **274**

County: **Sligo**

Mark: **171**

Category: **B**

Date: **23/06/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	35	35
The Built Environment	40	25	25
Landscaping	40	25	25
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	12	12
Litter Control	40	20	21
Tidiness	20	8	8
Residential Areas	30	21	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	20	21
General Impression	10	5	6
TOTAL MARK	300	171	173

Overall Developmental Approach:

The adjudicator would like to thank you for the excellent maps and keys, the CD and the photographs. The Action Plan is excellent - the objectives are clear and specific and realistic. All documentation was most useful on adjudication day.

Like many villages of similar size in Co. Sligo major development in housing terms is under way in Collooney. It is important that you committee meets with developers and the Planning Authority to make sure that all new developments will be landscaped to a standard that is in keeping with you vision for the village.

You have good participation from the schools and the Local Authority and that is most important.

The Built Environment:

You have done good work at the Tennis Courts and the Fairfield. The Credit Union wall facing AIB is in need of painting as is Quigley's amongst others. A number of well presented properties caught the eye such as J.B. Perry where a good use of colour was noted. The grass areas and the castellated low stone walls at the Church of Ireland set the building off to good effect. The Catholic Church is a fine limestone building complimented by the nearby Grotto that is attractively presented.

The Square should be a focal point for your village but the area lacks definition. Can you talk with your Local Authority about developing a plan for this key area?

Landscaping:

The Union Wood is a great community asset and your work there is well worth while. The trees at the Fairgreen are looking well. However it is a pity that at the entrance to this area there is a pile of stones and sand inside the gate on the right hand side. The cut grass at the Fairfield should be removed as it looks quite untidy.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The wood is also highly important from a wildlife point of view. 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 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 grass lands

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:

The litter clean up days are an excellent way of trying to focus the community on this important aspect of environmental presentation. Unfortunately litter control was not good on adjudication day. Litter was noted in the area of the bridge on the Sligo approach, at The Square and at the Bring Centre. Litter control should play a key role in your Action Plan for 2006.

Tidiness:

A number of road boundary walls need to be painted, and this task needs to be done on an annual basis by all property owners. Many instances of casual weed growth was noted at roadside kerbs and at walls. This gives a very un-cared for appearance. Plastic pipes were noted to the side of the Recycling Centre and these should be removed. The adjudicator is not in favour of the display of retail goods on the pavement as was noted here. Apart from looking rather untidy such displays can cause major difficulties for people in wheelchairs or the visually disabled.

Residential Areas:

Like many towns and villages in the area individual and estate houses were generally well presented and many have attractively presented gardens. However road boundary walls need painting at some properties. Casual weed growth is another recurring problem in residential areas. Some gable end walls need painting also. Do remember that the kerbing around grass open spaces should be visible - grass may need to be cut back by hand to achieve this.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads were generally disappointing. Both the Sligo and Galway approach roads did not show any recent indications of maintenance attention. On the Galway approach road the area at the bridge was very poorly presented with rampant weed growth. The new trees on the Old Barrack road are a good addition to this area but it is a pity that all verges and smaller grass areas have not been cut.

General Impression:

Your Tidy Towns Action Plan will be of great help to you in planning your way forward. As indicated in the 2004 Report do take on board the suggestions in that Report and the 2003 Report together with the present Report.

Good luck to all involved.

Second Round Adjudication: