

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Loch Gowna** Ref: **55**
County: **Cavan** Mark: **245**
Category: **A** Date(s): **29/06/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	39
The Built Environment	50	31
Landscaping	50	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	24
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	5
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	245

Overall Development Approach:

Loch Gowna is a very pleasant little village with the beautiful aspect of the lake shores. Work progress has been very satisfactory over the years and many projects of improvement have been successfully completed. At this stage as was mentioned last year, a three to five year plan would be most helpful. This would identify all the issues that need rectifying and would initiate new ideas for projects. The involvement of as wide a range of community and business interests in the community could be assembled. Prioritise items that need attention and programme these out on a phased basis over the years. This will serve also as a checklist from year to year to see how progress is moving.

The Built Environment:

The amount of building development that is currently taking place in the village is dramatic and is changing the face of the village. This is also causing some disruption and hopefully when this settles down the new areas of building can be integrated well with the village. It is important that the central core of the village remains intact so as not to lose the character of the village. Stone walls are a great feature of the village and with all the new concrete structures the stone walls are becoming even more important. The school and adjoining hall look well as do both Churches. The shops are in good condition. As mentioned last year the Hire service building and surrounds would benefit from some painting attention. The Ball Alley is well treated and makes the Fairgreen look well. The large neglected house opposite the Swan Lake housing estate is troublesome – this is such a fine structure and hopefully this can be regenerated together with the roadside wall. The old school appears to have work in progress which would be very helpful. Both the Foamlite and Aeroboard premises look well. The Petrol station while looking bright and clean seems to have décor ill fitted to the particular location- décor that would be more appropriate to the outskirts of a large city rather than a scenic country Irish village.

Landscaping:

A number of well cared for landscaped areas give very nice character to the village. The Fairgreen with the play areas and ball alley is meticulously attended to, the areas surrounding the Church of Ireland and the railed grassed areas to either side of road on the Longford roadside. Also the area at the corner below the petrol station looks well with the picnic table. A number of houses contribute very well to the roadside by carefully tending their gardens. Planted containers through the village give a welcome sparkle of summer colour and brighten up the roadsides. The swan Lake housing estate has tiny pieces of grass – unless these are meticulously maintained they do not look well as being so small the focus of attention is immediately upon them. It is a pity that so little green space is allotted to this development. The green entrance space at the entrance to the large houses at Lake View is very disappointing and one would expect a much better standard of entrance to such prestigious houses even if the building is not finally complete. Tree planting through the village was noted on the inside of some boundary walls – this is a great idea and generous on behalf of the landowner.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The lake provides enormous potential for wildlife and natural amenity appreciation and new projects should be initiated to capitalize on this magnificent feature. Access to the lake is not great – some toe paths were found by chance. Consult the tidy town's handbook for ideas and look to last years report for comments that were made. The roadside verges provide a very rich flora and these look very well. Surveys and school projects can help to highlight the great fund of floral richness that exists here. The Foamlite factory grounds are interesting in that one part of the road frontage has carefully mown grass with weed control at the boundary and the other portion has a natural field with a rich flora – it is not clear whether this occurred by chance or was intended but it does emphasise the value of the natural planting.

Litter Control:

Litter control is generally good in the village with very little evidence of litter on the roadsides. Some litter was noted on the road towards the Fairgreen. The litter bins are prominent, attractive but not obtrusive. Work was noted in progress on litter collection and cleaning

Waste Minimisation:

The promotion of ensuring that households use waste collection services does avoid dumping taking place. This aspect of the competition is about concentrating both on the need to choose materials and methods that avoid producing waste and to consider environmentally friendly ways of dealing with the waste that is generated. A campaign of awareness with both homeowners and business people needs to be started to give an understanding of the importance of waste management and recycling. Compost heaps can be made for green materials, avoidance of using materials that do not degrade easily and separation of the various materials so that they can be recycled.

Tidiness:

The current wave of building developments are causing some untidiness in the village and hopefully when all this is finished a more normal situation will return. The area behind the Hire service centre looks a little untidy with the partially clad shed. Towards the petrol station iron roofed structures become very prominent and are not the most attractive sight in such a lovely setting. There is also a large heap of rubble just below the petrol station that hopefully will be removed soon.

Residential Areas:

The residential areas are well tended with many roadside houses contributing well to the overall roadside view of the village. The new housing developments as mentioned above are creating a new dimension which needs positive approaches to integrate these with the existing village. At Lake View some houses that are occupied look very well and have developed their properties effectively. The uniqueness of streetside village residences needs to be preserved so that the village remains intact.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach roads are very attractive with a wide and rich flora in the roadside verges and hedgerows. The balance between cutting back these and yet retaining the nature of them is delicate. Road surfaces are generally good. The village is well self contained and fortunately the developments are very close or within the village which means that the surrounding approach roads are not interfered with

General Impression:

Loch Gowna is a very pleasant little village to visit. It is a village undergoing enormous change with building construction in places and there is a need to retain the heart or core of the village intact with all the

developments. Access to the lake and capitalising on this wonderful asset should be a priority now.