

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Carraig Airt** Ref: **1137**
County: **Donegal** Mark: **274**
Category: **B** Date(s): **18/06/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	48
The Built Environment	50	34
Landscaping	50	38
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	29
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	11
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	274

Overall Development Approach:

Your extensive and Village Enhancement Work Programme is most impressive. (There is no necessity to enclose copies of correspondence to other organisations: we prefer to read of your progress in your own very detailed report and view the fruits of the projects on site. Photographs are always useful.) The historical information is fascinating. Nothing could be more apt than the sentiments expressed in the summary enclosed, but what is missing is a year-by-year table showing target dates for starting/finishing various new projects: this gives everyone annual objectives to work towards and other committees have found it stimulates enthusiasm especially among the large numbers of voluntary helpers involved. Other committees also find that the Rural Place Map for their localities, published by the Ordnance Survey, is more useful than the older sheets as they show fairly recent additions such as housing estates; certainly they are more helpful to the judges because carrying around the large sheets can be awkward, especially in bad weather. A huge amount of maintenance work has been undertaken; this is always the case in the best centres, where new schemes that are introduced have to be kept up in succeeding years. Standards are improving everywhere: congratulations for continuing to hold your high place in the county.

The Built Environment:

As usual, the churches are exceptionally well presented - the Church of Ireland with its landmark tower and miraculously restored clocks, the handsome Roman Catholic church on the edge of the village, the Presbyterian Church in its pretty gardens. The Hotel looked pristine, adding greatly to the visual impact of the centre of the village. Nionra impressed as a neat small structure. Mervagh Resource Centre was tidily presented. The Day Care centre adds considerable interest to the streetscape. It seemed that there was less of the obtrusive mass-produced signage on business premises that was seen in previous years. There has been no major new building erected and the effort appears to have been successfully concentrated upon maintenance and upgrading.

Landscaping:

Now that the monument at the centre of the village has been reinstated, it would be advantageous to remove the dull concrete between the railings and the cross and substitute something more prepossessing - such as stone flags, gravel or grass, there are many alternatives. The triangular bed of herbaceous plants looked most attractive and the simple landscaping - it is hardly even that: perhaps just careful dressing is the term - of the Creeslough road with its neated verges and trees creates an unusually pleasant impact. Of course the centrepiece is the splendid Strand Park which was such an imaginative initiative when it was first planned and now gives the lie to those who felt such a garden would not survive by the sea; it is now in fact a mature garden containing another mature garden - the enclosure with roses - with trim lawns, well maintained walls and pleasing features such as the pansy cart.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The listing of 26 song birds, 32 aquatic birds and 3 birds of prey given in the report provides much food for thought; it will be interesting and useful to keep referring to it annually to ascertain which species are increasing and which not; the research for this is complimented. The list of plants in the salt marsh is equally informative. The nature mural near the park has survived extraordinarily well over the years - in fact the way in which you introduce the public to the local nature resources is exemplary. The waterside path was favourably noted, as was additional tree planting.

Litter Control:

Your control of litter was even more effective than last year, though of course this is something that can vary from day to day. In general, this has been the trend in the county this year. Congratulations to the voluntary helpers. It is good to read that your local Authority makes two litter collections each week. Refuse bags dumped in the street were not in evidence this year: if it occurs again, there is nothing like well publicised prosecutions to diminish the incidence - if the culprits can be identified.

Waste Minimisation:

This is an above-average mark in the first year of this new category - a category that will become more and more important as time goes on. Your work as described in the documentation - such as the fact that you compost clippings from the park - shows you are already connected to the concept. The bring bank was tidy at the time of the visit.

Tidiness:

There are still a number of untidy 'backs', especially as seen from the Strand Park. One unsightly area between the hotel and the park contained what looked like discarded metalwork and an ugly rusted corrugated iron roof was conspicuous near the large car park. A major house construction in the main street will hopefully be completed before long - this is considered as legitimate untidiness because temporary and does not enter the marking. An untidy post-and-wire fence near the river might be replaced with one of the sturdy timber palings which have become popular recently.

Residential Areas:

Most of Carrigart is residential. It is the older houses in the core of the village that give it its special quality. Some fine garden frontages were seen, ranging from the magnificent palm tree in one near the hotel to the amazing clematis on the way to the car park, where veronica, azalea and escalonia were also flourishing; those demonstrate what can be done by individual householders. Residents of the newer estates could be encouraged in this direction. The estates are in the main well kept, but no better and certainly no worse than hundreds of others throughout the country - Radharc na Cille had neat lawns at the time of the visit, and the estate by the Day Centre was very tidy - there is ample space here for more tree planting. A nice little cluster of well-kept houses was noted opposite the RC Church. As the author of the Enhancement Work Programme states, you can perhaps help residents of estates such as Radharc an Oilean with tree-planting; this could extend to shrubberies and other plantings.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Paving done in recent years with parking bays and attractive lighting did a great deal for the overall appearance of the village. Parking in the village centre is still haphazard, however. Surfacing of side roads is poor. The car parks are well kept - that on the sea front adorned with flowering tubs, and that adjacent to the hotel with a central flower bed. On the Milford Road, the new roadside limestone wall and pavement is outstanding.

General Impression:

It is always encouraging to see how Carrigart maintains its high position with great pride. One always comes away with a feeling of admiration for the work being done. Long may this continue.

