

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dungloe** Ref: **700**
County: **Donegal** Mark: **209**
Category: **C** Date(s): **14/06/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	34
The Built Environment	50	36
Landscaping	50	22
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	15
Litter Control	50	26
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	10
Residential Areas	40	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	26
General Impression	10	6
TOTAL MARK	400	209

Overall Development Approach:

Do not be disappointed with your placing this year: as you did not enter the competition in 2005, and as the marking system has changed since then, your submission has been taken as a new entry - it will be in next year's marking that the work you have done over the past twelve months will really receive a relative and proper assessment. Judging by the projects listed in your excellent Development Plan, which starts this year, and all going well, the pace of your climb up the marking ladder should accelerate. You give an exceptionally candid account of discrepancies noted by the committee, with photographs to show unsightliness and dumping. You will find that in the following the word 'inconsistency' will occur quite frequently, as it is for its inconsistencies that Dungloe is at present remarkable, from the superb to the less than prepossessing. First, hearty congratulations to the Templecrone Co-Op on its centenary: its impact and influence a hundred years ago has coloured the more admirable pages of our history.

The Built Environment:

Perhaps some of the more modern buildings have not received the attention they deserve from adjudicators. The Ionad Seirbhisi Pobail is a first class piece of contemporary architecture which, in its siting, does not conflict with the more traditional buildings of the town. Seen from above on the main road, the Community school, Ionaid Spoir and the RC Church do not impress greatly, but close-to their impact is very strong and they are all presented in well-kept surroundings. The old church, now Ionaid Teampail Chroine, retains its landmark position and has not suffered from the neglect that often occurs in such transformations. The picturesque Church of Ireland church is beautifully maintained in its pleasant enclosure, and the neighbouring harbour buildings show a fine quality of restoration. Of the business and commercial houses, none rises to the quality of design and maintenance better than that of Patrick John Sally's. The fact is that most of the shops in the main street suffer from excessive advertising and mass-produced signage, and though some are individually well kept the majority are garish and in some cases quite scruffy; even the Cope HQ is poorly

presented. Herein lies inconsistency: some fine individual buildings but the view looking down main street is, unfortunately, quite unattractive.

Landscaping:

The wide grassed area by the sea (north of the elegant footbridge) looked very well on the date of the visit. Small areas of planting, such as at 'the Angle', in estates and in the grounds of several public buildings, create a much-needed soft and colourful respite from built-up areas and areas of neglect. The graveyards are very well kept. A major landscaping project, such as on an approach road or at an important intersection, to give a colourful welcome to the town, is missing.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It is good to read that trees have been replaced where necessary. Work was seen to be ongoing along the seashore. It was interesting to see a rhododendron hedge in magnificent bloom - a tree not usually used for hedging. There are, quite obviously, plenty of marine, lakeside, riverside and meadow habitats, but it did not seem that these were being interpreted widely (such as by illustrated signage) for members of the public to appreciate. Perhaps you will correct this impression on your next entry form - the wild-life heading is notoriously difficult to assess. The involvement of schools in nature-related projects should be encouraged, and it is likely that you are doing this.

Litter Control:

Litter control was quite good in the main street and in housing estates. Ard Croine was surprisingly littered. The car park by the bring bank was very badly littered indeed.

Waste Minimisation:

This is a good average mark in this new category - a category which will increase in importance as time goes on. It was good to see that the recycling area was in constant demand, but (see Litter above) the surroundings were not well serviced - the Local Authority should be alerted to the inadequacy of supervision. Some quite large objects, such as hoovers, were left lying about because there did not seem to be proper receptacles. (It is hoped that tourists do not have occasion to see this area because it does nothing to obviate the 'dirty Irish' image!) To be positive, it is very good to see the townspeople making the best of the facility, but they need to be better served.

Tidiness:

The clutter of obtrusive signage in the potentially tidy main street is something that needs long-term attention, for it will take time to convince business people of the need. It is one of the major elements contributing to an 'untidy town' image. Another is the inconsistency of domestic frontages on main roads, such as the road into the town from Glenties and the Caravan road: fine wooden palings cheek-by-jowl with poor post-and-wire fencing, excellent stone boundary walls next to others that are crumbling, neatly kept entrances beside weedy ones, and a number of neglected roadside plots. Unsightly poles and wires do not help. On Quay Road there is the same difficulty - inconsistency in the upkeep of roadside properties.

Residential Areas:

Most homes, whether in the older core of the town or in the suburbs, are presented with real pride. St Peter's Terrace is a fine example of a well-kept neighbourhood - it was wonderful to see children painting the kerbs. Ard Croine makes good use of rocks in its pleasant planting area with its mix of shrubs and bedding plants; a pity that weeds had been allowed to grow in places and that a few boundary walls were not as well maintained as most. Homes with excellent gardens were noted at Mill Road. The Cois Locha development is promising.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road surfaces of the main thoroughfares were good, but some side roads were in need of attention, such as Caravan Road. The car park at the recycling area has been mentioned under another heading; its surfacing was poor. Major improvements to the pier, including public lighting, were very favourably noted. The undergrounding of cables, where this has been achieved, is excellent and could with advantage be extended to other areas. Excellent street name plaques were seen. Traffic control was generally very poor in the town centre on the date of the visit.

General Impression:

This has been a very interesting centre to visit. It would appear from your Development Plan that you have a clear sight of the improvement that are needed. Every good wish for your forthcoming enterprises.

