

# Tidy Towns Competition 2006

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Rockcorry** Ref: **613**  
County: **Monaghan** Mark: **263**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **28/06/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	39
The Built Environment	50	33
Landscaping	50	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	19
Litter Control	50	35
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	16
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	38
General Impression	10	9
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>263</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

Your Five Year Plan is impressive and undoubtedly attainable if the imaginative energy of this committee is anything to go by, assisted by your well established voluntary and official connections. It is good to read that you are involving new residents. It is more than evident as one approaches Rockcorry that a significantly well kept village is about to appear, because the borders of the converging roads from Newbliss, Monaghan, Ballybay and Cootehill are so well trimmed and neatly planted for a considerable distance in each direction. No map was enclosed, except for those incidental to the Plan, where locations and buildings are not named so we hope we have not missed anything significant. Most committees use the Rural Places maps printed by the Ordnance Survey, and on which any notes may be written in pen.

### The Built Environment:

Dereliction persists, but a number of recent initiatives have counteracted the problem. The splendid white mansion in the village centre, with the elegant Hall and associated structures to the back of both, now catch the eye positively. It is understood that plans for the Market House are in train - it is of course the focal building in the village. The pretty Church of Ireland church was looking splendid as usual, amid its profuse planting. A small (church?) building opposite was neatly kept. A Hall on the Monaghan road was in need of painting. What remains of the industrial buildings were presented to good effect due to the well maintained grounds and the planting. Ideally the ivy should be removed from the chimney - an interesting piece of industrial archaeology - but perhaps it is holding it together? None of the shopfronts is of sufficiently unique design to nominate for an award. The wonderful contribution to the streetscape made by the cottages and almshouses are mentioned under 'Residential', below. (Who, as a matter of interest, maintains the Dawson memorial nearer Cootehill?)

### Landscaping:

This category is really your strongest point. The number of flower beds, tubs, window-boxes and other containers was in fact quite astonishing - and all so well nurtured. The display around the church has been mentioned above; the display on the triangular green was also breathtaking: it is good to see how the young trees have come on. The neat planting by the old mill was admired too. The GAA sports field was well maintained. Beware of going too far with prettification - sometimes a grassy bank can look more impressive if not broken up by bedding. There may be some danger of Disneyesque-style foolishness, though not yet.

#### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

Tree planting (though clearly a part of general landscaping) is marked under this heading. Your tree-planting programme is extensive and judicious. Your plans with the Heritage Group will be eagerly awaited in next year's submission.

#### **Litter Control:**

An advance here too. There was very little litter in Rockcorry at the time of the visit, thanks no doubt to your voluntary helpers and probably also to the additional bins. Congratulations.

#### **Waste Minimisation:**

This is an average mark given in the first year of this new category - a category that will assume greater importance as time goes on. A bring bank was not seen - there may be one, but having no map was a hindrance. It is good to hear that you are already in discussions over this issue - your mark next year will depend on the fruits of these. You may find useful information in the Tidy Towns book, and the County Council officials will be sure to provide local advice when asked.

#### **Tidiness:**

The remaining derelict sites contribute to a comparatively (for you) low mark here. Also, unused petrol pumps opposite Emo are somewhat unsightly. The front boundary wall of the otherwise handsome school could do with freshening up with paint.

#### **Residential Areas:**

The inheritance from the past of the alms houses and also the cottages on the Mongahan road are what really make Rockcorry unique. Assuming that the latter are mainly uninhabited - yet so neatly preserved - has there been any discussion with the Council or with a developer about knocking them together in twos, say, preserving the frontages and upgrading the interiors of the double-sized homes? This has been successfully done elsewhere. A planning application for new houses opposite the old mill was seen: you should use your influence to ensure that the new homes are in keeping with the traditional streetscape - including such features as brick facings, for example. The small court or close off the main street looked most attractive, with neat homes and well kept grass and parking bays, against a background of mature trees. Such a background was also notable at the still incomplete estate of white houses on the Ballybay road, and at an estate off the Cootehill road, demonstrating an enviable integration with the natural environment that is not seen in many other centres.

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

All roads were well surfaced, especially the Newbliss road. As mentioned at the outset, the approaches to Rockcorry are outstanding. The car park at the GAA was well kept. Stone walls were admired, and there was a high quality of stout wooden paling seen at a number of places. The elegant lamp standards are an effective adornment; this might be extended (at enormous expense of course) to other parts of the village to real advantage.

#### **General Impression:**

This has been a very stimulating place to visit, because so many well-considered, tasteful and ultimately effective projects have been completed or are at an advanced stage. There is no need to emphasise to this committee what the ultimate priorities should be. Every good wish for your continued rise up the Tidy Towns ladder.