

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Coolaney** Ref: **680**
County: **Sligo** Mark: **248**
Category: **B** Date(s): **12/07/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	41
The Built Environment	50	32
Landscaping	50	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	24
Litter Control	50	35
Waste Minimisation	20	5
Tidiness	30	14
Residential Areas	40	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	248

Overall Development Approach:

The tidy towns committee in Coolaney is clearly a very active one with great initiative and new ideas. Congratulations on the initiative of the prospectus for the development of a playground and the sculpture furniture project. Hopefully these initiatives will be fully completed and add to the success of the village to date. The planned approach to the development of Coolaney is impressive. The committee's liaison with so many bodies ensures that good cooperation can be achieved – it also means that you are in a good position to lobby for issues and to know the best approaches to take when seeking public body help. The involvement with the schools is particularly helpful as having children involved in community work at an early age creates a good spirit.

The Built Environment:

The enormous amounts of new housing developments that have taken place and are currently in progress are breathtaking. The village has been blown open at each end with housing developments. The extra population means that a wider range of people will hopefully become involved in the tidy towns movement and have a welcome input with initiatives. In the main village street there is a good level of care and maintenance of buildings. Well painted and presented buildings give an immediate impact and also show up those that need attention. The Garda station needs attention to the paint at the base of the wall. The old McNulty premise with petrol pump offers a challenge. The Health centre looks well. Colour schemes look well and the general appearance of the business premises is attractive. The newly refurbished three story house is interesting. And some new business premises appear well. The monument and the well add a nice character touch to the village particularly on account of where they are placed. From the notes with the entry form it is interesting to note that changes in ownership of premises may now result in an upgrade of one of the difficult buildings. The painting and presentation work during the year is very helpful. The community centre is looking very smart.

Landscaping:

The landscaped area by the monument and at the well is attractive. The entrance to the riparian walk near the well is interesting with the features by the river bank – these certainly attract attention. The trees along the centre of the street are indeed a novel approach and an interesting idea for a wide street – they get lots of light here and are not shadowed by the buildings as this commonly occurs when trees are planted close to the paving. These trees are maturing well and will continue to improve and make further impact. The many containerised plantings of summer bedding give a nice sparkle of summer colour to the village. Some good landscaping has been done at the entrances to the new housing estates – this is very important as there is frequently a fear with such estates that they may be left without proper landscaping and reinstatement of the surrounds – it is wise to keep a watchful eye on this and also on planning permission requests. The Millennium Park is looking well and forms a nice adjunct to the riparian walk. Many gardens contribute well to the overall landscape of the village by their care and attention to their own roadside gardens. The horticultural course was an excellent initiative as many young people with new houses and gardens can benefit greatly from this help and guidance. The tree planting that has been done is a very valuable investment for the future.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The riparian way offers great potential for appreciation of the natural environment. This has become very naturalised over time and is a lovely strolling place. There is a good range of plants and it would be very useful to compile an inventory of the knowledge of local people in regard to this – what they have seen, when, and where. The renewal work done on the riparian way is very useful and it is important to keep this riparian way upgraded as time passes to insure its continued value. It is good to see this project included in the future planning.

Litter Control:

There is a very good level of litter control evident in the village. Some very small amount of litter was noted but really the litter patrols are working very well and the persistence and determination approach pays off in this case. The involvement of school children at the weekends is commendable. The extra amount of housing and the distance of these from the shops provide possibilities for litter dropping and a continuous awareness programme is essential to keep the standards as they are

Waste Minimisation:

The bottle banks represent one aspect of recycling – more materials could be recycled or their use avoided in the first place. Perhaps a schools compost making process could be started. Banks for a wider range of material recycling would be welcome

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 main street of the village has a very tidy and orderly appearance. This is helped by the well kept buildings giving a very neat streetscape with the unity of the trees down the centre of the street. The sign boards of shops are well suited and signage in general is good. The control of kerbside weeds is noted. It is wise to control these early in the season or before they emerge as often when mature grass weeds are killed their dead appearance is worse than when alive. The entrance to the temporary bottle bank area where the reseeding of the pitch is happening is causing some temporary untidiness. The building developments also have a bearing on aspects of tidiness in the village – the actual work and the heavy machinery and trucks take their toll on an area. The town enhancement scheme that is planned to start in the autumn will give a great impetus to the village and surrounds and this is very welcome news.

Residential Areas:

The original residences of the town still retain their local character. It is great to have streetside residences in a village thereby combining the business and residential community effectively and forming a good community spirit. The new estate Gort na Si and Cluain Aine look very well - good landscaping has been done here to the entrances and to the internal green areas. Individual homeowners then must take responsibility for their own gardens and they are depended upon to give a good impression of the estates. Sliabhgamph also looks well. The trees in these estates will need time to mature and perhaps denser tree planting could be undertaken as trees form the backbone of the landscape. The new houses being built at the other end of the town are

progressing well and they will extend the village very much over the bridge. In the village centre the Radharc na Habhann housing will help to consolidate the village main street residential area.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads are in good conditions and on leaving the village return to their rural natural setting very quickly which is appropriate. The roadway towards the Gort na Si and Cluain Aine estates is in very poor condition and needs attention. The footpaths constructed at this housing estate are very robust but they do not link with paths leading to the village and in the interest of safety these are urgently needed. Similarly roadways should be kept clean during construction work to avoid slippery surfaces developing. The absence of overhead cables is a great advantage and gives a lovely vista through the street with the sober but attractive lamp standards.

General Impression:

Great work and great initiative is shown in Coolaney. The new projects proposed will be exciting and we will be looking forward eagerly to seeing these and we wish success in the pursuit of these. There is all the evidence of an active committee at work.