

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Donnycarney** Ref: **1318**
County: **Dublin (City)** Mark: **201**
Category: **E** Date(s): **27/07/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	25
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	20
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	15
Litter Control	50	15
Waste Minimisation	20	5
Tidiness	30	25
Residential Areas	40	30
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	6
TOTAL MARK	400	201

Overall Development Approach:

Donnycarney was entered as part of the drive by SuperValu to work with communities to approve the environmental standards of their areas through participation in the National TidyTowns Competition. Areas were entered on the basis that they fall within the catchment area of the nearest SuperValu store and this 'baseline assessment' is intended to provide a basis on which progress could be made over the coming years through partnership with residents, businesses and local agencies. As such it should not be interpreted as a critique of the area but rather an opportunity for everybody to work together to make their hometown a better place to work, live and visit. As part of SuperValu's strategic approach to sustainable development in the area, a nominal mark has been given to reflect this. Further marks will be awarded in future years where more tangible TidyTowns structures are developed and local environmental plans prepared and implemented.

The Built Environment:

Donnycarney is a mature Dublin suburb that is predominately residential. Unlike many suburbs it has the advantage of being pretty well defined, particularly with its impressive church which is one of the prominent landmarks on the northside of Dublin. This magnificent building, although modern in design, was directly influenced by later medieval churches with its tall pointed windows, beautiful stained glass windows and arched doorways. In addition to the church, the area is of course also home to the famous Parnell Park, the Dublin teams' home-ground as well as well known GAA clubs Craobh Chiaráin and St Vincents. The area also boasts a good range of amenities including a new community centre which was nicely presented on the day. The national school further down the road was also looking well! While landscaping could be used to soften the image of many of these structures as detailed beneath, the area is very lucky indeed to have such fine buildings and modern amenities.

Landscaping:

While the area has a fantastic template to work on, landscaping could still be applied to make the area even nicer. The area around the stadium could be softened with creative planting, and while the church dominates its surroundings thoroughly there is room for further planting in its surrounds on the Malahide Road. Leaving aside some lovely gardens in individual houses, most landscaping throughout the general area is mainly through planted roadside trees which consist of the same species with little to break up the eye. An opportunity therefore exists to introduce a lot more native trees that would not only ensure interesting colour whatever the season but also provide much needed habitats for wildlife in an urban setting. This adjudicator did not have an opportunity to survey the Maypark located off the Malahide Road during his initial base-line assessment. I understand from Dublin City Council the park extends to 3.25 hectares, is mainly used as a football facility and therefore has probably not achieved its full potential given its prominent location. I look forward to seeing this on a return visit. For the area as a whole, however, a survey of the area carried out by a new TidyTowns groups would be the first step in making a lot of progress under this category.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

As stated above, landscaping will provide a great opportunity to encourage wildlife in the area. With the exception of the Maypark, the development of which I will follow closely in future years, Donnycarney seems to boast few large open spaces. Street sides, private gardens and areas around prominent structures therefore probably represent the best opportunity to develop new wildlife habitats by a new TidyTowns group. The landscaping survey suggested above should therefore take on board this aspect and would be the first step and could involve local school children, thereby having both environmental and educational benefits

Litter Control:

While the area was mostly litter free on the day of assessment, unfortunately quite a lot was seen on the road in front of the national school. This could represent an opportunity to perhaps involve the school children in litter patrols, successfully done by many residents groups throughout the city. Not only does it have the potential to be a fun day involving the whole community, it also has its educational benefits and engenders pride of place. Perhaps groups already take part in the very successful National Spring Clean organised by An Taisce. These kind of details would normally be included in the standard entry form for TidyTowns and would garner additional marks under this category.

Waste Minimisation:

Without details of ongoing community projects, it was difficult to assess the extent of progress being made under this category and I would look forward to seeing whether progress has in fact been made on future assessments. However taking into account the existing council facilities and SuperValu's own commitment in this area, I believe a nominal mark is appropriate for this year. There are however plenty of ways in which local communities can assist in tackling this growing problem, such as promoting best practice in local businesses and schools, encouraging household composting through local workshops and lobbying for access to appropriate recycling facilities. How this has been achieved in other areas, and indeed many other useful tips, is contained in the Race Against Waste community booklet available from the TidyTowns Unit in the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Tidiness:

The area was generally uncluttered and tidy, although graffiti was noted in a few areas and particularly around Parnell Park which detracted from the area.

Residential Areas:

Residential areas were very well maintained. Well done to all concerned! In particular I must point out St. John's estate to the rear of the church which looked beautiful on the day with its benches and lots of colourful flowers. A new estate across the road from the stadium does not yet appear to have a name on view - I presume this is only a matter of time?

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The roads throughout Donnycarney were generally of a high standard and appeared to be well maintained. I noticed that there were very few signs actually welcoming people to the area. While not needed to identify this famous suburb, signs can create a stronger sense of place, particularly to those like myself visiting the area on the day.

General Impression:

Donnycarney is predominantly residential and looks like a very pleasant place to live. There is of course scope for enhancing the area further, but it could do really well in TidyTowns were the community and local businesses to get behind the TidyTowns effort. I for one, would look forward to revisiting the area again, and in particular to see developments in Maypark. Well done to everyone for maintaining your area to such a high

standard!!