

# Tidy Towns Competition 2007

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Drumcondra** Ref: **1322**  
County: **Dublin (City)** Mark: **207**  
Category: **E** Date(s): **28/07/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	25
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20
Litter Control	50	20
Waste Minimisation	20	5
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	30
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>207</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Drumcondra 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:**

Drumcondra is a beautiful, old Dublin suburb. The centre was taken to be Quinn's pub at the end of Clonliff Road. The town looks great with new landscaping, re-paved footpaths, and lots of litter bins. Some shop fronts still have plastic/neon signage but many seem to have replaced theirs with wooden/painted signs, to great effect, e.g. the Barber shop, Paul's Delicatessan, Independant Pizza and Laundry & Dry Cleaners. Quinn's pub is newly painted and looks good. The train station and adjacent church are of fine red brick - a feature that predominates throughout the area.

### **Landscaping:**

The streetscape has been greatly enhanced of late with the planting of hornbeam trees along the central median of the road. The other end of this road is lined with leafy, mature London Plane trees.

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

The Royal Canal runs adjacent to Drumcondra and is a major wildlife corridor nationally. Much has been done to improve the walkway and it is a potentially great amenity. Unfortunately there is a lot of litter in the water and there are no benches on which to sit and enjoy the water. Perhaps anti-social behaviour is a problem. There is good lighting however. Otter and kingfisher are known to use these waterways, even in the heart of the city, and an information panel would greatly increase people's awareness of this. Buddlia (butterfly bush) grow abundantly in these urban environments and not only are they very colourful during July and August, they are a magnet for butterflies.

#### **Litter Control:**

There is a small amount of litter around.

#### **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 Tidy Towns Unit in the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

#### **Tidiness:**

Some of the principle road signs are illegible as letters have been removed. Graffiti is a minor problem in places, particularly on shop shutters. In general however, the town looks clean and tidy.

#### **Residential Areas:**

Residential areas have some very old, bi-lingual signs which should be cherished and preserved. These areas are fantastic red brick terraces, well kept without losing their sense of times past. Whitworth Parade deserves particular note due to its beautiful floral displays. Street landscaping is with rowan and birch - much nicer trees than the ubiquitous maple/lime.

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

St. Anne's road has benches under the walls of the train station, where the ivy has been allowed to grow is lovely (although it does seem to be used by drinkers who have discarded their empty cans. Clonliffe road looks good with tall floral displays and colourfully painted doors. Some 'welcome to Drumcondra' signs would greatly enhance the identity of the town.

#### **General Impression:**

Drumcondra looks great and has managed to preserve its old town feel. It's very much a place you would want to stop to have lunch. The canal is potentially a great amenity but needs some work.