

# Tidy Towns Competition 2007

## **Adjudication Report**

Centre: **Dromahair** Ref: **673**  
County: **Leitrim** Mark: **246**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **26/06/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	37
The Built Environment	50	32
Landscaping	50	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	17
Litter Control	50	36
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>246</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

The adjudicator would like to welcome Dromahair to the 2007 Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for the comprehensive Entry Form and the Plan for 2006 – 2010 that sets out your vision for Dromahair quite clearly. It is good to read that you have found the Rural Social Scheme so useful and that your committee of 10 people enjoys good support from the LEADER and Clar programmes. You have established closer links with the school and that is an excellent step towards the broadening of the community involvement in Tidy Towns. The adjudicator would like to wish the school well as they seek Green Flag status. The issue of the village sewerage and the problems that it causes for you are appreciated by your adjudicator.

### **The Built Environment:**

The completion of the walk to the Abbey has been a major undertaking for your Committee and the adjudicator enjoyed this walk along by the riverside. The new planting along the way adds colour and interest as does the Information Panel half way along. Some tidying up is necessary at the end of the path and cut grass had not been removed near the start of the path. The area around the Fountain remains a real problem area and the presentation here had declined since the adjudicator passed through Dromahair some years ago. The adjudicator is of the view that if necessary the moving of the fountain to another part of the village should not be a major problem. The schoolboy Forest Grove appeared to have been repainted recently and looked really well in its bright colour. Consideration might be given to the painting of the railings here. A good choice of contrasting colours was noted at the Garda Station though the Road boundary wall needs to be repainted. The frontage of the Abbey Manor Hotel was well presented and the attractive lettering admired. The Hostel building would be improved if whitewashed as a temporary measure pending redevelopment. An attractive stone building in the area of the Library caught the eye. As you pointed out in your documentation derelict property remains a problem to be resolved and on the Sligo road a derelict cottage was noted on the right on the approach to Dromahair.

## **Landscaping:**

You have put great effort into the creation and maintenance of a number of small landscaping projects and these were visited on adjudication day. The old Pump at Rock Valley and the landscaping there made an attractive feature out of a little bit of the history of Dromahair. Along the Church of Ireland wall the neat timber flower planters are very effective and work well with the stone of the wall. The landscaping at the Sligo road junction provides a great splash of colour and is being well maintained. Throughout Dromahair the various hanging baskets and flower tubs have been well placed and add to the character of the village. The planting of the 50 trees along the Drumkeeran approach road was a major undertaking and a great investment in the future.

## **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The signage on the Abbey Walk is simple yet effective in giving the visitor some information on the wildlife of the area, and the Fisherman's Trail through the Park area is imaginative while the short walk at the Newtownmanor road junction provides additional interest for the visitor. Have you considered having a wildlife survey of the Dromahair area carried out? It is important that your Tidy Towns Committee would examine further the wildlife potential, and see what you can achieve in terms of making the Dromahair area even more wildlife friendly. The new Biodiversity Award that is now part of the Tidy Towns Competition should be considered by your Committee for 2008. If you have not already done so, the starting point is to have a habitat survey carried out of the wildlife in your area. Suggested habitats to be considered include the following –

- Urban habitats – gardens, waste ground, walls, graveyards, hedges
- Wetland habitats – rivers, ponds, lakes, canals, reed marsh, bogs
- Woodland habitats – forests, hedgerows, plantations, parks
- Grassland habitats – roadside verges, parks, wet meadows, dry grasslands

The survey should produce a species list for each of the habitats relevant to your area. This need not be an expensive survey. Perhaps there is a knowledgeable person locally who might undertake this task for you. Basically the survey would identify the animals, plants, birds, fish that inhabit your area and their associated habitats. It should be remembered that to carry out the survey properly that it will probably take a year so that all habitats can be assessed at different time of the year. Using the results of the wildlife survey your next step should be to draft a straight forward Plan to preserve the identified habitats in your area, and investigate the possibility of new ones. Ultimately your objective is to encourage the existing wildlife to stay in your area and encourage new species to move in. This can only be done by creating an awareness of the feeding and shelter needs of the various species in the area. It is most important to try and involve your local school children in this project, and in many Schools there is probably a teacher who may have an interest in this area who would be willing to get involved. As part of the actions to be undertaken in your Wildlife Plan you might like to consider the provision of some weather proof display panels, illustrating and explaining the wildlife in your area. This has been done very successfully in many towns and villages in Ireland.

## **Litter Control:**

The weekly clean up that involves up to 50 of the community is an excellent way of giving people a 'hands on' involvement in Tidy Towns. The adjudicator looks forward to seeing the results of your planned poster competition next year. Litter was noted on the approach road down to the Church of Ireland Church and on the road down to the start of the Abbey Walk before the river bridge. Litter was also evident in the general area of the fountain. Occasional litter was also noted in the village centre.

## **Waste Minimisation:**

The segregation of litter which you are doing is an important first step in community waste reduction. The purpose of this new category is to encourage Tidy Towns Committees and the local community to get involved in projects that will reduce waste and encourage recycling. Marks can be gained by Dromahair for the promotion of best practice. This can include community guidance on methods of reducing waste such as segregating litter during clean up events. The organising of a Workshop in Dromahair on waste minimisation in your community is another initiative that you might consider. This could be held on a waste minimisation community awareness day as part of a series of local initiatives. Your local school or schools should also be involved with their own waste minimisation projects. You could also consider a partnership with local firms and businesses to encourage them to reduce unnecessary waste. In regard to waste minimisation it is important to remember that quite small actions can sometimes have a significant waste reduction impact. The Race Against Waste booklet circulated to all Tidy Towns Committee in 2006 has many ideas on waste reduction that may be of help to your committee. Hopefully Dromahair will have a Bring Bank Centre in the year ahead.

## **Tidiness:**

The Square (Fountain) area has been mentioned under other headings in this Report but the presentation here on adjudication day was really very poor. The Sculpture itself looks rather sad as the area around it is getting engulfed in weed and grass growth. Weeds were noted growing up through one of the seats. Nearby the Information Panel is damaged and needs to be straightened. At least one apparently derelict vehicle was noted in the general area. The approach road down to the Abbey Walk was quite untidy and evidently this is also the approach road to the Hotel car park. What a poor impression this area gives to visitors to Dromahair. The removal of cut grass towards the start of the Abbey Walk is also necessary.

#### **Residential Areas:**

At Drumlease the refurbishment of housing for the elderly was noted and this is such an important project. At Stonebridge estate excellent landscaping was underway on adjudication day and the approach here seems to be imaginative and appropriate for this estate. Sat Forest Grove the fine new stone road boundary walls blend well with existing older stone walls in the area. In the smaller estate of Woodlands Avenue mature landscaping here is a feature complimented by attractive limestone boulders. Some weed growth was noted at the community landscaped area at the end of Rock Valley but private landscaping was well presented. The timber fencing on this estate needs preservative treatment. The Old Parochial House caught the eye for the great colour choice made here and the associated landscaping.

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

On the Sligo approach further work was required on banks and roadside verges. The tree planting on the Drumlease road has been a significant project. On the Drumkeeran road little recent work on verges and roadside banks was evident. On Ardakup Beg very neat verges are a great feature here combined with good landscaping at the road junction.

#### **General Impression:**

Your committee seems to have a very clear focus on the present problems and your plans for the future of Dromahair. Good luck with your 2008 projects.