

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Coolagown** Ref: **649**
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **298**
Category: **A** Date(s): **25/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	44
The Built Environment	50	33
Landscaping	50	41
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	40
Litter Control	50	40
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	20
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	36
General Impression	10	9
TOTAL MARK	400	298

Overall Development Approach:

Congratulations to the Coolagown Development Group for participating in the Tidy Towns Competition 2008. Thank you for the simple, yet most helpful map and for pointing the adjudicator in the correct directions. The value of the additional maps was not appreciated until the survey of the village took place. Your 3-5 Year Plan shows that this is a focused and ambitious group who are on a mission to improve the quality of life in their village. The whole village seems to be involved in assisting you and the appearance of the village attests to this support. Thank you for including information on your funding. It would not be feasible to make improvements without funding. Your engagement with the local agencies appears meaningful and your account gives definite information on the contribution of these agencies make to your work. Of great interest to the adjudicator is the liaison between yourselves and the school, which sadly is not situated in the village. Hopefully, the school authorities will continue to pursue the Green Flag Status for their school. A slight caveat: ensure that all the material submitted in your entry is immediately relevant to this competition. A visit to Coolagown is like entering a new world. The adjudicator enjoyed his visit no end. Go n-éirí an t-ádh libh amach anseo.

The Built Environment:

Evidently Coolagown has been transformed over the years and there are very few traces of its ancient built heritage. This generation are at pains not to allow that past to fade entirely from memory though. The gabha at work in the céarta in the centre of the village is most attractive, well maintained and most appropriate, complimenting other hints at the village heritage. The Church is part of past and present and wonderful landscaping work has been done to present it at its best. O B's is the only trace of modern enterprise on the village main street and the yellow on this building brings vibrancy to the street. The maintenance of the BBQ station beside is in keeping with the standards all about the village. Hopefully when the construction on the

house near the corner is completed the decoration of the house to the front on the Long Road will improve too. The village is so well manicured that any inconsistency in décor besmirches the surroundings buildings.

Landscaping:

Under what heading does one put co-ordinated gate design that reflects the name of the village and the heritage of the village. The 'crúb chapail' on gates and flower poles touched a cord in this sentimental adjudicator. Landscaping throughout is multi dimensional. Every available opportunity to landscape is availed of all the way from the N72. The variety in the landscaping is breathtaking, now a raised bed of flowers, then a shrubby bank, now a pebbled base to the hedge, next a neatly trimmed grassy base. Always there is interest. Great work has been done at the Spout and the rushes behind confirm that this feature is appropriate. Lifespace Park: wonderful. The log piles would do the Chelsea Flower Show justice. They took the breath away. Kilbarry Wood is a bit out of town but the adjudicator enjoyed the 2.5 km walk. Another wonder. Signposting was better than Garmin.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your initiative in availing of expertise is paying dividends. Biodiversity is a by word with you and the log piles illustrated your enthusiasm for promoting habitats for gentle creatures. The 'Water Spout' is not just a landscaping ploy that deflects the eye from the enterprise across the road. It is a natural habitat with a walkway for frogs to come and go as they wish. The marshland behind the Spout must be a reserve but the adjudicator was nervous to snoop too closely. Information boards throughout are clear, clean and informative. The bilingual nature of these boards adds to the heritage aura.

Litter Control:

You are serious about eradicating litter from your community. Well done on the boards. Surely the message will get through. These boards illustrate your dedication to elimination rather than clean-up. You have, one imagines, targeted litter black spots with the siting of these boards. Do you take part in the Cork County Council litter challenges and, if so, how well do you do? Your informative and hopefully telling Litter Educational Boards show that you intend the litter message to get across. Maybe the message is getting through because there is no evidence of dumping and very little litter evident.

Waste Minimisation:

Well done on the educational work done during the Spring. There is a slight confusion evident in your submission between the aims in this section and litter awareness. This section is aimed at reduction. In order to make further progress in this section it may help to study the booklet 'Race Against Waste'. This booklet may help you to focus on projects that would be suitable for you.

Tidiness:

No weeds. Could O'Donnells be prevailed upon to remove or rethink their name signs? Something to compliment the village surroundings? Good kerbing which is well maintained helps to create the tidy impression. The road surface on the Long Road towards O B's needs looking after.

Residential Areas:

All individual homes are part of the orchestra of colour and care that blooms and blossoms around Coolagown. The new estates add their personality to the village interest. It is obvious that the existing dwellers welcome the new comers by giving them their own estate names stones and both Cill an Óir and the Paddocks bring variety and colour to their neighbourhoods. Hopefully these new dwellers will need shops and services which will bring further variety to the village. A drive out the Long Road was well worthwhile as the residences were resplendent.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Thank you for the welcome to Coolagown on all approach roads, and a bilingual welcome at that. The neat trimming of hedges defined the limits of Coolagown and is most attractive. The village name signs and the trimmed hedges along with the landscaping create a surreal feel as one drives into the village and suspects that maybe one is being duped into a Hitchcock like plot. The roadsides are beautiful only because of the planned care shown them. What could be a disaster at the O Donnells has been transformed. The welcome at Rathbarry Stud is equally warm.

General Impression:

What a great experience to drive into a village where design and treatment, where imagination and hard work act as a brake while the eager eye attempts to take in all that is happening in this quiet haven. There is so much of what village life should be. On seeing the new housing developments one felt that this new generation of dwellers will need services like shops and even a school. And what a boost those services would be to your village.