

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Knockraha** Ref: **791**
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **227**
Category: **A** Date(s): **18/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	34
The Built Environment	50	32
Landscaping	50	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	17
Litter Control	50	29
Waste Minimisation	20	7
Tidiness	30	19
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	27
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	227

Overall Development Approach:

Congratulations to Knockraha Area Community Association for participating in the Tidy Towns Competition 2008. Thank you for your informative Entry Form and for the village map which was most helpful. Also of great assistance was the information on the major issues facing your village and your association. Some of these issues you have very little control over. Thank you for the photos. Kilquane cemetery and your painting of the rails might never have been found were it not for the photo. You included a three year plan of action. Maybe you could revisit this plan, include priorities and targets for each section of the competition on a phased basis over the three years. One senses frustration because of the stone wall attitudes you face from time to time. Hopefully you will continue to meet PP, contractor and maybe the owner of the forge. Meantime concentrate on the issues over which you have influence. Do not lose heart. Continue to maintain your links with the various agencies that can shape the village future. Continue to bring your community with you and involvement of the new residents would help integrate them into your community. There may be a wildlife expert among your new neighbours. With regards to the school you might encourage the teachers to aspire to Green Flag Status. The best of luck to you with your work.

The Built Environment:

You certainly have been active and have achieved. The Community Centre looks well, even in the rain and has been worth all the effort expended. The school also looks well but could do with a coat of paint. The old school house is a highlight. The art work creates a wonderland feel for the toddlers. The houses at the heart of the village are tastefully decorated and create a traditional village atmosphere. The Church too is well maintained and one wonders if the dash at the front should be painted. Maybe power washing might be an option also. This is the heritage location of Knockraha and the forge is a vital link with the past. Its front stone wall and its very presence enhance the heritage buildings of the village. Yes, the ground beside and the gate

need to be looked after. The greatest tragedy that could befall the forge is that it would be bulldozed away to make a site entrance. The pity is that your committee cannot exploit the potential of this forge. All in all a lovely village.

Landscaping:

Delighted that you are conscious of all season colour and that you colour landscaping is not for the TidyTowns only. The regular grass cutting is worthwhile as it gives a cared-for appearance. You get great co-operation from some residents with flower arrangements. The impact of some walls jutting out has been softened by judicious landscaping for example at Gort na hEaglaise. You should look at the amenity area at the back of the Church. You mention 'further landscaping' in your plans for 2009. The term seemed like a broad aspiration. Instead there may be a need to have an integrated plan for landscaping in Knockraha now that the village has been further developed, maybe a 3/5 year plan.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The difficulties you experienced this year are understandable. Without ever going to the woods, the whole area is a wildlife habitat. As this is now an important part of the competition maybe you could involve someone on your committee who would be dedicated to this area only. You have made no mention of wildlife in your three year plan.

Litter Control:

Well done on the ongoing attempts to eradicate litter. Well done on the litter blitz. You are having success as there was no evidence of dumping and very little litter evident. Most likely the village needs more litter bins as the adjudicator tried to dispose of waste and found it difficult to find a home for the material. You have made no mention of litter in your three year plan.

Waste Minimisation:

It appears from your submission that there is a confusion between controlling litter and reducing waste. This section is dedicated to minimising the amount of waste material in Knockraha. Well done on attempting to have a Bring Bank in the village. It is noted that you segregate your waste during the litter blitz. During the winter you might study the booklet 'Race Against Waste'. It would stimulate waste minimisation projects that are clearly defined and achievable.

Tidiness:

One feels a calm about the village when one arrives. Knockraha has a neat and tidy appearance and the area around the Community Centre and crèche are bright and welcoming. Now that there is so much development in Knockraha there may be an opportunity to bury the overhead wires as has happened in the new estates. Their removal would improve the skyline. Keep the weeds under control as they give a neglected sense to a place and Knockraha does not deserve such a claim against it. Some of the signs also need to be cleaned and hedges/trees trimmed back to make the signs visible.

Residential Areas:

A tale of two villages, the old residences which look so well and so natural in their surroundings, the new residences appear less confident yet and a number are still unoccupied. The landscaping about both of the new estates is most tastily done and should bring hope for the future. Ardabhann Estate is beautiful in house design, landscaping and maintenance. Radharc na Tuaithe should in time gel into a fine estate also as the landscaping develops. The colour scheme of the estates compliment one another. The car parking is ample. Chapelfield estate is also a joy but one area of the open space is poorly maintained and the grass roughly cut. The older residences are very proudly maintained. One can empathise with your frustration regarding the unused and therefore unkempt sites at this latter estate.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Knockraha proclaims itself to the visitor with its personalised name signs, a great start to a visit. It is also a credit to your community that you also use the Irish name, as it is full of meaning. There is a vast difference between the two arrival areas into town. From Cork one is met by the traditional buildings and the sides of the road are for the most part wild. On the other side the estates bring an urban neatness with the grass verges

mown. Both are good and both need maintenance in their own way. Understandably the road surface was not the best at times especially on the road to the well.

General Impression:

Knockraha is a beautiful village which is about to change dramatically. Your committee is attempting to shape that change and deserves great credit for this. The influx of people will bring demand for shops and services that will help the village viability. Hopefully the integration process will be seen in the village appearance shortly and that the new residents will become as enthusiastic about the village as you are.