

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Donabate** Ref: **25**
County: **Dublin(Fingal)** Mark: **240**
Category: **E** Date(s): **22/06/2008**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2008 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Overall Development Approach | 50 | 40 |
| The Built Environment | 50 | 30 |
| Landscaping | 50 | 31 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 50 | 28 |
| Litter Control | 50 | 26 |
| Waste Minimisation | 20 | 10 |
| Tidiness | 30 | 16 |
| Residential Areas | 40 | 26 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 50 | 26 |
| General Impression | 10 | 7 |
| TOTAL MARK | 400 | 240 |

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the 2008 TidyTowns competition. Thank you for your completed entry form and your three year plan. Your map presented the right amount of detail to allow all places to be visited easily on the day of adjudication. We wish you the very best in your applications for the Dublin Bus grant, Heritage grant and the Pobal Anti-Graffiti grant. Well done on your plans to work with the new secondary school in the area and we look forward to seeing how this develops.

The Built Environment:

St Patrick's Church featured well maintained gardens and a bright and inviting yellow door. The sign at the front is a little bit rough and could use a touch up as some of the lettering was difficult to read. The Smyth building was wonderfully presented and its wooden doors and traditional sign were very appealing. The train station building was in good repair, but there was a lot of litter in the car park and around the bicycle shelter. Posters had also been stuck on the bicycle shelter and were falling off. There was some graffiti on some of the signs. The outside timetable display box is curled and faded and should ideally be replaced with a fresh copy. The thatch cottage was beautifully presented in traditional white with red trim. Well done on this. The base area of St Patrick's National School would come up brighter if power washed or repainted. The Senior Citizens Day Centre would look more inviting if some plantings were placed at the front to add some colour.

Landscaping:

Landscaping was generally good throughout the area. The water pump in particular was very well painted and maintained and the village green was appealing. It was wonderful to see public seating available in this area as its important to have public areas the encourage residents to enjoy their neighbourhood. Well done to the Waterside House Hotel for sponsoring the plantings at the station.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It was so unfortunate on the day of adjudication that someone had disposed of several garbage bags full of rubbish at the entrance to your walk. Otherwise, this is wonderful project that you are undertaking. The beech and willow will develop well. Perhaps look at incorporating native species such as whitethorn and blackthorn. Wildlife signs down by the water would be educational and the trees could be labelled to note their species. A marker showing the laneway is also important as we were unsure if we were heading into a farm or onto the path. One of your locals schools or an environmental group may be interested in working on projects that help monitor the wildlife in this area. In fact, a programme your schools might like to look at is the Heritage in Schools programme which is a collaborative programme funded by the Heritage Council and administered by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO).

It would be wonderful in the long term if a path around the lake could be established for walking and/or cycling. However, it would be most important that this would not disturb the native wildlife and a full survey on what the repercussions would be would need to be undertaken first.

Litter Control:

Overall litter control was quite good throughout, however, as stated, there was a problem with litter at the train station. Some areas here appear to have become litter traps, so perhaps you could consider how best to deal with the problem. For instance, it may be best if they were closed off to prevent litter gathering. There was also some litter in the leisure centre car park. You have mentioned your plan to work with the new secondary school on litter and this would be a wonderful way to integrate new residents - children and their parents - into your community.

Waste Minimisation:

We are pleased to here you segregate your rubbish in cleanups. Perhaps a community composting scheme or running sessions on how to compost at home would be beneficial in further reducing landfill waste in Donabate. You didn't mention whether the local schools participate in An Taisce's Green Schools programme which is marked under this category. This could be a key objective of your work with the new secondary school. As you probably know, there are plenty of ideas available for developing projects under this section on raceagainstwaste.com and in the Race Against Waste booklet available from the TidyTowns Unit.

Tidiness:

Again, Donabate was generally well presented and tidy - well done. The Supervalu car park was particularly clean and the addition of flower pots to the area added appeal. However, the car park at the leisure centre needed weeding. Some weeding was also required at the area outside the shops opposite St Patrick's National School. The old bike chained to the bike rack at the station should be removed if possible and to be honest this area could do with a general tidy up. The cigarette receptacle at the ATM had placed bottles and other rubbish placed on top.

Residential Areas:

Well done to all the residents areas in Donabate which were looking very well on the day of adjudication. In particular, the Eden Grove Estate was very clean and tidy as was Willoborrok Estate and Cois Ibhir – Estuary View Estate. The entrance to The Strand is very colourfully planted, however this does make the name difficult to read as it is somewhat obstructed from view.

We are pleased to hear of your development of a Best Kept Garden Award which should certainly help boost standards even further as well as broaden your support base. Once this is up and running, you might consider expanding this to "Best Street" and "Tidiest Estate" competitions which has been done to great affect in other areas.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Roads and footpaths were generally in good repair. The entrance to Donabate is appealing with its traditional stone marker. As mentioned above the area around the train station needs some attention. The overgrown area next to the National School could also do with some work - although this could be a great location for a wildlife amenity involving the school. No weeds were evident in the main areas.

General Impression:

Donabate is undertaking some wonderful work for the Donabate community and in opening up the natural environment to its residents. We look forward to seeing further developments in this area. Well done to the committee and all concerned.

