

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ruan** Ref: **86**
County: **Clare** Mark: **253**
Category: **A** Date(s): **25/07/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	38
The Built Environment	50	32
Landscaping	50	38
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	18
Litter Control	50	37
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	32
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	253

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you Ruan Tidy Village Committee for your entry on behalf of Ruan village to the 2008 TidyTowns Competition. Welcome.

Thanks to your Committee of seven people involved in TidyTowns activities in Ruan. You are all obviously dedicated community people who take the time and effort to attend your monthly meetings in addition to other TidyTowns activities. Your Committee is doing so very worthwhile work for Ruan a village with a population of less than 200 people.

Thanks also for the list of the twenty-two works completed in 2008 with the accompanying Village map, which showed these improvements. However a further map was needed which shows the location of the various buildings and features of Ruan. Some further information on Built Environment and Landscaping is needed in the Entry Form.

Well done on the ongoing contact with the national school and well done to the school on their involvement in recycling.

The work of local people, residents, business people, schoolchildren and others is to be praised. Well done on your energy and commitment. From your entry I expected to hear a little more on your partner organisations.

As part of your five-year plan and to help Ruan compare its performance in TidyTowns competitions a recommendation to consider is a visit to other towns that are high performers in the 2007 and 2008 national competition.

Great to read that the TidyTowns competition keeps people focused and helps generate a good community

spirit in general and also helps the Committee to convene and spring clean the village.

I wish you all the best with your Tidy Town activities into the future.

The Built Environment:

Situated just some seven to ten kilometres outside of Ennis, the contrast between Ennis and Ruan could hardly be greater with Ennis now a bustling county capital and Ruan a quieter reminder of lovely rural Ireland. On the beautiful July evening of my visit the village looked resplendent in the late afternoon sunshine. The impact of some particular physical features of Ruan is very positive on the village. These include the wonderful rolling farming countryside and the existence of beautifully crafted dry stone walls on the approach roads that draws one in to the heart of Ruan.

Those buildings and features that impressed this adjudicator included:

- The use of these stone walls as a feature on many of the residences and on boundary walls throughout the village.
- The old national school 1833-1977 looks well, neat and tidy and nice window boxes with summer flowers.
- Morty Kelly's Bar, well decorated but the sign could be in a better condition.
- The Catholic Church is a lovely building with its dominant position in the centre of the village.
- Purcell's Bar also looked well with the display of Clare flags flying proudly.
- Dalcassian Bar and Dalcassian Foodstore well decorated in bright colours but materials used in the signs could be more appropriate.
- The new national school on the outskirts of the village is in a lovely situation for the pupils to avail of the GAA playing facilities next door.
- The red village pump set in nice stone surrounds is a very attractive feature highlighted by half barrels of planted flowers
- The GAA club grounds looked well but the entrance gates needed paint and the remains of the noticeboard outside the ground need to be replaced.
- The old Eircom phone boxes should be restored to a better condition.
- The lovely roadside park which features some nice tree planting and the sculpture for "Milking Time" and the memorial to Jimmy Smyth just unveiled in May this year. Why are the two timber poles stuck in the ground near the paved/lawn area?

A recommendation is to put some placenames of streets and residential areas on nice stone streetsigns.

Landscaping:

Well done on the landscaping and floral displays at the individual houses in the village. The common landscaped areas demands much grass cutting to retain the good condition of these roadside beds. Credit to those involved in this maintenance. The stone surround flowerbeds also were in excellent condition with many colourful displays of summer annuals.

The landscaping at the Church looked very well. Also there were some lovely rose beds on the road down from the Church. All grass verges and margins were well maintained and properly cut. The beautiful rolling countryside, with cattle and horses grazing, on the other side of the boundary walls adds to the peaceful setting.

The roadside park, which features the Jimmy Smyth memorial, is a lovely facility. The "Milking Time" stone sculpture is quite innovative. An explanatory sign would help the visitor and explain the purpose of both the Park itself and the sculpture. There were some nice new trees, rose beds and the stone seat looked well. The grass in the Park required cutting on the day of my visit however the overall impact was positive. But why are the two timber poles stuck in the ground near the paved/lawn area?

The lovely garden with some beautiful flowers caught the eye at Cillcassen Cottage. Lovely.

Dromore Wood is a wonderful amenity for the people of the area. The landscaped triangle at the entrance was in need of some maintenance. Grass was too long and should be cut back. The seats in the area were lost in the height of the overgrown grass.

Well done to all involved in the various locations for good landscaping in their individual premises.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

There are few if any Wildlife Interpretative Signs and Display Panels on display in the village. Consider contact with the Heritage Council on this project. Further involve the schoolchildren. There is a need for some Interpretative Panels in the vicinity of the birdhide. The Dromore Wood and the Mid Clare Way are great facilities for locals and visitors alike. These projects could be further improved by the erection of appropriate

wildlife panels and notice boards to add to the one seen.

Litter Control:

Ruan village and surrounds were mainly clear of litter on the day of my visit. Well done on the involvement with the Schools on anti-litter campaigns, including the spring cleanup. The regular cleanup sessions are paying dividends. The energy and commitment of the parents, teachers, staff and pupils involved is to be applauded and praised. Well done on your good work. A few more LitterBins would be recommended.

Has the school been involved in the Green Flag programme?

Waste Minimisation:

The purpose of this category is to encourage TidyTown Committees and the local community to get involved in projects that will reduce waste and encourage recycling. Projects could include community guidance on methods of reducing waste such as segregating litter during clean-up events.

The involvement of the school in these waste minimisation activities could be further improved.

The four Recycling bins on the school road were in excellent condition, set out in a tidy well-maintained manner and camouflaged by lovely planting of shrubs and flowers.

Tidiness:

In general, Ruan residential areas deserve credit for their own areas of responsibility and for maintaining a tidy image for the village. The approach roads to the village were neat and tidy.

Residential Areas:

Most private residences throughout Ruan are in a very good condition, well presented houses and lovely landscaping and gardens. The use of indigenous stone walls on many residences is a lovely feature.

Congratulations to all concerned on the upkeep of their residential areas.
Well done to all residents for the great effort.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The village was in general clean and tidy with some nice grassed landscaping, good tree planting, some excellent display of planted hanging baskets in full bloom, which all combines to create a lovely atmosphere in the village area. Well done on all the work to maintain the various landscaped areas.

All approach roads to the village are well maintained, good surfaces, clean and well cut grass margins. Wonderful mature trees highlight this lovely sylvan setting on a summers evening.

In the village a medium to longer-term project should be the removal of overhead wires and cables. These should go underground if possible.

General Impression:

Congratulations to Ruan on your 2008 entry to TidyTown. Credit to your Committee for your efforts on behalf of the village. Much excellent work is ongoing in the village. Ruan is blessed with its wonderful natural environment. This gift must be protected and nourished for this and future generations.

I look forward to further visits to your lovely village.