

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ramelton** Ref: **907**
County: **Donegal** Mark: **230**
Category: **C** Date(s): **23/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	27
The Built Environment	50	28
Landscaping	50	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30
Litter Control	50	25
Waste Minimisation	20	7
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	30
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	230

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for your entry into this year's TidyTowns Competition. It is great to have Ramelton back in the competition after so many years. Though there are undoubtedly many challenges to be faced, your participation is highly important to the town and its community. May I suggest that you make contact with TidyTowns groups that have been participating well over the last few years. They will be happy to help you with advice and ideas.

The Built Environment:

The Quay area is quite beautiful. There are many buildings of historical and heritage value here. Gambles is a really lovely shopfront. There are some very nice buildings on the mall, especially the butcher shop. The Spar also looks well. The Garda Station needs to be repainted. The Tan Yard (Apt.) building is very nicely restored. Ayr Hill national school looks very well and has a Green Flag. The library is surely one of the more beautiful libraries in Ireland. Several of the derelict buildings could be redecorated informally by volunteer or community employment effort. There is much precedent for this. The buildings at Meeting House Square are lovely and it is clear that a big effort is being made here. The Post Office and bakery are also very attractive premises. The Heritage Centre and 'The Ramelton Story' are great. A lovely facility with very helpful staff.

Landscaping:

The Ramelton Art Benches are wonderful. A great concept and beautifully done. Some planting would benefit this area and the wood on the benches needs to be refinished. The mall gardens are lovely, especially the roses. Tullyaughish graveyard is very nice and very well kept. The 'Tank' gardens are nice but need care.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The adjudicator apologises for not visiting the Drumonaghan Woodland and walk. This was referred to on the map key but not clearly marked and was thus overlooked. Are there any signs for this area in the village? Future adjudicators should make a point of including this on their itinerary. The village is very well endowed with natural features. The river is lovely and home to many species. A kingfisher was seen as I cycled up the Mall! The bridge here would be valuable bat habitat. A number of gulls, swallows and house martins (nesting in the harbour wall) were seen. The Rathmullan Road is great in terms of habitats. There are many mature trees here including hawthorn, elder, sycamore, firs, oak and willow. The 'corridor' effect of such habitats are very important. A jay was seen in another oak tree close to the school.

Litter Control:

Some litter was seen on day of visit. Tackling litter is going to need a cross-community approach. It is recommended that you work with the schools on this. Also contact Donegal's environmental awareness officer for advice. Participation in event such as Spring Clean and hosting litter patrols is a good way of approaching the problem while also raising awareness.

Waste Minimisation:

This section of the competition is all about reducing and minimising the amount of waste arising from a town or village. While it is great that you have two Green Schools, their work alone will not be enough. Look again at the guidelines for applicant TidyTowns and once again you are advised to contact the environmental awareness officer for assistance. Other TidyTowns groups will be able to advise you too. Some ideas include: household and/or community composting, use of 2nd hand shops or car boot sales, novel reuse of waste items, an anti-packaging campaign in local shops.

Tidiness:

The 'Phoenix' sign should be removed from the gable wall in the newly landscaped area. The items of street furniture should be painted up as some of this is lovely. The old Northern Bank benches must surely qualify as heritage pieces by now! Watch out for inappropriate signage such as that seen on a tree on the mall. The children's playground is well-situated but this area is overgrown. There is a distinct lack of signage either directional or place-names. A uniform place name sign system could be. The building housing the Ramelton Community Youth Project needs cleaning.

Residential Areas:

There are some truly lovely houses in this village and the majority of these are brightly painted. The common use of white paint and traditional style of finish makes the townscape of the village very pleasant. Back lane, for example, is lovely.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The smaller streets and back roads of the village is one of Ramelton's best assets. The use of whitewash and stone is so good. Added to this is the greenery of the verges and overhanging trees. The adjudicator was lucky to have seen your village on such a fine day.

General Impression:

It was a real pleasure to visit this village. There are so many positive aspects to it that it would be hard to imagine Ramelton doing anything but succeeding in this competition. It is recommended that you firstly draw up a list of the aspects discussed above. If possible find out how other TidyTowns groups have made strategic plans and then draw up your own based upon this. Remember not to 'bite off' too much at once and careful progression is recommended, consolidating as you go. Good luck with all your work.