

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Cranny** Ref: **65**
County: **Clare** Mark: **247**
Category: **A** Date(s): **07/07/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	39
The Built Environment	50	28
Landscaping	50	37
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	22
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	7
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	247

Overall Development Approach:

We are delighted to welcome Cranny to the Tidy Towns Competition for 2009 and would like to thank your Tidy Towns Committee for submitting the completed entry form.

We noted that you have lost a committee member since last year and have 6 members who are obviously working very hard on behalf of Cranny and encouraging the local community to participate in Tidy Towns activities. Your hard work and commitment have obviously encouraged FÁS to continue supporting your activities by carrying out grass cutting in the village, well done. It is great that the teachers and pupils in the national school play their part in ensuring that the village remains litter free, this augurs well for the future of Cranny.

The continuing use of a Newsletter to communicate with the community is appropriate but we would also recommend that you organise at least one public meeting each year to discuss project options and prepare/update plans for the coming months.

We noted that your entry did not include the 3 Year Plan recommended in last year's report. We would strongly reinforce the recommendation as it would help you to identify and focus on key areas where improvements could be made; set realistic timeframes for work to be undertaken and hopefully, gain valuable additional marks within the Tidy Towns Competition.

We appreciate your comment about the early start for adjudications but the timeframe for completion of visits is quite tight so it would be very difficult to delay the start dates. Once again, Cranny has been one of the later inspections and the village certainly looked well prepared for the visit.

Festivals and the Tidy Towns Competition, offer great opportunities for people to work together and foster a

good community spirit so we hope that the Peadar Clancy Festival (17 – 20 July) will be well supported and enjoyed by everyone.

The Built Environment:

Cranny is a beautiful village which we found so peaceful and relaxing. The village has a lovely mix of older farmhouses, cottages and some newer individual homes. The old school building was so well maintained, with lovely window boxes and well painted walls, that it took a while to realise that this was the 'old' school. The new school (1980) was immaculately presented with attractive shrubberies, mature trees and well landscaped grounds. It was good to see that the school was receiving even more attention while we were there, well done. The Church was inviting and its grounds were tidy with neatly cut grass.

We were very impressed with the idea of the Virtual Library – a new experience for us and a great service for the community, congratulations to everyone involved.

Thirsty visitors were offered a welcoming watering hole at Tír na nÓg, with its inviting picnic tables, hanging baskets and premises painted green with red door and windows.

The presentation of the little derelict cottage near the graveyard was impressive but the old business premises across the bridge needed some improvement to its paintwork and its site.

Landscaping:

Landscaping throughout Cranny was of a very high standard. Our first introduction to the village from the Kilrush Road direction was the unusual timber mounted welcome 'Fáilte go Crannaigh' and the timber seating, bird table and stone ringed shrubbery nearby all presented a well co-ordinated picture that was very appealing.

We particularly admired the fine stone wall of the Tionscnamh FÁS Project 2000 with its very inviting seats and suspended planted containers.

The wonderful tiered rockery and stone ringed flowerbeds with white ornamental fence, (beside the peach cottage) was absolutely gorgeous.

The hanging baskets at the bridge were lovely and the stone tables, chainlink fencing and pretty planted containers completed the image. Although the grass at the riverside was cut it was very coarse, perhaps something could be done to create a more cultivated appearance. The raised stone flowerbed across the road was attractive.

At the graveyard we noticed a tiered plant container which didn't have any plants – it would be good if this could be filled with bedding plants. There was great activity during our visit with several people caring for the beautiful graveyard, a credit to your community.

The presentation supported by the Rural Social Scheme was thought provoking with the little cottage, hanging baskets, tiered floral display, chainlink fence and grassed area .

Congratulations to everyone who worked hard on the beautiful displays throughout the village.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

We noted that you did not include any comments under this heading in your entry form and that is a missed opportunity to gain valuable additional points in this category. Last year's report contained many suggestions for projects which might be undertaken and we would strongly recommend that you consider actioning at least one of them. The recommendations included: Seeking expert advice on the protection of existing wildlife and the introduction of new species, the preparation and installation of Interpretative Panels and the establishment of walks in the area. If you have difficulty in contacting a local wildlife expert or enthusiast, the County Council may be able to help with contact names.

We wish you success with any projects you decide to undertake.

Litter Control:

Litter control seemed to be working well during our visit to Cranny. The litter patrols by committee members were definitely successful. Litter bins were suitably located in the village but the outside of a litter bin at the

riverside was in need of cleaning

While Cranny is performing well within this category, there is an opportunity for gaining additional marks by submitting a Litter Control Plan which will clearly show the strategy being adopted to ensure that litter does not become a problem. The plan should include a survey of litterbins (number and condition), frequency of litter collections, any problem areas; solutions being used or proposed; clear targets and a suitable method of monitoring progress.

Waste Minimisation:

It is encouraging that you practice segregation of the waste collected in Cranny, that is a good start under this category. Other projects which you might include:

The organisation of a waste awareness day.
Circulation of waste minimisation brochures to residents in the area.
Encourage residents to start home composting

We would recommend that you consider undertaking at least one project in order to make good progress in this area.

Tidiness:

Congratulations on your endeavours to keep footpaths free of moss and grass – this has worked very well.

Homes and business premises throughout the village looked neat and tidy – do keep an eye on the beer barrels at the side of the pub to make sure that they don't cause clutter. There were a couple of metal/corrugated gates and shed roof which would benefit from a coat of paint and the green wall across the road from the pub was also in need of a touch up.

Congratulations to all the proud citizens of Cranny who have poured much effort and enthusiasm into all areas of the village.

Residential Areas:

In our opinion, the key to Cranny's appeal is the fact that it has managed to retain its individual residential stock and has not been swamped by inappropriate developments. Throughout the village there were many fine properties which were being maintained to a very high standard. Homes that caught the eye during our visit included Rose Cottage with its chainlink fence and stone wall; a relatively new house, located near the school, which had a fine stone and brick boundary wall; a couple of well painted white bungalows with grey trims and once again the peach painted cottage was immaculately presented.

Well done to everyone involved in maintaining the appeal of Cranny's lovely homes.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Roadside verges and banks were generally well cut and the surfaces of the access roads were in reasonable condition. The overall presentation of the village roads was quite good.

Signage in the village was appropriate and generally in good condition, however, a green 'Fáilte go Crannaigh' sign on the Kilrush approach was in need of cleaning and the post should be repainted.

General Impression:

It was very obvious from our, all too brief, visit that the future of Cranny is in good and very capable hands. The village is benefiting from the teamwork of the Tidy Towns Committee, FÁS and the broader community and long may it continue. We appreciate that it can be difficult to bring people onboard to help with projects but by working together you can achieve far more than working in isolation.

Before finishing we would like to commend the gentlemen who were working hard on the maintenance of the school and graveyard during our visit, it was great to see the activity.

We wish Cranny and its community many future successes under the Tidy Towns banner and we will follow your progress with interest.

