

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ogonneloe** Ref: **1872**
County: **Clare** Mark: **224**
Category: **B** Date(s): **12/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	30
The Built Environment	50	29
Landscaping	50	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20
Litter Control	50	29
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	21
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	224

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome back to Tidy Towns for 2009, we noted that 2008 was your first year in the competition so we were delighted to see that you are continuing your involvement.

We did not receive any map this year (unfortunately maps submitted in one year do not reach the adjudicators in subsequent years) so we suggest that each year a little sketch map be enclosed, identifying any work or locations that you wish the adjudicators to view.

It is good to see that your Tidy Towns Committee has added a 9th member and that you are holding meetings every 6 weeks – they are good indicators that the community is committed to enhancing its environment for residents and visitors. Ogonneloe has an enviable and very beautiful setting, overlooking Lough Derg, and it certainly deserves the care and attention of an enthusiastic community.

Your links with the County Council are excellent ways to ensure progress on several fronts and the use of newsletters, correspondence and meetings with the Parents Association are worthwhile means of bringing the wider community onboard. By working together it is possible to achieve far greater progress.

We note that you did not get an opportunity to submit a 3 year plan as recommended in last year's report. We strongly recommend that you do try to prepare a plan in advance of next year's entry as it would help you to identify key areas for action and to remain focused on achieving the goals you set. Remember that it doesn't have to be a complicated document – in fact you would probably find it easier to action if you keep it simple and ensure that the targets are attainable within your resources.

In last year's report there was a mention of planned Festivals but these were not mentioned this year. We hope they were successful and that they will be repeated, as Festivals are excellent vehicles for promoting

community spirit and co-operation.

The Built Environment:

The way Ogonneloe has evolved as a linear development along a very busy road makes it difficult to identify the true heart to the village and this could possibly result in a somewhat divided community. In order to avoid problems, it is vital that everyone works hard to ensure a co-ordinated approach to any improvements.

St Lua's Church (c.1836) and Cemetery were beautifully presented within carefully maintained grounds with planted containers and lovely lamp-posts. Mickey Rooney's Bar nearby had welcoming picnic tables outside. O'Brien's Café/Shop appeared to be closed for business. The National School had good sports and playground areas and some very attractive native trees within its grounds. Car Parking facilities at the school were coping well at the time of our visit. Pairc an Stlobhairt GAA grounds had an impressive stone entrance wall and well painted clubhouse. Lantern House Guesthouse, Glocca Morra B&B and Gibbons Furniture were all attractive properties located in superbly landscaped gardens.

We wish you well with the proposed restoration of the Parish Hall. This is an excellent project and will benefit young and old in the village.

Landscaping:

Colourful bedding plants in containers beneath the bilingual Ogonneloe signs were a nice introduction to the village. The cultivated green areas with neat fencing, cut grass, well planted flowerbeds and sapling trees created a wonderful ambience and were a credit to all who obviously worked hard in preparing them.

While some grass verges were neatly trimmed, there were quite a few which required attention. Due to the fact that the village is spread quite a distance along the main road, we appreciate that it is very difficult to ensure that all verges are maintained. However, if you succeed in getting the County Council to level the verges, it should greatly enhance the roadside appearance of Ogonneloe.

Residents in the area were taking obvious pride in maintaining their very attractively landscaped gardens, it is great to see such a positive approach.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

We noted that there was no information on your entry form regarding planned projects under this category. This could be a missed opportunity to develop worthwhile projects which could involve the whole community and particularly the local schoolchildren and their teachers.

In last year's report there was a reference to the establishment of a Ryans Shore amenity area but we hope that the fact that it was not mentioned in this year's application doesn't mean that you have had to abandon the project. As outlined under the Overall Development Approach, we strongly recommend that you proceed with a 3 year plan, in order to ensure that you remain focused and that exciting new projects can be scheduled over a manageable timescale.

Litter Control:

Your litter walks in April and May and the promotion of anti-litter awareness through the school have produced good results. During our visit the area was almost litter free – we just noticed a couple of items at the roadside below the school, otherwise the village was clear.

This category is not just marked on the absence of litter during an adjudication visit but also on the overall litter control plan for a village. It is therefore important to constantly monitor your litter control programme and adjust it as necessary, to take account of changing circumstances. Congratulations on your achievements to date.

Waste Minimisation:

The Race Against Waste is growing in importance and everyone has a vital role to play in this area. Your links with the County Council and local dump during litter cleanups are good starting points and the plans to encourage composting and recycling in the community should pay dividends.

Other projects which could be considered in this area include:

- Organising a Waste Audit - which could perhaps involve the local teachers and pupils. Helpful advice and suggestions are available in the Race against Waste booklet, which can be obtained from the Tidy Towns Unit
- Leaflets with advice on waste minimisation could be circulated to homes and businesses
- Waste collected during your litter picks/clean up sessions could be segregated
- A waste minimisation workshop could be organised, with the involvement of the County Council, and this could take place as part of a public Tidy Towns Meeting

Tidiness:

Traffic management can be a nightmare in a community like Ogonnelloe, where development straddles a very busy main road so the installation of traffic calming measures is a very positive move. We note your plans to replace existing signs with new stone signage and we look forward to viewing the signs on a future visit.

While mentioning signs, it would be good if the old signs could be removed from the closed petrol station.

Ogonnelloe in its wonderful lakeside setting was very enticing and we commend the Tidy Towns Committee and the wider community on all the work that has been done to keep the area neat and tidy.

Residential Areas:

Ogonnelloe is blessed with a wonderful selection of individual houses, bungalows and suitable small housing developments. Island Court 2000 is an attractive development of detached homes and it is maturing well in its surroundings. Gort Éigeán MMIV is a lovely development with well built stone entrance walls and good use of brick and stone on the entrance pillars. Inside the entrance wall there was a sloping bed which we suggest might be suitable for landscaping as a rockery (perhaps a future project for the Tidy Towns Committee). A small problem of weed growth was detracting from the fine sapling trees outside the front wall of the development.

The neat presentation of individual homes, including areas outside house boundaries, was a credit to the community and we congratulate all on presenting such an appealing array of attractive homes.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road signs throughout the village were appropriate and generally in good condition but it is important to check regularly that signs are not being hidden by tree branches and that the signs and supporting posts remain clean.

We hope that the traffic calming measures will succeed in making Ogonnelloe a safer place to live, learn and work.

Road surfaces were generally good but there were some potholes in the road leading to Pairc an Stlobhairt.

General Impression:

Ogonnelloe is a very picturesque area with a truly enviable setting, overlooking magnificent Lough Derg. Your Tidy Towns Committee and the wider community, with the co-operation of the County Council and sponsors, have been working hard to protect and enhance the Village and the fruits of your commitment are clearly visible.

We wish you well for the future and look forward to following your progress in the Tidy Towns Competition.