

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Rockcorry** Ref: **613**
County: **Monaghan** Mark: **271**
Category: **B** Date(s): **12/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	38
The Built Environment	50	36
Landscaping	50	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20
Litter Control	50	33
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	40
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	271

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the completed application form and welcome to the Tidy Towns Competition of 2009. Unfortunately, there was no sketch map of the village and its surrounds, which would have made the job of the adjudicator that little bit easier. It was this adjudicator's first time visiting Rockcorry and one must say that it was a pleasurable experience on a relaxing summer day. On traversing the village, it became apparent that it had some unique architectural features, as well as a rich history. For instance, many would not have known that Gregg the inventor of short hand attended Rockcorry National School at the lower end of the village in the last century.

As last year's adjudicator pointed out, it's a pity that the application was not accompanied by a little pocket history of the village. The committee of 12 seems to have succeeded in getting the community behind the Tidy Towns effort, as Rockcorry has achieved a high rating in the competition over the years. Your relationship with Monaghan County Council has also paid dividends, as certain works have been completed over the last few years. Your comments re the time of adjudication have been noted and this is a common complaint among other applicants in the County. All I would say that time of adjudication is the same for every centre in the country and is dictated by the time deadline for the submission of first adjudication reports.

The Built Environment:

The village can be rather busy with a lot through traffic, but the streetscape is orderly with good road surface and footpaths, not too much overhead wiring and nice street lighting. The central building in the village is the old market house and it was not easy to get a detailed insight into its past, one wonders if such a fine building will ever be restored to its former glory. The RC Church on the Monaghan Road is a fine stone structure with ample grounds, but the grass had just been cut and was a little untidy. Is it possible that the boundary wall

could be painted, not just because of Tidy Towns, but because it would give a brighter look to the Church and grounds. The Presbyterian Church was in good condition, with well kept grounds and supplemented by colourful flower planters at the boundary wall. Rockcorry is no different to most towns and villages when it comes to dereliction and one can see from your application that you are trying manfully to get the owners of the most obvious offenders on board to try and convince them to improve their properties. As stated in the first section, the village possesses some unique stone buildings including a terrace of what can be described as mill cottages at the Monaghan end. Pairc Naomh Mhuire, the GAA Grounds, was in good condition with the immediate parking areas tidy. Both National Schools were in an acceptable condition and a hive of activity on adjudication day.

A new residential development near the market house has blended in well with the existing streetscape.

Landscaping:

General landscaping and flower planting is one of the strong points of the village. Entrances into Rockcorry were inviting because of the excellent landscaping and accompanying features, such as the stone well and chain link boundary at road verges. The variety of trees was quite surprising, variegated popular, copper beech and sycamore. One particular arrangement of trees and planters of flowers on the Ballybay road took this adjudicator's fancy and was indicative of the standard that one encounters all over the village. The Village Green also had an excellent mix of shrubs and newly planted flower boxes.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

No real mention of future projects in this category and this is more the pity, as the inner village area with stream flowing through it offers ample opportunity to develop some worthwhile wildlife project for the community. The committee should consider asking the County Wildlife Ranger or equivalent person in Monaghan County Council to come and examine areas of opportunity. Also, make sure to involve local children from both schools in any proposed project, as they will take on tasks with gusto.

Litter Control:

Litter control was quite good on the day, except for a little observed at those areas mentioned in last year's report. The litter clean ups are proving to be very beneficial and the message of anti-litter is certainly getting through to the local community. A few more bins placed around the village would help to accentuate the anti-litter message in a practical way.

Waste Minimisation:

The Bring Bank is very well presented in an ideal central location and was tidy, and free from loose residue. Good to note that the school children are being introduced to the concept of reuse, recycle and the whole Race Against Waste movement. Additional information on possible suitable projects can be accessed from the relevant website or from the Environmental Officer in the Monaghan County Council.

Tidiness:

In general, the standard was quite good with a few exceptions. There is a need to have an ongoing awareness of areas of untidiness that might get out of control and go unnoticed. It is recommended that, as part of the weekly litter clean up, your group keep a vigilant eye for untidy back areas or broken fences, and other things such as dirty road and speed limit signs. Some untidy fencing on the Monaghan Road near the RC Church is rather unsightly and needs to be addressed. Last year's report alluded to the signage in one or two commercial properties and I would ask that the owners of these be approached to replace the dated existing signs with something more traditional in design.

Residential Areas:

The River Rock development is maturing and blending in with the "old" village. The Housing Estate on the Ballybay Road was very well maintained and presented to a high standard. Individual homestead owners are to be congratulated for the manner in which they have presented their properties and surrounding areas. Some private residences had exceptional gardens with well tended shrub and flower beds, especially the row of red stone faced houses on the Ballybay Road

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach roads were very acceptable, with good road surfaces and verges cut back in accordance with recommendations for wildlife conservation. The entrance from Dartry is enhanced by the nice combination of the wishing well feature and chain link on the grass verge. Entrance from Cootehill is wide, expansive and has visible signs, and well trimmed verges. The Monaghan entrance had a very nicely trimmed verge with saplings and maturing trees well staked and protected. Overall, the standard was very good.

General Impression:

Rockcorry has achieved quite a high ranking within the County over a number of years and this year that ranking has been maintained. Is it possible that for next year's competition the Committee submit a basic 3 Year Plan or an update of same.

Also a sketch map with clear identification of relevant landmarks and named housing developments would be a big bonus to the incoming adjudicator.