

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Caherdavin** Ref: **2081**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **198**
Category: **D** Date(s): **12/07/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	25	27
The Built Environment	50	26	26
Landscaping	50	24	25
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	14	14
Litter Control	50	28	27
Tidiness	30	18	18
Waste Minimisation	20	3	3
Residential Areas	40	25	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	27	27
General Impression	10	4	4
TOTAL MARK	400	194	198

Overall Development Approach:

Caherdavin is most welcome to the 2012 Tidy Towns competition. Many thanks for your completed application form, map and photographs. Your map marks the boundary of your area and this is vital. However it was confusing in some places e.g. is Meelick road the boundary to the North? Also do use the map to clearly mark the locations of projects upon which you are working. The adjudicator very much wants to inspect these places and the award marks were possible. Photos are most welcome additions to an application form but please remember to label them so that the adjudicator knows what he/she is looking at.

You have 20 – 30 on your committee and this is a healthy number. Do the members represent all the estates in your area? You say that you only meet four times a year, is this sufficient to get through your work program? A solid communication strategy is vital for ongoing success in this contest and you seem to be availing of a number of tools. Do you believe that everyone in your area is aware of your committee and the work that you do?

This is only your second year in Tidy Towns and it is recommended that you set about preparing three-year plan. This would define the overall objectives for your neighbourhood in a set of medium-term goals. Actions are defined in each of the headings with concrete completion dates. Do consult the Tidy Towns Handbook for more information on how to go about this.

It is great to read that you involve local businesses, schools and your scout group. This is excellent. You have made a great start in the contest and we are delighted that it is generating a sense of pride in their shared space.

The Built Environment:

Coming from Limerick city the first impression of Caherdavin is at the Ennis Road junction. Here Ivan's shop and post office really stand out as attractive features. Outside the post office the planting bed has collapsed, is littered and weedy, while cobblelock here needs to be weeded.

The businesses along the Ennis Road are looking well. The Topaz forecourt is clean and tidy.

The GAA grounds looked well and are very clean and tidy. The smaller changing room building would look well if painted.

The church is quite a distinctive design and a striking point of focus for Caherdavin. The adjacent school is rather more utilitarian and its expanse of tarmac could do with some planting to soften the effect. Nevertheless it is clean and tidy and was flying its flags on adjudication day.

The small shopping centre with Mace etc. could look better. Railings are broken and tatty, there is an empty lamp post in the car park and kerbing is weedy. Metal fencing around the corner from the Chinese restaurant adds further to the appearance of neglect.

Landscaping:

There is a range of trees along the Ennis Road that helps create a leafy atmosphere in Caherdavin. Always be on the lookout for new tree planting opportunities and try to select a range of native trees for colour and wildlife value. E.g. birch, whitebeam, rowan and cherry.

Planting along the margins of Ennis Road Motors is effective but needs to be weeded.

Green areas e.g. along Inagh drive are well-kept. Shrubs and greenery around the church are very effective in enhancing this area. Planting bed in the green area across the road add a dash of colour and are well maintained.

Generally it is considered that Caherdavin is well endowed with mature landscaping features that greatly enhance the neighbourhood's appearance. It also benefits from numerous attractive gardens. It could do with some extra planting schemes at strategic points to add colour.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

This category is focused on encouraging groups to greater appreciate their natural heritage. The first step here is always learning about the habitats you may already have and why they are important. Habitats in your area may include hedgerows, mature trees, gardens and wetlands. You are close to the Shannon special area of conservation, an internationally important area for biodiversity. Learn more on www.npws.ie and perhaps you could arrange a guided walk with your local NPWS Ranger or local naturalist.

Once you have gained an understanding of what you have you could then identify some simple actions to enhance the wildlife value of your area. Look at green spaces and see if boundaries could be planted with a native hawthorn hedge. Cut down on maintenance to allow grass to grow long during summer months, trimming the verges so that it still appears maintained. You could put up bird boxes or bat boxes and monitor their use. It especially fun to involve the school here.

The area beside the GAA would make a nice spot for nature studies. If you do get permission from the landowner do ensure that you get advice, e.g. from the Limerick city council heritage officer, before proceeding with any cleanups or other interventions.

Litter Control:

Does your committee arrange a regular rota of litter patrols? You should get high-vis vests with the Tidy Towns logo across the back to promote your group when doing this. Try to participate in the national spring clean run by An Taisce each April. This is a great event for attracting new volunteers and getting people out. It is great to read that you are vigilant for dumping and dog fouling. Are your environmental workers volunteers or paid staff of Limerick city council?

In general litter control was found to be moderate on adjudication day. The base of the railings at the GAA grounds seem to be a particular black spot.

Tidiness:

Generally Caherdavin is very tidy in appearance with no major issues to report under this heading. There is always room for improvement however and here are some points that were picked up during the walk around: an old bin outside the florist on the Ennis Road should be replaced; a pair of empty metal poles outside Advanced Pitstop should be removed; another empty pole can be found near the road on the Ennis Road Motors premises; a 'ramps' sign outside the GAA ground is graffitied; have you looked at painting the bases of graffitied lamp posts as suggested in last year's report? Stainless steel bins on the Ennis Road are clean and robust.

Waste Minimisation:

In this category you are encouraged to examine the volume of waste that we generate and aim to minimise this. You may already have segregated waste collections and this reduces volumes going to landfill. However there is still a lot that can be done at the household level. Are your neighbours aware of the location of your municipal recycling facilities and the range of items that can be accepted. Is home composting commonly practiced? You could hold a workshop to demonstrate how this is done. Your schools green flag is a fantastic achievement and well done to them. What can you learn from their experience? They will have implemented a range of projects that could be applicable across the community.

Residential Areas:

Do all street have nameplates? This adjudicator could not find one on Elm Drive. The road itself is very attractive with its range of tall trees and beautifully presented homes.

Caherdavin was particularly impressive for its range of attractive gardens and these add greatly to the area's character.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Although Caherdavin is signposted from the Limerick direction there are no welcome signs or nameplates upon arrival. Such features would give a greater sense of place and identity.

Elsewhere identifying signs were noticed but they look old and quite shabby. And nice long-term project would be to aim to replace these with the new bilingual signs.

General Impression:

Caherdavin is a beautiful cluster of estates on the outskirts of Limerick city. You enjoy a fine stock of homes and community buildings. You've made a good start in Tidy Towns and could build on this further with the preparation of a three-year plan. Best of luck!