

Tidy Towns Competition 2013

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Malin** Ref: **706**
County: **Donegal** Mark: **304**
Category: **B** Date(s): **29/06/2013**
03/08/2013

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2012	Mark Awarded 2013
Overall Development Approach	50	45	45
The Built Environment	50	41	41
Landscaping	50	39	40
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	31	31
Litter Control	50	40	41
Sustainable Waste And Resource Management	20	9	9
Tidiness	30	20	20
Residential Areas	40	31	30
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	38	38
General Impression	10	9	9
TOTAL MARK	400	303	304

Overall Development Approach:

Malin TidyTowns Committee is heartily welcome to the TidyTowns Competition for 2013. It is hoped that your participation in the Competition helps you in your work and further strengthens the sense of pride of place that this competition generates in the Malin community. Thank you for the material you sent with the entry but especially the map which was most helpful. Congratulations to Malin for hosting that much publicised Film Festival in May. What a pity the adjudication did not coincide with that event, from the adjudicator's point of view. Your committee is well adjusted to the preparations required by participation in the TidyTowns Competition as is clear from your engagement with various agencies, with the community in Malin and with the school. The pride you mention is expressed in the appearance and upkeep of the village from the time one arrives. Your ambition to improve conditions for the people of Malin with a safe walking circuit is commendable, necessary and achievable. Your determination to improve tourist numbers will not only improve the sustainability of the Malin area but will create an opportunity for many unsuspecting tourists to savour the delights of this heavenly spot.

The Built Environment:

One of the endearing features of Malin is that so much of its traditional built environment has survived through a number of centuries to post tiger years. This survival is noticeable as soon as one arrives at that multi arched bridge with the distinctive capped walls. These capped walls become so commonplace as one travels round the village but a lasting memory that distinguishes Malin as one travels round the country in vain to find a similar experience. Then there is the village triangular green that appears to be equilateral and the sides are lined with housing, housing that must link with landlord times. The appearance of this village centre may have been modified over the years with the arrival of Izuzu instead of the forge but still retains much of its traditional character. The Church of Ireland is central to the village design and still retains its dignity being beautifully presented. But there are other arched bridges to enjoy also, part of that original village. Your submission describes the many advances that you have made this year and these speak a language at odds with the appearance of the village centre but expressing the needs of the modern community. The footpaths, road drainage, the bird observatory, the site for a Bring Centre all serve the modern community in today's Malin and are worthy achievements. The white is a credit to you on walls of houses but, the 'piece de resistance' has to be the white kerbing round the green.

Landscaping:

The first task of a group like yours is to maintain and renew what has been planted over the years and that you do wonderfully. What has been achieved over the years is commendable and also somewhat restrained. The work along by the estuary is divine with the plants settling in despite the wind and sea air. Then the raised beds of the picnic area are singing to the heavens with colour despite grey drizzle. The practice of planting wild flowers welcomed. All around the Green the chorus of colour on window boxes tries to counter the greyness overhead. The hedging and tree planting along that long stretch of the Culdaff Road and also at the fence to the information panels and observatory hut is the result of planning and back breaking bending and a credit to you. It is very well presented even at this early stage. The pruning of the shrubs out the Lagg Road is well due and while it looks rough at the moment it will reap rewards shortly.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

No doubt about it, the bird watch huts also set Malin apart from my experiences around the country. The adjudicator wonders about the beach chair, would it frighten birds away or attract them! The adjudicator is certain that it was not pre-planned. One admires your consideration for the disabled access. There is a concern for wildlife discernible in your attitude to planting for the benefit of wildlife. The creation of access to the rich birdlife of the shore by provision of the observation huts is laudable.

Litter Control:

The adjudicator is delighted to increase your mark in this section. Litter control is an on-going struggle between raising awareness and patrolling the roads. There is a lot of ground to cover in Malin taking both shore and long stretches of roads into account. The Green area is vulnerable, but litter is difficult too, despite repeated attempts by the adjudicator. There were a few butts outside the hotel which the adjudicator felt justified his search.

Sustainable Waste And Resource Management:

Your mark remains at a low level in this section. It is the view of the adjudicator that you have not fully come to terms with what the section is aiming at primarily. Your committee and community are still at the segregation and recycling level. Most of the high achievers in TidyTowns have moved to another level. There is a great opportunity for an increase in marks in this section. In the context of the aims and aspirations of this section it sounds a hopeful note that the school is working towards achieving its Green Flag status. But do not rely on engagement with the school to progress in this section. The progress should be made in engaging with the home. One wonders what the word 'encouraged' means in your relation with local business.

Tidiness:

As one travels the roads around the village one is struck that there is so little road surface debris about and, of course, the road sweeper has done its work and the results are obvious. The condition of the footpaths which seem to travel on for miles, the lack of weeds, the attention to road verge cutting all combine to create this wonderful tidy image. In time carparks will also be gravel free but one does not fault the lack of tarred surface in these economic straits. As some buildings are unoccupied the strain of maintaining appearances is seen in chipped painting. On the other hand great care is taken of other old houses and they light up their surroundings as in the case of the white washed cottage with the red windows and doors. The Community Centre, especially at plinth level, needs a coat of paint. There are entrances into fields that some farmers could look at.

Residential Areas:

The whole of Malin is a residential area. The road from Carndonagh is speckled with housing. There are significant homes on all of the other roads except to Lagg. In all cases these houses add significantly to their surroundings. The new housing estate on the Culdaff Road has not been integrated into the whole TidyTowns plan for Malin. It is clear that it remains unfinished and one wonders what actions your committee has taken to improve the appearance of the front or to exert weed control in the estate. A most forlorn sight is that fine wooden swing surrounded by knee high grass on the slope. The disimprovement of the paint on the yellow pillars contrasts with the care taken of the older estate at the GAA grounds. The new estates out at the school have not yet made it onto your map. Does one presume that they are not on your radar either? You will understand from this disenchanted tone why your mark has been reduced.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

As the welcome to Malin has always seemed a bit muted the adjudicator is pleased to read that you have plans to signal the village with boulders sourced from the sea. Some will laud this as a proper 'reuse' strategy and rightly so but for the adjudicator it illustrates the close ties between residents and the sea. One looks forward to the next visit with eagerness. The footpaths are a great achievement and at a time when funding is scarce. The raised beds on two of the roads add colour and interest to their surroundings. The old kerbing on the Lagg Road still remains a highlight for the adjudicator who fears what a JCB might do.

General Impression:

Malin remains a joyful destination for a TidyTowns adjudicator. Generations of members of this community have kept Malin in the TidyTowns spotlight. But one feels that the attention that is given to Malin's unique built environment combined with the geographical location of the village is an expression of the care that you people have for community, for environment and for your legacy to coming generations.

Second Round Adjudication:

It is always with pleasure that this adjudicator visits the unusual and charming village of Malin, and this visit, again, did not fail to impress. The whitewashed walls throughout looked as fresh and bright as ever, the village green and surrounding buildings were neat in their presentation, including the Malin Hotel. The charming Church of Ireland was particularly admired. The retention of the traditional whitewashed outbuilding with external steps is commendable, although its roof could be painted before next year's competition. Another roof of a shed at the far end of the terrace should also be repainted. The retention of the traditional telephone box is commendable. The Health Centre and Sub Aqua Club were neatly presented, although the area to the front of the latter appeared a little rough. There were a number of new developments since this adjudicator's last visit and these fitted neatly into the fabric of the village. The recycling area by the water's edge at the car park was very neatly presented, although the surface area of the car park itself appeared a little rough. St Patrick's Hall was fresh in this location, with a magnificent view back to the long bridge. The picnic area on the opposite side of the bridge looked very well. Millbrook Estate looked as well as ever. This adjudicator would like to reiterate the comments made by the first adjudicator in relation to the fine work that the TidyTown Committees of Malin have done to maintain the integrity of the village for future generations-well done to all concerned.