

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Douglas** Ref: **116**
County: **Cork (South)** Mark: **237**
Category: **G** Date(s): **12/06/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	38
The Built Environment	50	33
Landscaping	50	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25
Litter Control	50	28
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	237

Overall Development Approach:

Although apart of the greater Cork area, Douglas has retained to itself a sense of entity, a pleasing cohesion, a self contained, village feel. Its wide fine streets project an air of prosperity and this is accentuated by the East Village complex and layout. New developments notable Carlton Park with its communal, grassed central area contributed as did the many small scale shops which were individually and collectively extremely well presented. The Scout Centre/CBSI was very well preserved as was the Church in this location. The fine shopping centres also added a pleasant, expansive air to the overall scene. However Douglas in common with other similar centres is experiencing enormous growth and substantial house building. There is accordingly an urgent need for the Tidy Towns committee and others to collectively development a three year programme to ensure that its valued and welcome atmosphere continues into an uncertain future.

The Built Environment:

Douglas has its share of fine, modern building - the Shopping Centres, Ulster Bank and Bang and Olufsen. Each contributed to a pleasing modern feel. The small scale Veterinary Hospital was also of interest as well as Rathmore House. Lion House with its extensive grounds gave a pleasing feel of gravitas to the centre. Exham House with its well presented gardens to the front, successfully masked their extensive car parking area. The Church of Ireland was a fine building well presented while Tramore House and the Bank of Ireland also contributed. Eco Douglas also caught the eye while Paddy Power and Lalquila were colourful and cheerful. Barry's of Douglas had a splendid extension executed in coursed limestone which gave a delightful over all effect.

Landscaping:

The roundabouts together with incidental amenities areas throughout the centre were pleasant although work continues on the Rochestown Road roundabout. Mature trees, to be found aplenty in the estates make their

contribution as did the random rubble and coursed walls in frequent locations. The rockery garden at the underpass was a joy as was the nearby Reeves Wood Estate. The cemetery was well maintained as was the Community Park. We note a new playground is purposed at the lower end. The entrance area at the lower end of the Community Park is below par as the gate is broken and the recessed gate area is very much overgrown. Many individual gardens contributed substantial to an overall, pleasant landscaped feel to this extensive centre.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Douglas Wood is a Mecca for all those interested in bird life and the improvements at Hardings Well and the planting of native wild flowers is an improvement. It underscores the importance of creation suitable food chains on which wildlife and birds must necessary depend. We welcome the Wildlife in Douglas Estuary sign and also signs in East Village depicting many of the birds to be observed in the area.

Litter Control:

The adjudicator was delighted to learn of your continuing Saturday Morning street sweeps. This form of voluntary action is a splendid example to all. There were still examples of litter on many of the roads. A serious black spot was at the underpass, St. Luke's School was somewhat marred but not to the same extent thankfully. We welcome the new Keep Douglas Clean signs erected by the County Council; please ensure that the County Council follow through on their pledge to make additional litter bins available in black spot areas, as identified by the Tidy Towns committee. It is important that a suitable servicing programme is also established in respect of these additional bins.

Waste Minimisation:

In many ways success in this category calls for both practical, on the ground facilities to be made available but, in addition, by publicity and every means possible to bring about a change in mindset whereby members of the public and organisations think waste minimisation by adopting a policy of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle so that the inevitable landfill consequence of our daily activities is reduced to a minimum. Please consult your Tidy Town handbook together with helpful documentation from 'Race Against Waste' for ideas and suggestions.

Tidiness:

A marginal improvement since last year with many making valiant efforts. We particularly applaud Kevin O'Leary's Motor Group which was extremely neat, despite its very large scale. Sadly there was disfiguring graffiti on signs at the Douglas Community Park entrance which in general was not displayed to good effect. There continues to be some examples of weeds and spoil at the side of roads. The large scale Recycling Centre in the Community Park was well policed. Clearly busy, it was clear of litter and indiscriminate dumping. We welcome the increase of signs 'Keep Douglas Clean' and especially 'Illegal to Dump' signs.

Residential Areas:

Douglas enjoys the benefit of many, long established estates which have been added to by delightful new buildings such as the terrace opposite Bang and Olufsen. Also Douglas Close behind the Veterinary Hospital was very well presented. The Belfry was a delight as was the mature housing estate at Greenshills Court. We welcome your intentions to develop further residents associations as these not alone assist in a Tidy Towns context but also help to develop a sense of community so necessary for collective action.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Your problems may well be exasperated by the dual control of the City and County Councils. The new footpath at Douglas West is welcomed. We applaud your ongoing efforts to secure the undergrounding of all overhead wires, this is of necessity a long term project. We applaud the 'Welcome' sign of the Lions Club the very fine and appropriate anchor at the Carrigaline, Rochestown and Kinsale roundabout. The roundabout at Douglas Court with its fine display of flowers was a joy and equally the roundabout at the Bank of Ireland caught the eye. There is a confusing and we suggest superfluous perfusion of signs at the approach to the Underpass and this, with advantage ought to be rationalised.

General Impression:

Douglas Tidy Towns committee and their supporter have coped well with the numerous difficulties with which Douglas as a community is faced. Modern especially infill building are appropriate to their setting and contribute to an overall cohesiveness which is pleasant in the extreme. Planning for and the execution of the refurbishment of the Old Centre must reflect the success to date and be in sympathy with the modern build. Douglas continues to benefit from the devoted and dedicated attention of those associated with the Tidy

Towns Programme. Please give attention to the drafting of a three year programme together with an appropriate response to some of the suggestions contained in this report.

All concerned are thanked and applauded for their efforts which has seen another increase in your marks this year.