

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Derrinturn** Ref: **1209**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **213**
Category: **B** Date(s): **08/07/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	31
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	25
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20
Litter Control	50	29
Waste Minimisation	20	7
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	213

Overall Development Approach:

Go raibh maith agaibh go leir! Thank you to Derrinturn TidyTowns and to the community you represent for having given selflessly of your time in working towards entering Derrinturn in this 50th anniversary year of the TidyTowns Competition!

Derrinturn is a small village with a relatively small TidyTowns committee membership of six.

Perhaps you may be able to increase your membership somewhat. Apart from sharing workloads, new members bring their own creativity and individual strengths and insights to any organisation. You have the support of your local employer authority, FAS and local businesses. Do you have any contact with any other agencies that could help your work? We also read that you have the support of local businesses.

You mention that you have weekly meetings during the summer. You certainly are an active group. You also say that you involve your Green local school, and that you have meetings with the resource teacher. It is great to see that the younger generation are helping.

The map submitted is good. Thank you for submitting a clear O.S. map in your plan. You might also extend its boundaries to include the new housing area outside its boundaries. However you have helped by including these on the sketch map in your application form. Perhaps you could differentiate 5 year objectives from 2008 objectives on maps?

Your 5 year plan is very clear, easy to follow and very well thought out, and we are sure you will agree that drawing up a plan focuses the mind and makes the carrying out your work more organised. You state that you worked with Kildare County Council and with the County's LEADER Company in preparing the plan. But you do not give details of the consultation process which you as a Tidy Town committee engaged with the people

who live in the village. Please be sure to fill us in on that aspect of the Plan in 2009. We assume that you did consult, but it is important for us to be made aware of how you consulted.

The Built Environment:

The church is looking well. The retention of the beautiful windows in the renewed building is good. The new door is interesting in that it reflects the window design. The surrounding hard and soft landscaping was admired. The church is in a strategic location at the centre of the village, and has set a standard for good maintenance, planting and upkeep which others will hopefully follow.

Well done on appreciating your GR postbox and making sure that it was cared for and reinserted in the stone wall. The free standing postbox at Centra was admired. Again well done on retaining this traditional piece of street furniture! The pump surrounds could do with brightening up.

The Health Centre is also at the centre of the village. There is some planting on-site, but the railings could be "softened" by additional planting within the site.

The Turn Inn is well presented with floral displays. The side of Costcutters might be screened off from the North-West side (church side) as the gas cages etc., detract from the amenity of the church and associated bring bank recycling area and associated planting. This could be achieved by planting or hedging, or by an appropriate timber fence. The signage on the row of business premises which contain the Centra outlet could do with rationalisation of signage and spotlighting, as the row of premises looks cluttered. We note that you intend to address this issue in your Plan.

The Irish name of Derrinturn, Doire an tSoirn is an attractive placename, and it is visible on your signage. We would suggest that you use natural boulders for your bilingual village signs proposed. Take care also not to have unnecessary signage at the entrances to the village.

We look forward to seeing more bilingual signage, and note that you intend to locate bilingual signage at various estate entrances. Your proposal to develop a Heritage Trail is to be encouraged. We hope that you have registered your various walks for Heritage Week 2008.

Landscaping:

Derrinturn village is located in rural countryside. Despite it being generally located on a main road, the village has a rural feel to it. The approaches, setting the context are rural and well treed and have good hedgerows. You have a comprehensive planting proposal in your 5 year Plan. Well done on the planting programme carried out already. We would not encourage you to devote too much time and monies to hanging basket displays. It would be better if you could encourage anybody with even a small piece of ground/soil to plant native shrubs or to perhaps choose a common throughout the village natural stone or terracotta type container and use throughout with native plantings.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

A logical place to start would be to carry out a very basic survey of wild flora and fauna in the area. We are glad to see that you hope to get your local school involved with birdwatch. Do you have a young person studying Environmental Science in a 3rd level institution from the area who might require a thesis topic? The provision of a survey and management plan contributes to the marks in this section. In last year's adjudication it was also recommended that you might consider conducting a wildlife survey, so do remember to endeavour to do this for 2009 – even a simple one to start with will obtain extra marks for you. Findings can subsequently be made public on information panels, as you propose for Sli na Slainte. This information would add to the enjoyment of your village for local and visitors alike, and would serve good educational purposes. Your bird boxes are a good development. It is good to see that you are aware of the importance of the graveyard as a Wildlife area.

Litter Control:

Litter was not in evidence on adjudication day. We are glad to hear your local businesses are prepared to sponsor more bins in the village. It would be nice if you could get a well designed modern bin range of good architectural quality. Remember that the colour black is difficult for visually impaired people to see, so consider a brighter colour. We note that you hope to have a common colour for all street furniture as stated in your Plan.

You really are trying to get the anti litter message across as well as actually getting rid of any litter that escapes your advice! Your poster competition is a educational and good public relations exercise. Your litter patrols are paying dividends.

Waste Minimisation:

Well done firstly on having a Green School ! The pupils are the TidyTowns people of the future. You are encouraging the families of schoolchildren to do the same by proposing a community composting facility with the school and church as facilitators. The mulching lawnmower is a good purchase.

Waste minimisation is about more than not having litter in your street . It involves the prevention of litter accumulation in the first case. It is really what it says – to minimise on waste production before we, as a community, private or public create it in the first case. You might refer to the Race Against Waste booklet available from the TidyTowns Unit of the Department of the Environment, Heritage, and Local Government. Consider organising or attending a Waste Minimisation Workshop with your local authority. In your local school there will be opportunities to involve the students in an effort to work towards this end. You could increase your marks considerably in this section by so doing. Perhaps you might prepare a flyer/newsletter on this subject? As a local community you could look at some innovative and simple ideas such as organising a “Bring and Take Day”. This would involve using your good community centre for a day for instance - where everybody brings items they have no further use for, but which other people might want (and which under normal circumstances they might get rid of as waste) and puts them on display. The corollary is that somebody else needs these items. No monies change hands. Website versions of this idea have been set up in places also. Another group collected all broken crockery, and made a mosaic in their local park. You can gain more marks by doing some of these things for 2009.

Tidiness:

Well Done on your National Spring clean work, and thank you for sending us the media report.

The area around the bring banks was looking very well. Just a can or two had escaped one bank! The landscaping in the foreground softens the area. Even the litter bin beside the bus stop had vegetation framing it, by accident or design!

There was no graffiti in evidence. This is good. Well done on getting rid of the graffiti you said that you had.

In the vicinity of the playground the grassed areas near the footpath requires tidying/ cutting. The content/front section/map of the Sli na Slainte sign in the village was a little defaced. This is a pity as it is a good solid appropriate sign.

The green fence opposite Costcutters could do with repainting. Some poles within the village could be removed if redundant.

In the centre of the village road markings were a little faded. This tends to detract from an overall tidy effect.

Residential Areas:

The individual inhabited houses in the village are generally well maintained and landscaped. The Ashgrove housing estate has some boarded up houses which do not add to the general overall cared condition of most to of the houses and gardens and the overall planting in the estate. The bins on the footpath outside the boundaries of some of the houses were full. The playground does not appear to have been given its playground surface and is rough. The large blue container adjacent, whereas clean, is an unsuitable long term addition in the estate. Its function was unclear.

Beech View estate is tidy, but could do with more planting. The western boundary retains natural planting.

Trinity Crescent has a nice name sign in stone with good floral display. Its open space also looked well, and there were good planted areas close to the entrance. There were poor gates at one end.

Newbury Park has a good landscaped green. The open space in Phase 2 has not yet been developed. We look forward to a good planting result there also.

Ballyshannon Road/ Park /Trinity Crescent green area was recently mowed and looked fresh. It could however could do with additional planting of trees. We are happy to see that you plan this for 2009. Make sure to choose native species which will also encourage wildlife, which we note you hope to detail on new information plaques. We are delighted that you intend planting a sensory garden. Well done on this proposed initiative.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach from the Carbury side is attractively treed. The hedgerows were looking well. The young planting on this road adds to this generally rural approach. The security fencing in the vicinity of the spray painting crash repairs workshop could be softened with boundary planting. There is one derelict cottage on this approach. Closer to the village on this approach the verges are well trimmed. There is a bus shelter and bus stop at this end of the village - both looking well.

The metal village name sign on the approach road from Carbury is dusty and bent. The tourism sign was also dusty. However, this is a busy road, and has had a fair amount of construction traffic. We note your intentions to work with your local authority on such issues.

The Ballyshannon road was looking very well, with trimmed edges, a good Derrinturn sign, and exemplary traditional striped road signs. Well done to your local engineer! The school looked excellently maintained. A block wall along this road would look better if plastered. The Garda Barracks could do with fresh paint – both building and boundary. From there to the main road the paths needed weeding on adjudication day.

The Allenwood approach was attractive with individual properties generally well cared for.

General Impression:

Derrinturn is a village which is expanding significantly as you so rightly point out, because of its proximity to Dublin. However it is obvious that a good village community predated this expansion and this community is being very active in facilitating the absorption of the new inhabitants into a strong community. We would encourage you to seek the excellent advice which is available to you from your local authority on many issues – be it Conservation, Heritage, Environmental issues and others as you propose to do within your plan. You will also have the new residents to help you and to bring new ideas and manpower to your ranks. You have a good masterplan. It is ambitious, especially for a small village. You have set yourselves a lot of challenges. We wish you luck with all your ventures! Tosach maith leath na h-oibre!