

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dromahair** Ref: **673**
County: **Leitrim** Mark: **269**
Category: **B** Date(s): **01/07/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	37	40
The Built Environment	50	34	36
Landscaping	50	38	38
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20	21
Litter Control	50	36	37
Tidiness	30	16	16
Waste Minimisation	20	12	12
Residential Areas	40	29	30
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	32	32
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	400	261	269

Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator welcomes Dromahair to the National TidyTowns Competition 2012. We are pleased to note that your five year TidyTowns Action Plan is underway and that your consultation event was a success. Thank you for providing your Draft Action Plan which charts your way forward to 2016. Consultation with the local community is important and you can take heart that you have consulted with a wide number of groups and stakeholders in the village and we encourage them to offer you assistance. It is so encouraging to read that for more than 50 years the association has been working for the community and the current committee is to be applauded for the tremendous work effort undertaken this year to enhance Dromahair and present it at its best. We are pleased that developing the plan reinvigorated you and has allowed you to see the amount of work you actually do, a good way to keep an account of your workload is with a simple diary listing all your work each year in chronological order. You are supported by a good number of agencies and in particular local business. We acknowledge those who support your works. You are now communicating well with the community by a large variety of mediums. We wonder if a member of your committee is on the school Parents Association. Encourage a member of the Parents Association or a teacher to join your committee. This adjudicator would encourage anyone interested but not currently involved to help strengthen the local committee and enjoy the social interaction that TidyTowns can also bring. TidyTowns committees require varying skills and expertise ranging from wildlife enthusiasts, gardening gurus, built heritage expertise, project management skills, litter pickers, marketing and public relations skills and those who have interest to give up some of their time to enhance the local community. Dromahair although in population category B for this competition the adjudicator thought had quite a number of residential estates and quite large area to cover. The adjudicator consulted the Census data for 2011 (Population and Actual and Percentage Change 2006 and 2011 by Electoral Division, Statistical Indicator and Year) the population stated places you as a category C, small town. Perhaps this is something you can consider next year.

The Built Environment:

You have initiated work on your dereliction and uncared for sites. This is often a tiresome task so you are to be commended for your efforts to date. Your 'Buildings at Risk List' completed in April was interesting reading. It has been some seven years since this adjudicator was last in Dromahair and it was disappointing to learn that the Abbey Manor Hotel on Main Street is now out of business. We follow the sentiments of last year's adjudicator and hope that this will be a thriving hotel once more in the not too distant future. We note that you have received the go-ahead from Abbey Manor Holdings to clean up the former hotel. Further complications are putting a stop to your works on the Shafin Developments site but we hope you can make improvements here also. The Abbey grounds and the general immediate vicinity here are extremely well kept. Drumlease Church of Ireland and St. Patricks Roman Catholic Church were both admired. Drumlease National School is well presented. Primary Day Care Centre is fresh and clean, the grounds here were in need of cutting on adjudication day. We noted on our visit that all the lighting standards and bollard lights and lights on the roof of the Day Care Centre were on, in broad daylight, if this is a regular occurrence this should be brought to the attention of the management, as it goes against the grain of the waste minimisation category. The adjudicator thought that the wall of Gardai station required painting. A number of business premises appeal to the adjudicator including The Depot, Hazels and in particular Stannford's pub. The new wastewater treatment plant was noted and it was good to see the provision of semi mature trees here. You have made great strides this year in this category: establishing the list of significant structures from the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage; the list of additional features that the committee have identified as significant that are not on this list; your 'Buildings at Risk' list; and the work completed at your community event held on the 26th May based on the theme 'Reclaim Our Village'. - Well done.

Landscaping:

There is a large stone planter at the junction and in the vicinity of the District Engineers Office which appears to be recently planted. This should add impact here once it matures a little more. The L4154 junction and Sligo Road is nicely presented with colourful planters. Hanging baskets were noted on the footbridge to your playing pitches. The Sligo/Ballintogher junction was also presented well with a good planting scheme. We are pleased to note that you are using peat free compost throughout. The landscaped areas around the pump and modern sculpture at Rockcorry were admired. The adjudicator wondered about the site donated by Aidan Rountree in 1994 recognised in your stone plaque on the wall here. Does the area behind the wall also comprise part of a community garden? Please be more careful with your tree ties, the adjudicator noted that damage was occurring to trees in front of the Stonebridge residential estate due to the tree ties being too tight. Check tree ties and stakes on trees planted as part of your yearly work programme. There should be no tree ties in place after two to three growing seasons, or once a tree is stable.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

You have undertaken a desktop study on wildlife (not included with your submission) and are liaising with the local enthusiast into developing a greater understanding of your local wildlife. You mention that you have been informing local residents of your legally protected butterfly species found in your midst – is this by word of mouth, email? Remember to provide examples of how you promote a greater understanding of your wildlife and natural amenities with your submission next year. The provision of local flora and fauna walks as part of the Demon Festival are noted but please tell us more – what is the uptake in these walks, do you produce a walking trail leaflet? You note the presence of knotweed at a few locations; we also noted it at the office of public works. The Inland Fisheries Ireland has produced very informative leaflets on a variety of invasive plant species and may be able to provide guidance to you. Liaising with the school or GAA club in relation to an insect hotel will help get them involved in this category.

Litter Control:

You are to be commended for your actions in relation to litter prevention and control this year. Your Dromahair Litter Plan should assist you focus your action in this category. The adjudicator liked your litter signs and we thought that litter control was good in the village on our adjudication visit. We note that you discovered four illegal dumps on the outskirts of the village. Indeed proper waste management costs money to the householder but illegal dumping and the clean-up costs associated is a far greater burden on all taxpaying householders. We would encourage householders to report illegal dumping to the local authority. We would encourage all dog owners to act responsibly and clean up dog fouling when out walking dogs. Be aware that it is an offence for anyone responsible for a dog, not to remove and appropriately dispose of any faeces after the animal has fouled. This includes public roads and footpaths, parks, playing pitches, communal land and any open land that the public has access to. No litter was present at the Bring Banks on adjudication day.

Tidiness:

We note that you have been successful in having some redundant signage removed from the village this year, there are still more that need to be removed. Signage at each side of a wooden boarded entrance along Main Street should be removed (one saying restaurant). Also one or two of the boards are missing on the gate

here. Pay attention to the footpaths and pavements; there are some in places in the main thoroughfare that are quite moss covered, for example in the vicinity of the 'Wildrose County Scenic Tour' sign. Consider power-hosing here. There are a lot of weeds around the paving at the District Engineers Office which should be removed. The property near the milestone at the Roman Catholic Church is in need of some attention. The sign board beside the Welcome to Dromahair sign on the Drumkeerin approach at the bridge should also be removed as should the two large auctioneering signs for Stonebridge in this vicinity.

Waste Minimisation:

You are well on your way towards waste prevention and are using email, texting and Facebook to communicate with the community. We note that you have made contact with the Environmental Officer in Leitrim County Council in relation to an audit of the amount of materials recycled at the Bring Banks. While you are recycling well (clothing, ink, mobile phones) remember that this category is about reuse and waste minimisation. Awareness and information campaigns addressing the community at a local level on priority waste streams such as food waste or textile waste would be welcomed in this category.

Residential Areas:

We are pleased to note that a few people from residential estates have recently shown an interest in your work. We would encourage the establishment of resident associations where none exists. Where there may be issues that householders need rectified the residents association and the TidyTowns committee can work in tandem and generally achieve a better solution. We would encourage interested residents to come onboard the TidyTowns movement in Dromahair. We noted that two trees outside of Stonebridge need replaced with semi mature trees. There are a number of delightful properties along the Main Street however encourage householders on the Main Street to get their roofs cleaned as many are becoming mossy. A number of housing estates were well presented on adjudication day and these included Millbank Glen, Larkfield Lawns, and Abbeyvale.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

On our visit your blue and white Dromahair welcome sign had been successfully relocated to the vicinity of the wastewater treatment works. The surfacing around the Dromahair map was very poor and the adjoining car parking area. The Back Lane appears to have been recently resurfaced.

General Impression:

You have made a great effort this year and the benefits of your five year plan are already coming to fruition and have facilitated a significant increase in marks this year. We hope you are pleased with your efforts and that you can use this success as stimulus to progress even further in this competition. Well done to all concerned.