

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Williamstown**

Ref: **135**

County: **Galway**

Mark: **230**

Category: **A**

Date: **09/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	36	36
The Built Environment	40	32	32
Landscaping	40	35	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	19
Litter Control	40	32	30
Tidiness	20	17	17
Residential Areas	30	24	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	27	26
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	230	225

Overall Developmental Approach:

Receipt of your continuing work programme was much appreciated. It is several years since this adjudicator was in Williamstown and the improvements seen in July 2005 appeared extraordinary - though to residents the gradual progress has probably seemed slow enough. Congratulations on your many initiatives. It would appear that work under Wild Life and Natural Amenities will be a priority in the immediate future and certainly there are marks to be picked up under this heading as you proceed with projects at the Bog road and Corralough lake. Your marks under Buildings, Landscaping and Litter Control are already unusually high. On your next map, please mark and name all sites and features which should be visited - for example, this year's map does not show housing developments of the last quarter of the 20th century or early years of the present century - it is hoped that we have not missed any important work as a result. (Some comments below are intended as thoughts rather than as suggestions as they would be quite radical and expensive.)

The Built Environment:

The Church, with its unusually attractive doorcase, was looking very smart indeed. The Health Centre was also very nicely painted; the old school nearby, now serving as the parish hall, with its fine stone facing is one of the most distinguished buildings in the village. The crescent is of course unique, and it is this and the traditional street houses that give Willkiamstcwn its essential flavour. Walls of exposed cement blocks should be avoided. It is good to read that you had removed faded plastic signs from shops, though it was not known which shops had carried these.

Landscaping:

The circular layout of the green and the decorative planting were particularly noted. The tubs of huge begonias were admired, also the rose garden at the Church. The entrance to the sports complex was nicely planted; there was evidence of major developmental work inside. Tree experts do not recommend the planting of annuals round the boles of trees.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It was encouraging to read of the involvement of students from NUI Galway in your flora and fauna research: the results should be made available to the public, and perhaps this is what you intend in your plans for informational signage. The bog road was walked for about a mile; new seating was seen. An enormous variety of plants were observed. This nature trail and its surroundings must be wonderfully colourful in the autumn; are you in touch with walking groups? Trees are properly considered under this heading (though there is an overlap with Landscaping); new or recent plantings were seen on the Dunmore road.

Litter Control:

The recycling centre was clean. There was very little disposable litter at the time of adjudication - congratulations.

Tidiness:

An open industrial yard near the supermarket and the streetscape in general would be greatly improved by dense hedge-planting here - this would of course mean moving the galvanised fence back at least two feet and much excavation. The same would improve the bog walk where the presence of the recycling centre - although well kept - is intrusive. The area opposite the parish hall was in need of tidying up, as indeed is mentioned in your documentation.

Residential Areas:

As remarked above, the traditional street houses are full of character, and these homes are looked after with pride. New or recent infill housing was very favourably noted: this helps to maintain the original streetscape and also the sense of community, where ribbon development or estates remote from a village centre do not - fortunately there is none of the latter in Williamstown. Sycamore Court is a good example of a new estate which clings to the village. New housing on the way to Corraclough lake will be looked forward to when completed; do encourage developers to tidy surroundings and entrances when work is finished.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Surfaces on the main roads were very good. (One would have liked to have carried away a picture postcard, but no local views seemed to be available.) Very fine paving was seen, and your street furniture, in particular the lamp standards, was admired.

General Impression:

This was a village in which one would like to linger. The care with which it is maintained is evidence of strong community spirit. Very best wishes for your continuing enterprises

Second Round Adjudication:

The attractive limestone nameplates on approach roads were noted and admired. New hedging on the Ballymoe road was coming along nicely, as were the new ash trees on the Dunmore road. The County Council yard area opposite the Parish Hall looks unfortunate in its prominent location and hopefully this will be screened from public view or relocated in the not too distant future. There is a lot of new development under construction in the village, in terms of housing estates. These should be monitored carefully to ensure that they are finished to a high standard in terms of materials (including paving) and landscaping. That on the road to the school sported a rather rough forecourt area on the day. The Garda Station is a very charming building, which is maintained to the highest standards. The Health Centre looked very fresh. The village sported some attractive floral displays throughout such as daisies and nasturtiums. Do ensure that Christmas decorations are removed once the season is over – some lights were spotted on the Texaco garage! Your Three Year plan commences this year and made interesting reading. Good luck with all your future endeavours.