

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Miltown Malbay** Ref: **861**
County: **Clare** Mark: **205**
Category: **C** Date(s): **01/07/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	28
The Built Environment	50	27
Landscaping	50	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	17
Litter Control	50	26
Waste Minimisation	20	7
Tidiness	30	14
Residential Areas	40	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	26
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	205

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the completed application form and sketch map of the village, which was very helpful on the day of the adjudication, which was the start of the Willie Clancy weekend.

Miltown Malbay is very welcome back to the competition 2006 after a few years absence and it is hoped that you will go from strength to strength in the competition in future years ahead.

Your interaction with the Ibribane Network and other agencies will have a positive effect, in that it will enable you the Committee to seek advice on putting a 3 year work plan together.

It is important that you undertake this exercise as it allows you to set achievable objectives that can be benchmarked each year.

Miltown Malbay is a large rural town with potential, it has been earmarked as an e Town and a site has been designated for same on the Mullagh Road.

There is a need for a full scale Town Renewal Plan and it is up to the various town organisations to approach Clare County Council to lobby for this.

The Built Environment:

The standard in this category was a bit mixed with some premises very well presented and retaining the facades that are part and parcel of a rural town like Miltown Malbay.

There were also too many business premises that had still had the plastic signs that dominated the 70s.

The following businesses were admired for the simplicity of presentation and retention of original features Queallys Pub and Burkes Hardware near neighbours, Lynch's(Friels) which is the same way as it was 30 years ago and still a haven for the best of musicians, Hogan's PO, Michael A's, Bank of Ireland and M Crowe which now looks like it is no longer a business.

Some very impressive private residences complemented these.

One thing that the adjudicator observed was that a number of these premises had been recently painted, putting the best foot forward for the Willie Clancy no doubt and doesn't it all help. On the negative side there were too many premises that were in a poorly maintained condition. The Committee will have to engage with all other relevant organisations in the town to see how this can be changed over time. As stated earlier it is now time for Miltown Malbay to be considered for an Urban Renewal Programme, if this has been done all the better. The public premises including the RC Church and very well maintained National School and the excellent facility that is the Resource Centre on the Ballard Road were noted for the standard of presentation. The conversion of the old technical school into this Centre was one of the most positive things done in the town.

Landscaping:

The standard was acceptable, there is a need to develop arrangements that would exploit the best aspects of the town to their utmost and have an all year round effect. As part of a work plan the Committee should seek professional advice on how best to devise a landscape programme for the town and its environs. To implement this businesses should approach for sponsorship, this may be a slow process but well worth it in the long run. The existing planting schemes were very much admired and the provision of a water irrigation system has certainly helped in this respect as it makes tending hanging baskets and the like less tedious. The arrangement at the Ballard Road, with the new nameplate, is an example of a simple and easy maintained planting arrangement that could be replicated in other selected areas of the town.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Committee should look at doing the basics first off by ensuring that the management of open areas or other forms of ground cover is in keeping with recommendations in this category. Consult the Tidy Towns Handbook for some direction on how to go about this or alternatively get in touch with the Wildlife Ranger in Clare County Council who will give you tips and advice. At the outset of this overall report it was suggested that the Committee put in place a work plan with timescales and a wildlife programme should be an integral part of this. There are plenty wildlife habitats in the Town and environs that could be earmarked for a dedicated wildlife project. Try to involve local schools from the outset, as children will bring enthusiasm to any such project.

Litter Control:

Given the weekend that was in it the standard of litter control was acceptable, but there are a few side and back areas that need to be patrolled regularly as the Council will only do main areas. More should be done to promote anti litter in the town, a request should be made for additional anti litter signs that will put the onus on individuals to take responsibility for disposing of their own litter. The local newsletter should be used as a medium for getting the message across as well.

Waste Minimisation:

The Local School's achievement of getting a green flag is to be commended and the local community is doing its collective bit in the interest of better waste management. There are plenty of ideas of how you can build on what you have done to date if you study the Race Against Waste publication included with the application package. We look forward to seeing new projects from Miltown Malbay in this category in the years ahead. Again make it an integral part of your work plan.

Tidiness:

The standard here was mixed, as there was too much weed growth evident in places as well as a general untidiness. A number of back areas were the biggest culprits and an improvement in the basics would be a start. It is a pity to see the old Clonbony Grounds in such an untidy state, the Gaelic Games sign is certainly from another era pre removal of the ban!! The Committee should continue with its efforts to get people to keep areas around properties maintained in a tidy fashion.

Residential Areas:

The Ballard Road Estate residents, mentioned in favourable terms in another section, deserve praise for the standard of presentation of the estate.

The Estate looked very well as boundary walls were in good condition, immediate front areas were tidy, there were some very nice gardens and communal areas were nicely landscaped.

The nice stone nameplate sets the tone as one enters.

The Ennistymon Road Crescent was also maintained to a high standard, but the communal boundary wall was a disgrace with cavity and breezeblocks put up haphazardly. Clare County Council should treat this as a priority job as it takes away from the good standing of this estate.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The town is always busy when I have visited in the past and on this occasion it was ultra busy because of the Willie Clancy festival. The streets are narrow so traffic jams were the order of the day especially after noon.

It seems like there's a myriad of roads and link roads in to the core of the Town most are in an acceptable standard but again there is room for improvement.

This column does not allow for comment on each entry, but suffice to say that you as a Committee are planning a very positive approach by arranging discussions with Clare County Council on how to improve matters that will create appealing entrances to the town.

General Impression:

It is good to have Miltown Malbay back in the competition and of course it is always a pleasure to visit the traditional music capital of the island.

Where could one do a day's work and then experience the best of traditional musicians at their zenith later in the evening.

The Committee should take on board the suggestion of a 3-year simple and effective work plan and it will pay dividends in the future.