

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Milltown** Ref: **373**
County: **Monaghan** Mark: **230**
Category: **A** Date(s): **13/07/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	31
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	17
Litter Control	50	37
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	24
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	230

Overall Development Approach:

It is clearly frustrating for you that continuing development work on housing estates and factories, with the dust, dirt and incessant heavy traffic associated with such development, is delaying your plans, and frustrating to the adjudicators that additional marks can not be awarded in some categories because one can only mark what one sees and not what one expects as forthcoming. You mention the amount of information required on the Entry Form: this is so that activities undertaken during the year which would contribute to additional marking are made known (for example, is useful to read that you have taken the step of engaging a part-time helper for grass-cutting); and so that features which may not be entirely or immediately visible (e.g. bat boxes, archaeological field sites, historic plaques in obscure lanes, etc etc) can be pointed out; granted, this is more greatly needed in larger centres. Your 'Living History' project and your restoration of the pre-famine cottage will be greatly looked forward to, when the time is right for you to proceed with them.

The Built Environment:

Because of its proximity to a large urban centre Milltown does not have the church, school, pub etc characteristic of most villages; it happens that the most prominent buildings are industrial/commercial. Ultimately, a well-presented commercial premises can be a source of pride. If the JBS premises is anything to go by, care of the building, the forecourt and the new planting is exemplary. Others in the same quarter look as if they will follow suit. The entrance to the Furniture Store was neatly presented, but the roof of the building required attention at the date of adjudication.

Landscaping:

An arresting feature of the village was its well-tended roadside verges, with neatly mown grass and floral decorations in salient spots. It was good to read that you invested in bulbs for spring showing - it is a precept of the competition that a village should look well throughout the year. The pump, with its 'paved area of shrubs

and seats' was not seen at the point marked on the map: it may be that the adjudicator simply failed to note it, and so credit has been given in the marking.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Tree-planting comes under this heading. The line of young trees in front of the JBS building was most favourably noted; they will make an impact in a surprisingly short time. As well as the specific nature reserve alongside the river, the outlying areas of Milltown are rich in mature trees and wild hedgerows.

Litter Control:

Litter control had been very effective indeed. The involvement of a voluntary task-force, especially children, is strongly applauded.

Waste Minimisation:

This is an average mark given in the first year of this new category - a category that will grow in importance as times goes on. Your mark next year will depend upon what action you take. For instance, a bring-bank was not seen (though perhaps one is sited in a back area) and if the former is so, then application should be made to the Local Authority for the provision of such an amenity.

Tidiness:

It would be more correct to assign a lower figure than last year's because of the developmental work in progress and the resulting damage to hedges and boundaries and the spreading of mud and dust, but this has not been done, in deference to the qualities which make Milltown a tidy village. Responsibility must lie, in future when works are completed, with the commercial concerns to keep their precincts neat, tidy and well planted. Neat verges have already been mentioned; hedge-cutting of private properties in the village area was seen to be excellent. You should discourage the use of plastic and other advertising banners at commercial yards, as they tend to sag and give an scruffy effect that is adversely eye-catching.

Residential Areas:

Most of Milltown is residential, and mainly of one-storey suburban-type houses. This gives a visual consistency along the principal road. No houses were seen that did not convey pride of ownership and most had attractive front gardens that added considerably to the charm of the place. A neat un-named cul-de-sac was admired with attractive fencing and excellent road surfacing, and a pleasant run of houses was seen on the Ballyalbany road. A house on the corner of this road was in need of improved fencing, and another, next the furniture store, required its boundary wall to be repaired. The older houses nearer the bridge are full of character and very nicely presented - these give a particularly unique flavour to their area.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road surfaces were good to adequate which is surprising considering the amount of heavy traffic. One small item which can continue during the period of constructions is keeping road signage clean and visible: some signs were seen to be dirty (such as the Milltown sign on the Ballyalbany road) and other safety signs were obscured by foliage.

General Impression:

Milltown is undergoing extraordinary pressure at present, but the vigilance and sheer hard work of this committee will undoubtedly result in a favourable outcome, though it may take some years. Those in charge of commercial developments, and new residents in the village, should be encouraged to participate in your work. The fulfilment of your interesting and creative projects will be warmly looked forward to.