

# Tidy Towns Competition 2007

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Mount Merrion** Ref: **1305**  
County: **Dublin (Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown)** Mark: **211**  
Category: **D** Date(s): **19/07/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	25
The Built Environment	50	26
Landscaping	50	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	15
Litter Control	50	28
Waste Minimisation	20	5
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>211</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

The adjudicator would like to welcome Mount Merrion to the 2007 Tidy Towns Competition and your entry is important to the Competition. It is recommended that the first thing that the new Committee might do is to agree on the boundaries within which you will work for Tidy Towns. Normally this is about 1 km from the entry centre but in your area it will be necessary for your Committee to research the official boundaries of Mount Merrion and work within these. To assist the adjudicator the supporting documentation for this might then be submitted with your 2008 entry. It is suggested that at an early date that your Tidy Towns Committee considers the preparation of a simple 3 Year Tidy Towns Action Plan that would detail year by year the projects that you wish to undertake for Tidy Towns. When preparing the Plan it would be helpful to talk to any local organisations or agencies that may have an interest in the Competition.

### **The Built Environment:**

The retail development at Deerpark Road was visited and a feature here is the reasonable approach that has been adopted to signage where it is generally in scale with each premises. The hand lettering at 'Something Special' caught the eye here. The Playground at the Deer Park is imaginatively laid out and must provide children with a great sense of adventure. This facility appeared to be well maintained. At the Church near the Deer Park the grass was high in places and needed to be cut. Another retail area was noted on the Lower Kilmacud Road but the many projecting signs here gave an impression of clutter rather than retail information. The O'Dwyer premises here stands out in design terms as an good attempt to blend in a retail premises into a residential area. The adjudicator was of the view that some of the retail signs at the junction of Mount Anville Road and Drummartin Road were out of scale with the premises that they promoted. Quite often it is the small well designed hand painted signage that catches the eye of the shopper.

### **Landscaping:**

Little formal landscaping was noted in the Mount Merrion area but this is not necessarily a problem in Tidy Towns terms. The area has so many fine tall mature trees of varying species that artificial landscaping becomes questionable. A small landscaped area was noted at the entrance to Mount Anville Wood off Lower Kilmacud Road. However the planting here needed to be thinned out a little. Some hanging baskets were noted at the retail area along Deer Park Road and these added some welcome colour to this area.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

In many areas this is an aspect of the Tidy Towns Competition where there can be significant potential for development. All areas have the presence of wildlife to some degree. It is suggested that the Mount Merrion Tidy Towns Committee would examine the wildlife potential, and see what you can achieve in terms of making you're the Mount Merrion area even more wildlife friendly. The starting point is to have a habitat survey carried out of the wildlife in your area. The Deer Park is obviously an important area for wildlife in terms of cover and feeding and this park might form the focus of you work under this section of the competition.

### **Litter Control:**

Generally litter control in Mount Merrion was quite good with occasional pieces of litter noted from time to time throughout the area. The exception however was the crescent shaped entrance area (with chained gate) with Granite Walls off Mount Anville Road. As this area does not appear to be used on a regular basis litter is tending to accumulate here. Litter here extended to the grassy verges on either sides of the entrance.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

This is a new category in the Tidy Towns Competition first introduced in 2006. The purpose of this new category is to encourage Tidy Towns Committees and the local community to get involved in projects that will reduce waste and encourage recycling. Marks can be gained by Mount Merrion for the promotion of best practice. This can include community guidance on methods of reducing waste such as segregating litter during clean up events. The organising of a Workshop on waste minimisation in the Mount Merrion area is another initiative that you might consider. This could be held on a waste minimisation community awareness day as part of a series of local initiatives. Your schools should also be involved with their own waste minimisation projects. You could also consider a partnership with local firms and businesses in Mount Merrion to encourage them to reduce unnecessary waste. In regard to waste minimisation it is important to remember that quite small actions can sometimes have a significant waste reduction impact. If you do not already have a Bring Bank Centre or if you have one that is not yet properly signposted from the town centre then such initiatives could gain additional marks for your centre in 2008.

### **Tidiness:**

At the car park near the Church at the Deer Park the metal barrier needs to be repainted as it appeared to be rather rusty. The general tidying up of the area by the Church is also suggested. Watch out for weed growth at the base of roadside walls and at kerbing within some estates.

### **Residential Areas:**

Many of the housing estates in Mount Merrion like other parts of south County Dublin have been developed some years ago and have mature private and public landscaping. In some estates roadside verge areas needed to be cut or there was an uneven presentation of such grass areas. The following recommendations are offered by the adjudicator who suggests that the Tidy Towns Committee bring these points to the attention of all estates in Mount Merrion.

- Road boundary walls will probably need to be painted twice each year especially on busy roads.
- Gable end walls though sometimes difficult to paint should be painted when the rest of the house is being painted.
- Timber fencing will require treatment at least twice per year.
- All estates in the Mount Merrion area should be encouraged to provide entrance name signs and directional signage within the estate.
- Green open space grass areas will need to be cut frequently if a quality presentation is to be achieved. Remember that grass will probably have to be cut back from the top of kerbing by hand. The provision of a few well chosen trees can often transform an open space.
- Areas to the back of estates can sometimes become dumping areas for cut grass and other materials.

- By their nature estates can sometimes have litter control problems and this must be addressed by each individual estate in the town.

It is suggested that your committee might like to consider the possibility of running a Tidy Estates Competition involving the estates in the Mount Merrion area. It is likely that you will be able to find a local sponsor or sponsors who would be prepared to fund the prize fund. The prizes should ideally be in the form of vouchers for estate maintenance equipment or for landscaping.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Fosters Avenue is impressive as it is a fine wide tree-lined road complimented by well presented grass areas at the 4 sides of the road. Along Thornhill Road some verge areas needed to be cut while the variety of trees species noted along South Avenue added visual texture.

**General Impression:**

The overall presentation of Mount Merrion is good and the difficulties noted are not generally ones that cannot be overcome given time and community cooperation. Good luck with your projects for 2008.