

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Stillorgan** Ref: **757**
County: **Dublin (Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown)** Mark: **174**
Category: **E** Date(s): **19/07/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	25
The Built Environment	50	22
Landscaping	50	23
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	15
Litter Control	50	18
Waste Minimisation	20	5
Tidiness	30	13
Residential Areas	40	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	28
General Impression	10	5
TOTAL MARK	400	174

Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator would like to welcome Stillorgan to the 2007 Tidy Towns Competition and your participation in Tidy Towns is important for the competition. The key focus in Stillorgan is the area of the Stillorgan Shopping Centre and the retail area at the junction of the Lower Kilmacud Road and the Old Dublin Road. 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 Stillorgan and work within these. 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 in Stillorgan for Tidy Towns. When preparing the Plan it would be helpful to talk to any local organisations or agencies in the Stillorgan area that may have an interest in the Competition.

The Built Environment:

The Stillorgan Shopping Centre was one of the early purpose built shopping centres in Ireland and it still functions as a highly important retail area where the presentation standards were noted as being quite good. Tree planting here helps to soften the impact of the large car parking area. The retail area across the road and at the start of the Old Dublin Road is largely based on two storey properties which were in all probability once residential. In many cases the signage is quite poor and out of scale with the individual buildings. It is recommended that at the Leisureplex that the white parts of the front elevation be painted in a colour that will blend with the existing quite attractive grey block-work. The cottages below Bolands probably represent some of the early houses in the original Stillorgan. However poor signage has taken over here and the visual impact is rather poor. There are signage issues here of scale, materials and style. In contrast the Stillorgan Décor Centre has a crisp and clear presentation. The Credit Union appears to have been developed from an old

terraced property one of about six in this row. As we have come to expect from the Credit Union the building is well presented. Down the road the Texaco premises looked quite smart with some attractive landscaping to the road frontage. Across the road the Mill House Bar and Mill House Barn use modern lettering that compliments the attractive front elevations. Further along this road the retail presentation is rather poor and signage again is the main difficulty. One of the better buildings in Stillorgan is the National Irish Bank / Maple House building that occupies a key location at a road junction. The curved building here makes a positive impact on the local built environment. The Luas Station area was found to be well laid out with appropriate hard and soft landscaping and hopefully the good standard of presentation noted will continue on into the future.

Landscaping:

Good landscaping was examined at the Luas Station and the plants trees and shrubs here help to blend the new development into the sloping green bank of the reservoir area behind. Some good landscaping has been developed in front of Ping's Restaurant and the small grass area with the trees is attractive. The Grotto area on the Old Dublin Road has been enhanced by some shrubbery.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Marks are available in the competition for the research and promotion of local wildlife. The new Tidy Towns Committee might like to consider what role they can have in this. The three reservoirs must attract some wildlife though presently they are closed to the public. There could be the potential for a good wildlife project here in the future.

Litter Control:

Litter control is one of the weaker areas of the overall presentation of Stillorgan. It is accepted that there are very high daily traffic and pedestrian volumes through Stillorgan but litter control process should be put in place to resolve these difficulties. It is suggested that the matter be discussed in detail with the Local Authority.

Waste Minimisation:

The Bring Centre at the car park was reasonably well presented but the official signage was not in pace. 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 Stillorgan 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 Stillorgan 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 local school or schools should also be involved with their own waste minimisation projects. You could also consider a partnership with local firms and businesses in Stillorgan 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.

Tidiness:

Graffiti and unnecessary projecting signs are two of the problem area for Stillorgan under competition category. Many Tidy Towns Committees have done excellent work in encouraging retailers to remove unnecessary signage. Weed growth at the base of stone and brick walls was another tidiness issue noted in Stillorgan on adjudication day. This problem extends also into some of the estates visited. For example very bad weed growth was noted at the Bus Shelter (No. 1844) at Beaufield Park. Graffiti is a problem that the committee needs to consider at an early date. Can you get the Local Authority support take put an ongoing graffiti removal programme in place?

Residential Areas:

Some of the estates in Stillorgan were visited and weed growth at kerbing and verge grass in need of cutting were noted as issues needing attention. 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 Stillorgan.

- 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 Stillorgan 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.
- Simple landscaping at individual houses can often be very effective if the proper trees and shrubs are planted.
- 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 Stillorgan 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:

The main roads in Stillorgan were up to the reasonably good standard noted in other parts of south County Dublin. Tall mature trees such as those on the Old Dublin Road add much to the visual impact of this approach road as they do for others in the Stillorgan area. Some damaged pavements in the centre of Stillorgan need Local Authority upgrading.

General Impression:

The main problems in Stillorgan are those of litter control, graffiti and weed growth, together with poor retail signage. The adjudicator would like to wish the new Tidy Towns Committee well in their work and we look forward to seeing your 2008 projects.