

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Straffan** Ref: **385**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **286**
Category: **B** Date(s): **17/06/2007**
10/08/2007

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	40
The Built Environment	50	35
Landscaping	50	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	35
Litter Control	50	35
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	21
Residential Areas	40	33
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	36
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	286

Overall Development Approach:

Straffan is welcome to the 2007 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission which was very detailed and helpful in the adjudication process. Wonderful progress has been made this year as regards marks, these have been allocated for work accomplished over the past 18 months to 2 years; a word of warning however large increases in marks will not be likely in the future as when a centre reaches this level in the competition each additional mark is hard won. We note from your submission that you liaise with your local authority and other statutory bodies as well as local schools and businesses and commend you for this. Well done also on your communication strategies in the form of public meetings and notices together with leaflet drops. We wish you every success in the implementation of your plan.

The Built Environment:

We note with interest plans to move the roadside school boundary wall and the creation of a flower bed when this has been accomplished however as an interim measure it should be maintained as clean or painted as possible. Both churches are presented to an excellent standard and the Straffan Inn looked well also. The entrance gates to the Steam Museum and the sports grounds could be improved.

Landscaping:

The committee and others responsible for landscaping within Straffan are to be commended for the sheer volume of planting, hopefully these will get a chance to mature and enhance their environment in the course of time. Existing mature trees of which there are many in the village and on approach roads look quite splendid and are complemented nicely by rose displays at name plates. Green areas were beautifully presented and are enjoying excellent maintenance; however stretches of grass verge out the Boreen Road and the road to the Steam Museum could be improved.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The graveyard is neatly presented and both the Butterfly Farm and the grounds of the Steam Museum are attractive features under this heading. The identification of trees in the grounds of the K Club is an excellent initiative and it is good to note that the local community have access here. Your wildlife heritage in relation to species of snowdrop and rhuard is interesting, perhaps you could give us more information about this next year. To carry you forward under this heading a survey of habitats in the village and surrounding areas might be undertaken with a view to protecting wildlife in the face of future development and of course heightening awareness of wildlife so that it can be enjoyed by the community.

Litter Control:

Litter control was excellent in the course of adjudication. A few scraps were noted in the school and some on the roadside hard shoulder at the bridge. The latter consisted of milk cartons, a cereal box and Lucozade bottles. One is tempted to think these were discarded from passing traffic. No doubt your regular litter picking evenings will have seen these gone by the next day. Given that Straffan does not have a bin emptying service from KCC the standard of litter control achieved is excellent.

Waste Minimisation:

Congratulations to students for work undertaken for the Green Flag programme, this is an excellent initiative. We note also the segregation of waste within the school for the Green Flag award. Well done on your liaison with local business regarding the need for both recycling and for waste minimisation. Perhaps the results of this might be included in your submission next year as it could be a source of additional marks. The overall aim under this heading is to reduce the amount of waste produced by a community in addition to recycling.

Tidiness:

No doubt the development work in progress at Barton Grange is responsible for a certain amount of untidiness and the problem will be resolved upon the completion of construction work. The base of a wall located across from the K Club Hotel was weedy and an untidy roadside featured across from the graveyard. Some commercial yards on the Boreen Road are in need of better enclosure either by good quality timber gates or stone walls or by landscaping.

Residential Areas:

The stone cottages located across from the Church of Ireland within the village centre are charming and an excellent standard of presentation has been achieved here. Housing developments such as The Beeches and Straffan Gate are impressive with their landscaping and an excellent standard of presentation also. Your new chess board feature at the crossroads is a nice touch and it is interesting to note that local children have instructions in this game. Well done on ducting four overhead service cables at St Brigids Terrace, this will pay dividends in the future.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Almost all roads to Straffan and within the village centre have been resurfaced to an excellent standard. A potholed road edge by the school remains to be treated and the overflow car park at the Straffan Inn could be resurfaced. The latter is important as it is located within the heart of the village. Street furniture is particularly attractive and the new bollards have been noted together with new road signs and name plates. There is almost no overhead wirescape left in Straffan village which is a fine achievement. Encourage the owners of the Maxol garage to remove the redundant post. High stone walls, kerbs and road surfaces together with street furniture are presented to an overall high standard.

General Impression:

The overall impression of Straffan is one of excellence with no major issues waiting to be addressed. It is important now to ensure that landscaping gets an opportunity to establish itself and to mature to give the village the touch of perfection it truly deserves. Congratulations on an excellent increase in marks this year.

Second Round Adjudication:

The centre benefits by a natural entry point, the delightful river bridge. Splendid village name signs greet on a

number of roads. Splendid floral display at the Kildare Club entrance, grasses well cut and the road swept, a perfect setting for the fine stand of mature trees. Traffic volumes are a constant intrusion. Interesting road surfaces at the Church of Ireland junction with Station Road set off the clear and colourful signage here and elsewhere. Charming houses opposite the church caught the eye .The cemetery gates on the Boreen Road need to be wire brushed to remove rust before repainted while the wall at the corner need attention following traffic damage. Major work is in progress at the school building, at Barton Grange and at Straffin Gate.