

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Sixmilebridge** Ref: **89**
County: **Clare** Mark: **266**
Category: **D** Date(s): **18/07/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	41
The Built Environment	50	38
Landscaping	50	38
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	27
Litter Control	50	30
Waste Minimisation	20	13
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	266

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you Sixmilebridge Community Development Association for your entry on behalf of Sixmilebridge town to the 2008 TidyTowns Competition. Welcome.

Thanks to your Committee of eight people who take the time and effort to attend your monthly meetings, in addition to other TidyTowns events. Your Committee and partnership organisations are doing very worthwhile work for Sixmilebridge, a town with a population of less than 5,000 people. Well done to all concerned.

Thank you for the submission including your TidyTowns Strategic Plan 2005-2008, and Update on the Plan of the various TidyTowns activities in Sixmilebridge. Thanks also for the sketch map of your town. This map sketched by one of the local children, to celebrate the TidyTowns 50th Anniversary, is an excellent innovative means of getting the schoolchildren further involved in TidyTowns and well done to the winning pupil. Your communications strategy is paying dividends and congratulations on the excellent website. www.sixmilebridgetidytowns.com and on your plans to upgrade the website.

The work of local people, residents, business people, schoolchildren and others is to be praised. Well done on your energy and commitment. A recommendation is for the Committee to prepare a new short three-year plan on TidyTowns activities to say 2011. As part of this plan and to help the town compare its performance in TidyTowns competitions a recommendation to consider is a visit to other high performers in the 2007 and 2008 national competition. A further recommendation is to attempt to increase the number of people willing to serve on TidyTowns Committee. Your present Committee of eight would benefit by the introduction of new members to help spread the workload and take on additional duties.

I wish you all the best with your planned activities into the future. Enjoy the Sixmilebridge Family fete in August. Keep up the excellent work.

The Built Environment:

The major task, which Sixmilebridge has faced and is continuing to face, is the challenge of change, of getting the balance correct between "the old and the new". Sixmilebridge has quickly grown from a small village to its present status of a small town. This is not an easy task and to date the town is coping well. This process must be managed for the benefit of residents and visitors alike. Your Mission Statement of "the development of an environmentally sound, visually attractive community through the participation of all age groups, for the benefit of present and future generations" captures the challenge well. Your ongoing attempts, with other organisations to improve the quality of life of the people of Sixmilebridge are to be applauded.

The Limerick entrance to the town is quite attractive, the nice individual houses and the old Church impress. Landscaping was also impressive. The centre of town also looks well and has such potential. The lovely bridge, the poignant sculpture of the Miller Returns, the nice flow of the O'Garney River, and the nice landscaped seated area brings you right into the heart of the town. This area was nicely decorated. Well done. A recommendation is to examine the feasibility of making this area a pedestrian car free area. Also examine the option of removing plastic signs over the commercial premises.

Due to ongoing change there is a wide variety in the quality of the built environment in the town. Those public buildings that impressed included: The Churches; the Schools, The Credit Union; the Garda Station; the Parish Office Building. The Kilfinaghty Public Library is a wonderful restoration and congratulations to all involved. The Grotto at the Church looked well, but some of the paving outside the church needed weeding.

Other commercial buildings that looked well included: the Old House; Queen; McGraths Pharmacy; John Rooney; Niall Gilligan; Bridge Sports; Van Jon Jeweller; Greyhound Bar; John Shaw; Well done to all. The GAA grounds and the soccer grounds are important assets for the people of the town, well done on their development.

The old ivy covered residence at the corner of the square needs attention.

Landscaping:

Well done on the planting programmes of trees and beech hedge and the ongoing maintenance around the town. The landscaping at the individual houses on the outskirts and in the town is of a high standard. In general the residential housing estates are nicely landscaped and well maintained. The Car Park area near the Square has some nice silver birch trees as a feature. The stone bed of red roses in full bloom looks well also.

The grounds of the Kilfinaghty Public Library are appropriately well maintained and the mature trees add to the scene.

There are some nice shrubs, plants and seated areas outside the Church which look well.

The high standard of landscaping at the GAA Club is impressive.

Well done to all involved in the various locations for good landscaping in the individual elements that help to make Sixmilebridge look well. The residential areas also put so much effort into their own gardens and the result is mainly impressive and of benefit.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The wildlife sanctuary at the Tulla Road is a wonderful facility for the town. The habitat homes for the geese and ducks are excellent, as is the Wildlife Interpretative Panel. Sixmilebridge is fortunate to have such a lovely river as the O'Garney flowing through it and this offers excellent further opportunities to highlight the native and indigenous wildlife and birdlife. A suggestion might be to contact the Heritage Council and the Wildlife Ranger to assist in the establishment of a further appropriate wildlife project for Sixmilebridge. As regards the cleaning of the ivy off the bridge I would accept the expert advice already given.

Litter Control:

Sixmilebridge was mainly clear of litter on the day of my visit. Well done on the Spring-Clean Up and the weekly clean up campaign. The Scoop the Poop and the Litter Free signs are noted.

Waste Minimisation:

The purpose of this category is to encourage Tidy Towns Committees and the local community to get involved in projects that will reduce waste and encourage recycling. Projects could include community guidance on methods of reducing waste such as segregating litter during clean-up events.

Well done on the two composting workshops held with the County Council and the segregation of litter as part of the Green Schools initiative. Congratulations to the school on the award of the Green Flag for the second

time.

Tidiness:

In general, Sixmilebridge looked tidy on the day of my visit. There are of course always pockets of untidiness that could be better. These included the red wooden bench with a seat piece missing at the lovely riverside park. Also the grassed area at the Miller Returns needs to be cut back from the base of the memorial. A pity to see this nice area somewhat spoilt.

Residential Areas:

As previously mentioned, the challenge is to have an appropriate balance between "the old and the new" and ensure that the infrastructure of the town can maintain pace with the rate of recent change in the residential estates.

The older townhouses help retain the small town character and rural charm of Sixmilebridge and some of these are maintained to the best possible standards. Others require painting. Residential Estates looking well included; Terraced houses opposite the Church; Estate opposite the Library; Cappa Lodge; O'Garney Park; Lios Anama. Congratulations to all on the 23rd June official opening of the lovely Fana Glas Housing Scheme. This is a lovely development.

Some individual houses on the outskirts of the village are top quality with some lovely gardens. Congratulations to all concerned on the upkeep of their residential areas.

Well done to all residents for the great effort.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The Limerick Road looked clean and tidy but some wallside weeds need some attention.

The town was in general clean and tidy with some nice grassed landscaping which could be improved by further planted hanging baskets.

General Impression:

Congratulations to Sixmilebridge on your entry again to TidyTowns and well done on the progress made on your projects during 2008. Keep up this excellent work. Well done on the "Walk to Mass" initiative.

I look forward to further visits to your lovely rural town.