

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Milford** Ref: **593**
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **256**
Category: **B** Date(s): **28/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	37
The Built Environment	50	32
Landscaping	50	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	23
Litter Control	50	37
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	30
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	256

Overall Development Approach:

Congratulations to Milford Tidy Towns for participating in the Tidy Towns Competition 2008. Thank you for the supporting literature and photos which show that you are an enthusiastic group of people, committed to the improvement of the appearance of Milford and to the enhancement of the quality of life in your village. Thank you for the map and especially for pointing out what must be seen thus channelling the adjudicator in the appropriate directions. The photographs were also most helpful in giving a sense of the town before arrival and in helping one recognise items when one stumbled across them. It is a novelty to find a committee with 8-10 members but one suspects that yours is the most truthful answer as numbers on committees such as Tidy Towns Committees tend to fluctuate. It is noted that you are one branch of a broader movement committed to the improvement of the quality of life in Milford. Therefore through the Community Council you have greater access to the various public bodies and agencies that influence the shape of Milford. You involve the pupils in the school in your work, something that is vital in instilling a sense of pride of place. The adjudicator made a special note of looking over the bridge and your efforts here do deserve mention. Well done. The adjudicator is not sure if a 3-5 Year Plan has been submitted through the photos. Certainly a plan that is written down, encompassing all sections of the competition, with targets and dates, with support agencies named and sources of funding included would be what is expected. For this year the photos were accepted as a substitute.

The Built Environment:

Milford is a comfortable blend of Church, shops, residences and former businesses, with landscaped areas interspersed, to generate a homely village atmosphere. The school is one of the first buildings one encounters on the Charleville side, its neat, tidy appearance creating a good impression of Milford. The bins and flower boxes are a demonstration of the influence of the Tidy Towns Committee. The street name sign, Cill Bheoláin helps generate a community atmosphere. The

buildings along the street look well, for instance, the residences, the shop, the Church, the Post Office. Ní Choileáin is a fine shop front enhanced with stylish decoration. The Presbytery also adds reverence and antiquity to the street.

The four stone faced terrace houses are a gem in a focal area of the village centre, Church Place. They help to shape the central square. The village bridge is another attractive feature of the built environment of the village. The wonderful work created around at the bridge is for mention in another section. As village life changes the use of buildings also alters and, regrettably, in some cases the building is vacated. This can lead to neglect of the appearance of the building and your streetscape suffers from lack of occupancy in places. The Milford market is a delightful building and one hopes that it is bought and maintained. In another instance it seems incongruous that what once rocked as the dancehall or cinema is now Donegan's Garage but in fairness to the owners they do well to maintain a gay front. The tennis courts are a fine facility but the neglected sheds need attention. The size of the creamery has a major influence on the built environment of the village, a measure of its status in a previous life but now a challenge to your committee.

Landscaping:

It is obvious that great strides have been made in improving the visual image and impact of Milford by carefully designed landscaping throughout the years. Not only are green fingers in evidence but also an eye for design using pointed walls on raised beds to reinforce the impact.

The arrival to Milford via Dr Croke Place is particularly well treated. Apart from the attractive treatment of the Milford sign there is the relaxing seat on the carefully mown roadside. Across the road the picture is not so idyllic as the roadside seems more skimmed than mown. The interest created by the buildings on the street is accentuated by the landscaping in the village centre. The island bed is an attractive feature. One of the big moments in recent social history of Milford is celebrated with most attractive landscaping around the Fleá Ceoil 2000 commemorative plaque. Good use is made of the flower tubs throughout the village and they do create an impression of care. Another element of the past, the parish pump, is well celebrated also. Finally take a collective bow for the work done at the park and riverbank. It is well worth getting out of the car to have a walk around. This is exceptional work. Full marks for the wheel chair friendly path, the seating, the railings. The treatment of the park also remembers the farming history of Milford in a subtle manner being delicately incorporated into the landscaping plan. Lovely. The adjudicator took a plastic water bottle home and silently prayed for the offender who desecrated your wonderful work.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Well done on the development of the Quay Wall, a work in progress. Sorry about the ducks. No sign of them to-day either. The wildlife area at the back of the school was not visited but one accepts that it is there. The development of a River Walk seems to be a noble aspiration and one wishes you well with this. The cleaning up and development of the river bank must surely make life in Milford more attractive to wildlife. Well done on planting bird feeding plants as suggested in last year's adjudication. Much more attractive than bird feeders, but these have their place too.

Litter Control:

Increasing 'Litter Awareness' is an important tool in the war on litter. Involving the school in this effort is most commendable and will, hopefully, lead to a litter reduction, over time. Your involvement in the Cork County Litter Challenge is also commendable. The massive reduction in the amount of rubbish collected during your clean-up this year suggests that your campaign is being successful. But there is still litter. On the roadside from Charleville there was quite a bit. Coolgower did not escape without some litter strewn about despite the litter bins standing idly by.

Waste Minimisation:

The Bring Bank is a worthwhile initiative and looks well.

Have you approached the school with a view to pursuing the achievement of Green Flag Status for the school? The pupils would learn much about recycling, reusing, reducing and composting. They would be involved in waste minimisation projects and would bring their new found skills, their new found knowledge and their new found enthusiasm home to the generations at home. There appears to be a slight misunderstanding about the aims of this section in your submission. It could benefit your committee to study the booklet 'Race Against Waste'. Such a study would stimulate new waste elimination projects for you. The emphasis in this section is not on litter control but on minimising waste in your community.

Tidiness:

The traffic rumbles on the approach by the school are a commendable traffic management ploy. Some of the overhead cables mar the skyline. Has there been no opportunity to bury them? Watch out for redundant poles also. That green corrugated iron gate draws the eye away from all of the neatness all about and overshadows the presence of the period walls all about.

Residential Areas:

There are the town houses and the suburban houses which make up the residential areas of Milford. All along the street the houses are beautifully kept and have a distinctive period appearance. Your own pride in these buildings is illustrated by the enclosed photos. In some cases the chimneys are the relics of the skilled tradesmen of other times. There is no need to remind you of the challenges faced due to unoccupied buildings. Dr Croke Place is among the highlights of the residential areas. Well maintained houses are further enhanced by the groomed open spaces and varied hedges to the front. The timber fencing opens up the estate and adds further character to the area. The next estate, Coolgower one presumes, is also proudly presented, the open landscaping to the front giving a view of the beautifully maintained houses. Gort na hAbhann, though still a work in progress, provides promise for the future. The four new houses have attractive bright colours but hanging baskets might soften the concrete impact.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

It is a wonderful introduction to a town to be welcomed with the unique name sign of that town. Your attractive, distinctive name sign proclaims a welcome. Of particular visual interest is the treatment of the name sign in a bed of dwarf busy lizzies at Dr Croke Place. To mention Dr Croke Place is not to overlook the Scairt Road approach. Not only does the sign welcome one but the houses, the colour, the neat borders, the seat and pump seem to chorus that invitation to come and visit. The pedestrian walkway to town seems safe and encourages one to get out and walk. Arriving from Charleville one feels that one is arriving at the landlord's manor house. While these walls are a distance from town they should be part of your portfolio of work because they enhance the village atmosphere, as if from a distance. Some road surfaces need the attention of Cork County Council who may need a reminder.

General Impression:

A wonderful experience. You are justly proud of your work and achievements. One of the challenges you face will be in maintaining the work already done. One looks forward to the results down by the river.