

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Effin - Garrienderk** Ref: **449**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **213**
Category: **A** Date(s): **13/06/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	26	27
The Built Environment	50	30	30
Landscaping	50	29	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	15	15
Litter Control	50	29	30
Tidiness	30	16	16
Waste Minimisation	20	2	2
Residential Areas	40	28	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	28	28
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	400	209	213

Overall Development Approach:

Effin is most welcome to the 2012 TidyTowns competition. Many thanks for your application form with map. You are encouraged to fill out all sections of the application form as even small projects can win points and be of benefit to your community. Do get a hold of the TidyTowns Handbook which is full of useful hints and information under each of the headings. It is understood that small communities such as yours can lack resources but big ideas can come from small places and other centres in your category have excelled.

Your membership seems to have jumped from four last year to 10 this year. This is a wonderful achievement, how was this done? Communication is a vital element of TidyTowns as the adjudicator wants to see as much involvement as possible. Is there a parish newsletter? Do you contact the local newspaper? You could also benefit from contact with TidyTowns groups in neighbouring towns.

It was suggested in last year's report that in lieu of a school you make contact with the local youth group or sports club. Has any progress being made here?

Finally you are encouraged to prepare a three-year plan to outline your strategic vision for your town. It would set out medium-term actions across the various headings and would perhaps help in sourcing support in the event that there are major projects you would like to see completed.

The Built Environment:

The church is an attractive structure set behind maturing maple trees. Its well painted walls blend in well with its surroundings and the old stone surrounds complement this well. The interpretive panel is clear, clean and interesting while the old map could be rejuvenated with some sandpaper and varnish. The church gates

meanwhile would benefit from a clean. The railway bridge stonework is attractive and this feature looks well.

The discount furniture shop is looking well as did the garage and Crown paints. It is unfortunate to see the shop and the petrol station closed down and hopefully this situation will not last. Do be vigilant here for signs of deterioration.

Landscaping:

The majority of the landscaping elements in your town are the hedges and tall trees that also support wildlife. Learning to appreciate these, to manage them correctly, and enhance them where possible can yield long-term benefits. Trees in the grounds of the church work well here. There are lower branches which need to be cut back as this will encourage tall, straight growth. Planting flowers at the base of trees is discouraged since it robs the trees of water and nutrients.

The new Mountain Ash trees were admired on the Charleville side of town and no doubt these will mature well in this location. It would be nice to see a hawthorn hedge replanted along the wire fence here.

Green areas are well maintained throughout and it is encouraging to see how hedges are being cut correctly to promote dense growth at the base and to allow tall trees to emerge. This is a wonderful feature for your village.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

You provided no details of projects under this heading. Here you are encouraged to raise awareness of your natural heritage among the community. Examples of important habitats include hedges, tall trees and even gardens. The OSI map shows the railway line to be disused. These can be wonderful wildlife corridors, is there any possibility of pedestrian access here? Elsewhere such features have been transformed into public walkways.

Do you have a Slí na Sláinte or Green mile? Developing a circular walking route serves to bring people into contact with nature and opens other possibilities e.g. heritage trails, bat walks, dawn chorus events etc. These tend to be low or even zero cost. It is hoped you can give this area some attention in 2013, see the TidyTowns Handbook for more information.

Litter Control:

It is noted that you conduct litter picks every two weeks. Do you get good participation in these? A good idea would be to wear high-viz vests with the TidyTowns logo at these times. This will raise awareness of the work you do among locals and maybe attract some new volunteers.

Do you participate in the national spring clean? This is a wonderful event in April, run by An Taisce, they can sort out problem areas or just energise your group after the winter.

Litter control was excellent on adjudication day, well done! The clothing recycling banks at the petrol station were in good order. Are there plans to add to these facilities?

Tidiness:

You do not indicate any projects that have been undertaken under this heading since last year. Such projects may include weeding of kerbs, control of signage, cleaning or removing old poles or dealing with untidy areas. Generally the town is tidy however and serious examples of these issues do not present themselves. At the now disused garage weeds are threatening while signage nailed to the old sycamore tree should be removed if possible. Road signage is generally in good shape but poles may need to be cleaned in some instances.

Waste Minimisation:

You have left this section blank. Ireland produces more waste per person than any other European country and much of this goes to landfill. To address this we need to start throwing out less. At home this could mean composting, reusing old wood, giving unwanted items away and recycling more. In business waste costs money so perhaps working with your local businesses can be of mutual benefit. You could start by contacting Limerick county council and see if there are seminars you could attend or workshops you behold. There are also ideas in the TidyTowns Handbook.

Residential Areas:

Effin has a small stock of houses and no estates. The houses are fine homes set back from the road and in many cases separated by leafy walls of trees and hedges. Almost uniformly these are presented to the highest standards and were looking very well on adjudication day.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The name sign on approach from Kilmallock needs some attention as it is overgrown and somewhat unattractive. The parking area across from the church is very well-kept. Have you talked about developing a path or pedestrian crossing at this busy point. Field gates along the road could be painted to enhance their appearance (this has already been done in some cases). Roadside verges are well trimmed.

General Impression:

Despite its small size Effin has much going for it. This village is looking very well and it is hoped you can build on this by selecting projects for 2013 under all headings. Best of luck!