

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Hospital** Ref: **456**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **247**
Category: **C** Date(s): **12/06/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	35	36
The Built Environment	50	35	35
Landscaping	50	39	40
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	17	18
Litter Control	50	23	24
Tidiness	30	15	16
Waste Minimisation	20	9	10
Residential Areas	40	29	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	29	31
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	400	239	247

Overall Development Approach:

Hospital is most welcome to the 2012 TidyTowns competition. Many thanks for your clearly typed application form, three-year plan, map, photographs and additional information. You seem to be making great strides in the contest and your energy really comes across in the application form. It is particularly impressive that you are continually looking to expand your support base despite already having a decent number of committee members and volunteers. It was wonderful to read how you have set up a Facebook page and have attracted over 200 fans. This is an excellent communication tool and in particular can reach out to the younger generation. The new volunteers that come out for your cleanup are a testament to the success of this approach. You also continue to maintain good links with Limerick county council, Fás, and Ballyhoura development and this is good.

Your three-year plan comes to a conclusion this year and leafing through it, it appears that you completed all the actions that you set yourselves! This is most impressive. You now have to turn your attention to a new three-year plan to build on this considerable success.

Maintaining contact with schools is an essential element of TidyTowns and it is wonderful that this is being done. Are all schools included in this outreach?

The Built Environment:

The Main Street is a nice collection of vernacular buildings that have for the most part retained their character. Some particularly nice details remain such as facades for 'Woods' and 'Jones' and these add greatly to the sense of place.

The community hall looks newly painted and is enhanced with black bollards and some lovely roses. Scoby's bar is well decked out for the football and its numerous flags enliven the street scene. Carmody's is another unique facade that stands out.

Pobal Scoil Eoin Baiste is looking very well and was proudly flying its green flag.

The Roman Catholic Church is imposing and is surprisingly complimentary of the adjacent, ruined structure. It was interesting to read the small plaque detailing its history and to climb the steps to the grotto. These religious grounds are very well maintained and presented.

Landscaping:

You clearly have a wide range of areas upon which you are working to enhance the landscaping of the town. It is worth pointing out that the aims of landscaping and wildlife can sometimes overlap and it should be borne in mind where possible. To this end native trees should be considered as they provide additional resources to other plants and animals. Cherry laurel, despite being a popular hedging plant, is one of our most unwanted alien invasive species and should be avoided in preference of our native hawthorn.

The stone fountain is a beautiful set piece that is immaculately presented. The stonework here complements other features in the town while the floral displays are suitably discreet.

Open green areas are well-mown and have a leafy aura with their tall trees. Smaller displays of potted flowers are probably superfluous here. A spectacular planting bed was admired across from the old creamery site.

The tall trees and approach from Limerick are wonderful features to the town and their setting against the limestone walls lends a character full of history and heritage. Planting displays at the River were admired and the white seats here are most enticing.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It was wonderful to read that the wildlife survey has been carried out. This did not seem to be included in your application form. Nevertheless the new panel detailing the birds to be found at the river is excellent. You detail all the different species that are nesting along the river. Do keep note of these data and see how things change over time.

The school's butterfly survey and wildlife garden are more excellent initiatives. Do make sure you pass on your findings to the National biodiversity data centre as they compile similar data from all over Ireland and monitor the health of our butterflies.

The school wildlife area is lovely, do students regularly monitor this area, for example for nesting birds? The riverside panel was admired as are your plans for a river walk. Do ensure that you consult with Inland Fisheries Ireland before progressing here.

Litter Control:

Well done on your participation in the national spring clean. Even better that you segregated what you found for recycling. Your use of Facebook has already been commented upon. It is impressive as you have your own roadsweeper!

On the day of adjudication practically no litter was to be found. This is a great achievement, well done !

Tidiness:

The Main Street through town is very tidy with no obvious points of clutter. Kerbs are weeded and poles are free of unwanted ads. Overhead wires are an obvious source of skyline clutter and perhaps you could write to the ESB to see if these could be put underground. Throughout the town it was found that tidiness issues were not apparent and so this paragraph is necessarily short, well done.

Waste Minimisation:

Very few towns managed to progress beyond the recycling elements of waste minimisation. In this regard it is wonderful to read how you have grasped the essence of this problem. How do you take what has been

learned at seminars and workshops and spread this knowledge to the community? Have you considered doing a waste survey? This would be most useful in identifying specific areas to be targeted, and monitoring your success over time.

Congratulations to the primary school on their third green flag and the secondary school's first. There is a real opportunity here for ideas generated by students to be rolled out to homes and businesses. There is even an An Taisce 'Green Homes' initiative that may be worth investigating.

Residential Areas:

Hospital seems to have numerous small residential areas rather than larger estates. This gives them a more human scale and connects them to the heart of the town. Those that were viewed on adjudication day were presented to a high standard but many do not seem to have nameplates e.g. the small row of terraced houses beside the church.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads into and out of Hospital are in good order and your new stone name plaques were admired.

As noted in previous reports the length of old stone walls leading into your town are wonderful features worthy of conservation. They are home to an array of lichens and mosses, ferns and small flowering plants so they also have habitat value. Some towns feel this must be cleaned, however they add to the walls character and charm.

The wall of the family resource centre is in need of a lick of paint.

General Impression:

Hospital has done extremely well this year and the energy that comes across in the application form was also visible on the ground. We look forward to reading your new three-year plan in 2013 and how you intend to build on this success.