

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Strand** Ref: **469**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **289**
Category: **A** Date(s): **01/07/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	41	40
The Built Environment	50	41	42
Landscaping	50	42	43
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	24	24
Litter Control	50	36	37
Tidiness	30	22	23
Waste Minimisation	20	8	8
Residential Areas	40	29	30
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	34	34
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	400	285	289

Overall Development Approach:

Your adjudicator would like to welcome Strand to the 2012 TidyTowns Competition and your participation is important to the competition. Thank you for the completed entry form and helpful maps. The first thing that your adjudicator noted about Strand is that there is a great sense of community here with the village core area clustered around the river bridge. It is suggested that the Committee might consider monthly meetings throughout the year. You will have different priorities at different times of the year. Your concern in regard to project funding is noted and understood. Have you talked to the LEADER Partnership to see if they can assist any of your future projects? It is suggested that the Committee prepares a simple 3 Year TidyTowns Plan for the village and this could be a project for the coming winter. It is helpful to use the ten adjudication categories as a framework for the Plan. The year in which each project is to be targeted should be detailed together with any supporting groups or agencies. It would be helpful to expand your communications about your work and texting and email is now used by many committees. Thank you for the excellent photographs.

The Built Environment:

Your concern for and work at the derelict property and the vacant site beside the Post office is noted. The grotto was examined and is improved this year following the painting and replanting. The millstone feature was also seen and an information panel about the history of this might be considered. An impressive feature of Strand is the way that the various elements of the built environment work so well together; for example how well Cois Abainn is integrated into the village core area. The use of the Irish language on signage is required under present legislation and this should be encouraged where appropriate. On signage the Irish language must have the primary role.

Landscaping:

In landscaping terms Strand is a real delight and you continue to do really excellent work in this regard. The planting of beds, flower boxes, containers and hanging baskets was admired throughout the village area. New planting on the Newcastlewest approach road is welcomed. The flower beds in front of Castle View were visited and examined. While the beds are excellent the location at the base of trees detracts a little from the trees themselves. Work on the embankment in front of Riverdale House is commended.

Your adjudicator reminds the TidyTowns Committee that the cutting of roadside banks and ditches in the period 1st March to 30th August is not permitted under Section 40 of the Wildlife Act 1976, incorporating section 46 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. At the river area perhaps some of the tree stakes can be removed from larger trees. Leaving them in place too long can be damaging to the trees.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Bird boxes in various parts of the village were noted. Have you considered a wildlife survey of Strand? This should include fish, birds, mammals, insects, plants and butterflies. Perhaps the LEADER Partnership could assist in this? Following on from the survey the next logical step would be to provide some wildlife interpretation. In all your future planting to keep in mind the importance of native trees and shrubs that are so supportive of wildlife.

Litter Control:

The level of litter control last year was very high and your mark has been increased this year because of the high level of litter control noted during the adjudication visit. The way in which your litter bins are managed is commended.

Tidiness:

Weeding and the painting of gates have been your main activities under this category in the past year. The village was indeed quite tidy though the Cois Abainn area was not up to the overall high standard of Strand. Having said that this estate was not badly presented. Signage had obviously been cleaned recently. On the Newcastlewest approach the remains of the old wall on the left at the timber fencing should be removed or tidied up as a village feature. Fencing here needed to be treated. Across from Castle View two large damaged field gates needed to be replaced and the replacements painted.

Waste Minimisation:

The Carbon Footprint Survey was read with interest. However what is happening as a result of that to reduce the carbon footprint in Strand? This category is about waste minimisation and not waste management as implied from the entry form. The issue is about how the annual waste produced in Strand each year can be reduced. The Waste Minimisation Officer in the County Council should be helpful together with the TidyTowns Handbook.

Residential Areas:

The An Tigh Bothantaiochta caught the eye of this adjudication as an outstanding example of hand lettering and overall property presentation. In the core village area individual houses were presented with obvious care and attention. The estate in the village could be improved with some work on the green area but your search for funding for this project is acknowledged. At Castleview the rope and poles at the grass edge did not do justice to the houses here. At least the poles should be painted. Have you considered timber post and rail fencing here to match the excellent fencing on the road up to the estate? A road boundary wall opposite the Grotto needed to be painted.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Banks on approach roads should be trimmed at the right time of the year. However do make sure not to cut the banks too tightly as this will give an inappropriate or urban appearance out of keeping with Strand. However the three approaches apart from that created a good first impression of your beautiful village

General Impression:

It was a great pleasure for your adjudicator to visit Strand for the first time and it was a great discovery. The best of luck in the year ahead when we will look forward to returning to Strand.