

Tidy Towns Competition 2013

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Robertstown** Ref: **981**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **239**
Category: **B** Date(s): **19/06/2013**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2012 | Mark Awarded 2013 |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Overall Development Approach | 50 | 31 | 32 |
| The Built Environment | 50 | 30 | 31 |
| Landscaping | 50 | 32 | 34 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 50 | 18 | 20 |
| Litter Control | 50 | 31 | 32 |
| Sustainable Waste And Resource Management | 20 | 9 | 10 |
| Tidiness | 30 | 18 | 19 |
| Residential Areas | 40 | 27 | 28 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 50 | 25 | 26 |
| General Impression | 10 | 7 | 7 |
| TOTAL MARK | 400 | 228 | 239 |

Overall Development Approach:

Roberstown is welcomed to the 2013 Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your entry, your supporting photographs and helpful map. What a nice village on the canal with many splendid picnic areas, seating and places to admire.

Your committee of 8 together with the Junior Tidy Towns committee meet regularly also have a good working relationship with the local school, this is to be commended. Waterways Ireland, Kildare County Council, local business and the community are another great support to have in place. Your communication by local papers and text is a good way of getting the word to the community. Winning two awards in the competition last year was a great achievement, well done to your hard working committee. It is encouragement for the rest of the community and as you state in your entry it is bringing more tourists to the village.

The Built Environment:

The approach signs to this lovely village were admired and the Irish language on the sign was noted. The village has such a lovely natural setting with the canal. The hotel that was once a thriving business still looks quite good and the work on the windows and doors will add to the façade of the building. Mullaney's was also admired and again the use of the Irish language was noted. The national school was neat and tidy. The village pump looked well and had some pleasant landscaping. The picnic tables and seating at the canal were noted and admired. The thatch house across the canal with bright planting was seen as a real tourist attraction to this lovely picturesque village. The bins are a novel idea and come as a result of an art competition with the local school.

Landscaping:

The village has many nice areas of landscaping. The timber sleepers surrounding the beds were admired. It is good to see timber, stone and natural products used where possible. The pink garden was nicely landscaped with bright colours. Olive's way sign had an array of nice colourful flowers. The picnic area had lovely landscaping both seasonal and herbaceous plants. As you look across the canal the trees and hedging provide a pleasant backdrop. The Lady Kay a former canal working boat is still working as a planter for herbaceous and seasonal plants. It is good to see it placed on a gravel bed with stone surround. Your use of native trees around the village is noted and commended. Your planned projects for the village of hanging baskets using only native pollen bearers will be awaited. The schools Eco Garden is also another project that is interesting using recycled materials. The building of your poly tunnel will enable you to grow your own plants and reduce the committee's

costs.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Grand Canal is a natural source for wildlife. Your bird box using natural timber looked good. The willow dome project a natural art project organised by the junior Tidy Towns Committee and located at the school was admired. The walks along the canal are enjoyable and give the opportunity to take in the wildlife. The Wildlife Interpretation Boards on the northern bank of the canal supported by Waterways Ireland and Kildare County Council will be an excellent project. This will also include a nature trail which will be a great resource for your national school. It will encourage other schools to visit. This project once funded and up and running will be self sustaining. Some projects cost a lot of money to maintain, like you wildflower planting along the canal but once established will not require too much work. You are lucky to have Waterways Ireland as sponsors with Kildare County Council. These are a distinct advantage of being located on the canal.

Litter Control:

The litter bins are an inspiration in themselves to encourage children and adults to use them. Are these bins unique to Roberstown or has anyone copied your idea? Litter is ongoing and particularly when you have a lot of people visiting the area you can never get complacent. Well done on winning the gum litter awareness campaign award. The Tidy Towns are more concerned with old litter as there looks like there are no management plans in place for clean ups. Fresh litter is unfortunately a daily problem. Roberstown was almost litter free on day of adjudication, well done.

Sustainable Waste And Resource Management:

Waste minimisation has caused a lot of confusion for groups. Reducing is top of the pyramid. You have a good understanding of this area and are working with the school as part of their Green School Initiative. You are committed to reuse and recycle, try and climb another step and reduce. You mentioned food waste goes into a compost bin; this is an area where leftover foods could be reduced, but well done on the composting. Saving on resource management in the areas of water, transport and energy could be looked at, such as car sharing or cycling, reduces the cost of transport. Harvesting of rainwater saves on water and money. Look at the Tidy Town's handbook for further ways, carry out a survey on households to see what waste they are producing and work from the results. Any survey carried out send a copy with next year's entry. You are doing well so do keep moving up the pyramid a little.

Tidiness:

The village was generally tidy on the day of adjudication, no problem with traffic it flowed freely. Signage was good throughout the village. One area of concern was the road surface which was very uneven by the canal and also the road by the school. The white railing at the back of the seating area in the village centre needs painting. The recycling banks were neat and tidy.

Residential Areas:

The residents with your assistance have taken ownership of their own area. You are still there to support but it does help with your work plan if the residents maintain their own area and it is also good for the competition. Unfinished estates are common in all villages but you are addressing the problem by contacting the owners and local authority. The nameplates on estates are superb. All estates were indeed very good with nice landscaping. The houses through the village were all neat and colourful with window boxes and baskets. The thatched house across the canal was a real gem.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The bollards and chains were maintained to a high standard. The approach roads have well matured verges and nice nameplates. As stated previous the road surface particularly along the canal was uneven. The bridge looked well and work was being carried out on Binns Bridge repairing the wall. It is hoped that when the repairs are finished they will match the existing stonework on the bridge.

General Impression:

Roberstown is a lovely picturesque village. Continuing as you are you will do well in the competition. You are well focused as a committee and you also have good support from Kildare County Council and Waterways Ireland. You have good members on your committee. Thank you for participating in the competition and continued success.