

Tidy Towns Competition 2013

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Stradbally** Ref: **235**
County: **Waterford** Mark: **306**
Category: **B** Date(s): **03/07/2013**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2012	Mark Awarded 2013
Overall Development Approach	50	47	47
The Built Environment	50	39	40
Landscaping	50	41	41
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	35	35
Litter Control	50	38	38
Sustainable Waste And Resource Management	20	10	10
Tidiness	30	18	18
Residential Areas	40	28	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	38	39
General Impression	10	9	9
TOTAL MARK	400	303	306

Overall Development Approach:

Stradbally is welcomed to the SuperValu TidyTowns Competition 2013. Many thanks for your clear and concise submission comprising completed application form, Biodiversity Plan, 3 Year plan and Agenda 21 details. Ideally the 3 Year plan should be updated every year. It is great to see that your committee is expanding as initiatives come through. You are commended for your structured approach to tackling projects and in particular your engagement with the County Engineer to ensure guidance is optimised. It is great to see that your win in 2011 facilitated the purchase of a ride on mower – money well spent! Optimising local and national opportunities is key to sustainable development and your committee is quite adept in this regard. The creation of a facebook page will ensure that information can be accessed at all times and may be a way to encourage the younger generations to get involved. Clearly Garvey's SuperValu in Dungarvan, Credit Union, FAS and LEADER supports you well in your endeavours to name but a few. The children of Stradbally are an integral part of your efforts and their enthusiasm for daffodil bulb planting has been noted. Finally, congratulations on 30 years of TidyTowns in Stradbally – your experience is certainly shining through.

The Built Environment:

The Church and Our Lady of Mercy School were gleaming in the July sunshine. The mural at the school looks well, the playground was neatly trimmed and the Green Flag was blowing in the wind. Similarly, St. James School and stonewall surround were most attractive. Perhaps the inserts in the notice board could be refreshed prior to next year's competition as they are somewhat faded. The playground development is almost complete with metal railings in situ. The new shop front at Cunninghams is superb with freshly painted façade in blue and white. The Barron Hall and Whelans Bar were admired, as was the Cove Bar in red and white. The new seating area at Ballyvooney Cove is a wonderful amenity. This adjudicator suggests that some seasonal planters would lift the greyness of this area. The new Mill Wheel adds interest making a feature of even the tiniest corner.

Landscaping:

Stradbally has the most wonderful floral displays from the outset. The village sign boulder was accented by seasonal colour. The new landscaping at the school is tasteful and five trees add elevated interest here. The images provided in your application pack demonstrate that spring bulbs have also been planted for colour in the springtime. Half barrel's adorn the rectory wall. The Square is quite simply sublime with multi-coloured rose beds in full bloom. Even the water trough was planted out! The green at Viewmount was neatly trimmed but this area

would certainly benefit from permanent planting. The planting at the Stradbally More sign is most effective however damaged trees close by should be removed and replaced.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your community took ownership of Biodiversity planning in 2009 in association with the Heritage Council. Ongoing projects include otter and butterfly monitoring, Japanese knotweed control and Ballyvooney Cove. It would be great to see an updated Biodiversity plan for 2014 based on the 2009-2012 outlines. The Beach wildlife information board was observed at Stradbally Strand.

Litter Control:

Your committee and the community as a whole have a structured approach to litter control and it shows. Zero tolerance in the village is proving effective. The GAA volunteers are commended for their support during the An Taisce Spring Clean – hopefully this will be an annual event. The anti-dog fouling sign was noted at Stradbally Strand. Cigarette butts are a sizable issue on Stradbally Strand. A few pieces of litter were noted close to the playground even though it was not yet officially in operation.

Sustainable Waste And Resource Management:

This section of the competition has changed format this year and you are advised to refer to supporting literature in the information pack for future guidance. The success of your composting initiative is astounding with more than 40 households participating as well as the TidyTowns committee. Have any of your members trained as master composters yet? Other projects include collection of electrical goods, general recycling. The schools are commended for success to date in the Green Flag Programme. Well done to the students of St. James and their parents for the walk to school traffic management project. Please consider running workshops on topical issues perhaps in association with Waterford County Council to help sustain awareness.

Tidiness:

Weed control is good in Stradbally – please use weed killer as a last resort in kerbside management. The ball alley is a prominent structure in the village and it is great to see that algae growth is being controlled. You are commended on the gate-painting programme. Unfortunately there were evidence of fires on Stradbally Strand and this gives an untidy appearance.

Residential Areas:

Central villages residence are maintained to a very high standard in Stradbally and it is clear that there is pride of place. The terraced row with uniform fanlights looked fantastic with sporadic window boxes and hanging baskets adding interest and colour. The Cottage and garden opposite the Barron Hall was splendid. Further along the galvanised roof of a cottage would benefit from a fresh coat of paint. Marian Terrace presented a mixture in the quality of presentation. Whitehall, Viewmount, Comeragh and Rockville looked well. Cove Cottage is a real gem – I would love to live here! We anticipate progress of the thatched development of St. James and appreciate that this is outside your remit. General advice in this section of the competition is to pay attention to the presentation of boundary walls, gates and chimneystacks.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Verge management on the Dungarvan approach is superb from approximately 2km out. The new surfaces and markings at Our Lady of Mercy School are pristine. The roadway here though is quite uneven in places with a number of potholes evident. Similarly the route to St. James School is quite rough.

General Impression:

As I first time visitor to Stradbally, the built and natural beauty of the village and its environs overwhelms me. Your methodical approach to initiatives is paying dividends. Keep up the good work and I guarantee you I will be visiting again.