

Tidy Towns Competition 2014

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Milltown** Ref: **378**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **226**
Category: **A** Date(s): **24/06/2014**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014
Community Involvement & Planning	60	30
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	33
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	33
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	17
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	6
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	50
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	29
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	28
TOTAL MARK	450	226

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2014. We note that your last participation was in 2008 and hope you find this year's experience helpful and encouraging for continued participation in future years. We have noted that your committee of six people were also supported by 15 adults and 35 teenagers on your first clean-up in April and still had strong numbers in May. The links with Foroige and the GAA is assisting in this venture. You receive support from Kildare County Council and you avail of parish church newsletters for communications and place posters in a shop. Many thanks for attaching a sketch map of the area. We do encourage communities to aim for a 3 year plan because it is not possible to achieve everything in one year and it is good to aim for targets over a period of years.

Built Environment and Streetscape / An Timpeallacht Thógtha agus Sráid-dreacha:

Milltown is a very pleasant village that surprises with delight. Scoil Bhride is a fine complex with a very clean car park and a good display of window boxes and plant containers. We admired the wildflower garden on the Kilmeague Road side of the complex. David's Shop was very good but we noted that Milltown Inn was closed down; the sign for food should be removed. The church was entered through a very narrow gate. It and the adjoining cemetery looked well. Flowers planted on both sides of the pathway. Houses opposite the old school had great window boxes. Windows were boarded up and painted on a derelict house on the Kilmeague Road. The stone well on the Kildare Road was nicely restored. The bridge over the canal looked well. The Hangman's Pub achievement sign for "Pub of the Year" 2003 was dirty. Milltown GFC had a fine complex of clubhouse and grounds. The strong laurel hedge on one side and the hawthorn on the other side were noted.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The main structural elements in the landscape are trees and you have many examples of trees in and around Milltown. In planting new trees it is best to use a single species on a road or street for uniformity and in a rural setting such as Milltown it is preferable to use native or naturalized species such as Ash, Birch, Rowan or Maple rather than exotic trees like flowering cherries which do not harmonise with your locality and provide little support for wildlife. In that regard, we suggest that the young flowering cherry trees in the grounds of the car park at the Hangman's Pub be replaced. These are also the trees growing along the school boundary; they are short lived so we advise that when they are being replaced to use a different species as mentioned above. Very good maple trees in the school grounds on Kilmeague Road. Also, it is important to ensure that the base of new trees is maintained free of weeds and grass and also flower beds to ensure early establishment. When trees are established it is important to remove the stakes as the stems can get damaged from the ties or stake. Guideline for plant containers is to use them only where planting directly into the ground is not possible. The use of permanent planting is

encouraged rather than relying on annuals which are more time consuming.

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fiadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádurtha:

You have a rich natural area surrounding your community and it is important to promote an awareness of its many traits and to map these habitats. The canal and its environs were looking well and there was no litter to be seen. We admired the wildflowers at a derelict house on the Kilmeague Road and in the school grounds. Appreciating your local wildlife resources is vital in order to achieve under this category. In this regard researching and raising awareness is more important than 'doing' at the early stages. Biodiversity is under threat globally and sadly Ireland is a part of this trend. Habitats of value include specimen trees, hedgerows, treelines, streams, woodlands and wetlands. List the plants and animals to be found in your natural environment and recognise their significance (native, protected, or alien invasive?). This would be a very useful project for schools.

Sustainable Waste and Resource Management / Bainistiú Acmhainní agus Dramhaíola Inbhuanaithe:

This category is becoming more and more important and the available marks are now increased to 50 to highlight the need for communities to address the issues involved in tackling the growing waste mountain that is creating problems of pollution, unwanted land use, and the use of dwindling resources. We note that your actions under this heading comprise a major clean-up with collected material brought to Kildare Council dump which we assume is a landfill. Other communities actually segregate such material for recycling and reduce the volume that goes to landfill so perhaps that is something you could consider for the future. There are a number of other measures that your community can take in regard to sustainability. Contact your waste contractors and try to find out what is being thrown away and armed with this information you can start to think about how waste can be reduced. Examine the waste pyramid and note the recycling is only the fourth most preferred option after avoidance, reducing and re-using. One third of our waste is organic in nature, such as grass clippings. You can avoid collecting mown grass by more frequent cutting and using mulching mowers which shred the clippings and facilitate faster decomposition. In regard to water usage, self-watering hanging baskets are a help in reducing the amount of water used and also the task of watering. Other waste minimisation projects might include working with retailers to cut down on packaging, reminding people to re-use shopping bags, discouraging junk mail, encouraging the re-use of water bottles and coffee mugs at school and at work. In response to an over use of chemicals for weed control, many useful products of the past are no longer available and therefore communities are encouraged to use other means such as hoeing to maintain weeds. In some cases, allowing wildflowers to develop is an acceptable alternative. These activities will highlight the fact that you are focussing on this category and when you develop more projects in the future your marks will increase.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Milltown is a very tidy village and you are making valiant attempts to remove untidiness and control litter. Some items noted were a rusty shed and gates on Kilmeague Road and a derelict building opposite the pub. You have made efforts to reduce the impact of other vacant premises. Clothes recycling area in the GFC grounds was tidy and we saw a small amount of litter at the school

Residential Streets & Housing Areas / Sráideanna Cónaithe & Ceantair Tithíochta:

Residents in Milltown show respect for their property and even for some other buildings as well. Fen View Heights had a dead tree at the entrance. Little flower beds with stone surrounds looked well here and the grass was well maintained. The houses were fine and some gardens had hedges. Mill View Estate with well-maintained houses is a proven winner in Tidy Estates Competition. We admired the flowers on top of the stone wall and plaque and in hanging baskets on buildings behind. The grass was well maintained and the plant containers (on grass) also looked well. Many of the trees were fine specimens. We also noted the poly tunnel which it is assumed is used for growing the many flowers.

Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes / Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna & Lánaí:

Lush vegetation provides a nice green entrance to the village. On the approach from Kildare at Wheelan Cross, the village sign needs replacing. Further on, the 50kph poles need repainting. The sign for the ramp on the Kilmeague Road needs to be straightened.