

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Strokestown**

Ref: **385**

County: **Roscommon**

Mark: **176**

Category: **B**

Date: **11/06/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	26	26
The Built Environment	40	23	23
Landscaping	40	26	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15	14
Litter Control	40	24	24
Tidiness	20	11	11
Residential Areas	30	20	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	24	21
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	176	171

Overall Developmental Approach:

Strokestown is welcome to the 2003 Tidy Towns Competition. You did not include a planned work programme with your submission, it is difficult to progress in the competition without such a plan, so do try to have one prepared for next year. We note your fund raising activities and your partnership approach to the development of your town with agencies such as FAS and the community employment scheme. Well done on your initiative circulating the business community for help also. The village has many fine assets and Strokestown Park and House is perhaps the most important of these. Your heritage trail and activities such as the poetry competition and hill walks to nearby Sliabh Ban celebrate the towns cultural heritage together with other festivals.

The Built Environment:

Strokestown's stock of buildings is a successful mix of architectural styles. There are certainly some fine traditional features which of course should be retained, particularly in the case of buildings that are awaiting refurbishment. Perhaps these features could also be drawn upon for inspiration in the design of the new buildings. Many properties were in need of attention, ranging from simple painting to total refurbishment. It was surprising to see so many out dated plastic neon beer signs in the town centre. Encourage property owners to pay attention to their chimney stacks and gutters also as in some cases these featured copious weed growth. The school on the 'Elphin' end of the town had been freshly painted and looked well as did the barracks. The Church of the Immaculate Conception is an important building in the street scape as it fronts directly onto the street. It could have been

presented better, its gutters were weedy, its immediate curtilage area was littered and the old bin here looked tatty. As the church is such an important visual element of the streetscape it should be highlighted as such.

Landscaping:

The town boasts a great variety of trees at several different stages of maturation and the tree lined Tusk Street together with the street leading to Strokestown Park and House is quite magnificent. It is not necessary to feature flower displays under trees as the latter make a strong statement on their own and in too many instances there were more weeds than flowers. Perhaps the main road coming in from Longford could be tree lined also as footpaths here are wide enough, this might be considered when these footpaths are being refurbished. Well done on landscaping around the town.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your hill walks to Sliabh Ban are a grand achievement, well done. We note with interest that signs and a booklet are being prepared. Do send in a copy of the booklet for next years competition and perhaps you might consider having an information panel erected in the town centre regarding details of these walks.

Litter Control:

Litter control was quite good in Strokestown on the day of adjudication but not great, there was a light scattering of litter throughout the town. The biggest eyesore in this respect was the curtilage area of the Walsh Mushrooms premises. The litter here was appalling and the litter looked as though it might have been there for some time. Well done on the awareness programme that you have started in the schools. Perhaps the business community could take a leaf out of the school children's book.

Tidiness:

A number of sites are underdeveloped and may be earmarked for development in the near future. No doubt these will make a significant contribution to the townscape and their streetscapes of completion of work. Do try to ensure that all building materials are removed when building work has ceased. The environs of the bottle bank was quite tidy during our visit.

Residential Areas:

A number of new developments were noted at different areas around the town, the most notable of these being on the Tusk road and on the Elphin road. These appear to be finished to a high standard and should make an important contribution to the life of the town and of course its appearance. We note with interest the new group formed in Killdalogue Heights and would be interested in their activities. Older town houses looked well for the most part. Of course some were in need of cleaning and / or painting and boundary walls to others could have been better presented.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Street furniture tended to look a little neglected. Some of your new lamp standards are already in need of re painting as indeed are some road signs. Many litter bins could receive attention also and some of them need total refurbishment or replacement. There are far too many signs at the Drumsna junction on the Elphin road. These should be reduced in number and accommodated on one post. The street scapes throughout the town are enhanced by the absence of wirescape and the presence of attractive lamp standards, this is a grand achievement. Handsome curb stones were noted along the main street. Take care that these are retained upon the refurbishment of the

footpaths here, as done along one section of the Tulsk road. Approach roads to the town were overgrown but not seriously so and name plates looked well.

General Impression:

Strokestown has the potential to be a top class performer in the Tidy Towns Competition as it has all the necessary ingredients. However its overall presentation needs to be to a higher standard.