

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Strokestown** Ref: **715**
County: **Roscommon** Mark: **206**
Category: **B** Date(s): **12/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	30
The Built Environment	50	27
Landscaping	50	27
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	16
Litter Control	50	22
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	29
General Impression	10	6
TOTAL MARK	400	206

Overall Development Approach:

Your adjudication would like to welcome Strokestown to the 2009 TidyTowns Competition. It was a pleasure to visit this town that has done so much to enlighten our knowledge and understanding of Famine times in Ireland. Your committee of up to ten people appears to be quite active with monthly meetings and meetings with the County Council. It was noted that you are not involved with any other agencies except the County Council. Have you spoken to LEADER? From the entry form the adjudicator got the impression that the Committee did not have a detailed work programme of their own and indeed no 3 Year TidyTowns Plan was submitted. It is recommended that you examine the possibilities of having such a Plan prepared for 2010. Your School contacts are valuable.

The Built Environment:

You are in touch with the County Council in regard to the derelict sites and buildings. Do make sure to follow up regularly with them to make sure that progress is being made on these issues. If necessary they have powers under The Derelict Sites Act. It was good to see that the Community Centre is being refurbished. Strokestown House is an architectural gem that is so important historically. It is suggested that the main gates be repainted matt black. The yellow Football Club building still awaits repainting while the stone frontage to the Percy French Hotel was admired. Among the buildings that were admired included the red brick Bank of Ireland with the stone detailing at the corners. The Church has found an excellent new use and the Heritage & Genealogy Centre seemed busy on the day of the visit to Strokestown. At the Primary School the paintwork on the road boundary wall needed to be touched up and the long stone wall here echoes so many other fine walls in and around the town. Some additional landscaping in the area inside the School gate might be considered. The Health Centre again this year caught the eye with the colourful displays while the new HSE building is impressive. Around Strokestown the various historic plaques were examined with great interest and this is a great way of keeping important aspects of your history alive for future generations to understand.

The Credit Union building looked crisp and in its blue and white colour scheme while the double storey porch to the building beside Bawn Lodge is unusual.

Landscaping:

Your entry documentation identified two triangular areas which the County Council was to look after. At the Longford approach the area here had been partially cleaned out and the low wall here is damaged. The area looked quite unfinished. On the Tusk Road the triangular area there was quite poorly presentation. The area was very rough and the cut grass had not been taken away. The long grass was climbing up the poles that support the chains. This raised area could be most impressive giving regular maintenance and attention. Hanging baskets and window boxes were noted at a number of properties adding a welcome splash of summer colour. Good landscaping was noted at Westward on the Longford approach.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your plans for a Duck Sanctuary are interesting and the adjudicator examined the river. It is quite deep and hopefully the Ducks when they arrive will stay here and not fly away! It might be useful to get advise on this. A small abandoned Park area was noted on the Longford approach and this has the Percy French Memorial and the Grotto. What a depressing area – the old pathways have become overgrown, a wall is damaged and dumping is taking place and there appears to be the remains of some old seating.

Litter Control:

What is the Saturday Morning Project? You mentioned this in your entry documentation but did not give details. Therefore regrettably additional marks in respect of this project cannot be considered. It is great to see that the School children are involved in litter collection and recycling. What are they doing in respect of recycling? Litter was noted at the Bring Centre. The wall to the left of the centre needed to be repaired and repainted. Once again this year litter control was quite good in Strokestown. However some littering was noted near the entrance to Strokestown House.

Waste Minimisation:

Congratulations on your involvement in the Green Homes Programme. You do not appear to have been involved in any other projects that come under this category which is about reducing the quantity of waste generated in Strokestown. Why not talk with local businesses about this issue and see what waste minimisation measures if any they are taking?

Tidiness:

Beside the new commercial unit on the Longford an abandoned framework for a road sign needed attention. This is a matter for the County Council. Do watch out for weed growth at the base of road boundary walls and at occasional roadside kerbing. Generally Strokestown was quite tidy

Residential Areas:

Improvements were noted to the housing on Boreen Road. Extremely good hard and soft landscaping was examined at Caslin Way. The left hand road verge here however needed to be cut. At the gates small state off Elphin Street the gates would be improved if repainted matt black. Superb landscaping highly impressed at Kildallogge Heights. This is a well designed estate and the sense of open space is great. Two attractively presented private houses were noted at the entrance to Hanley's DIY on Bawn Street. The colour scheme here is perfect. Generally private houses were attractively presented.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

On the Longford approach road no Strokestown sign was noted. On the Four Mile House approach verges were quite long and the town sign partially obscured by growth. Church Street was much admired – a fine wide street of great character leading across the roundabout into Bawn Street and to what in previous centuries would have been the different world of Strokestown House. At the other end of Church Street the old Church spire beckons. A damaged stone wall on the Finlough road needed attention. Roadside banks along here were uncut. On the Elphin Road the Strokestown was half buried in long growth. In summary the approach roads needed some additional work though some good verge areas were noted.

General Impression:

Strokestown is a town of character that has great potential to do well in Tidy Towns. Do try and approach your work in a planned basis. Good luck with your work for 2010 and continue to build further a working partnership with the County Council.

