

# Tidy Towns Competition 2011

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Strokestown** Ref: **715**  
County: **Roscommon** Mark: **218**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **12/06/2011**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2010</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2011</b>
Overall Development Approach	50	30	30
The Built Environment	50	27	29
Landscaping	50	27	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	18	18
Litter Control	50	25	26
Waste Minimisation	20	11	11
Tidiness	30	16	16
Residential Areas	40	24	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	29	29
General Impression	10	6	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>218</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

Strokestown is welcome to the 2011 National TidyTowns Competition. Thank you for your submission, the map included was helpful for adjudication. The absence of a planned work programme is noted, you are strongly encouraged to submit one with each year's application in the Competition as it is difficult to make substantial progress without one. Ten is a healthy number of members on a committee for a town the size of Strokestown and it is good to note that there is a small improvement in interest and support in the TidyTowns meetings. You are doing all the right things by your partnership approach with Roscommon County Council and the school. The variety of media used to communicate TidyTowns news is good. Your interpretive panel and your Sli na Slainte trail is noted, well done.

### The Built Environment:

The community services buildings and grounds located beyond Caslin Way are attractively presented and include the Fire Station and the Community Care HSE. The old health centre premises could be improved and the Garda Station looks quiet well. The majority of business premises in Strokestown are reasonably well presented, however there are still a few displaying plastic neon sign/beer signs which by now are quite dated and their respective premises would look much better with them removed altogether or replaced with more appropriate ones. Some thought might be given to organising a local window display competition as many nicely presented shops are spoiled to a certain extent in their presentation by the indiscriminate placing of posters in windows. Well done on projects completed for this year's competition and good luck with those planned for the future.

### Landscaping:

The island on the Tusk Road is attractively presented however its enclosing chain link fence could be

improved, it needs to be both painted and straightened in parts. Landscaping to the roadside of Pairc O'Seibhlinn was admired and indeed flower displays throughout Strokestown were admired also. The base of a number of trees were in need of weeding and removal of long grass. In future planting be mindful of the need to plant for seasonal interest and don't become over-reliant on summer bedding plants. Also where possible choose species that will support a diversity of wildlife habitats.

#### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The Woodlands Walk in Strokestown House and Park is a wonderful natural amenity for the community of the town, is there TidyTowns involvement in its management at any level? The small park at the bridge on Bridge Street was admired. Your plan for the installation of nesting boxes in suitable areas is noted, we wish you every success in this endeavour. Keep in mind that bird nesting boxes should be kept supplied with food and water throughout the year as the birds become reliant upon them, at this time of year a variety of seeds is the appropriate type of food. Ideally, and indeed ultimately, for success under this category in the competition a habitat survey of Strokestown and its immediate environs should be undertaken to identify existing wildlife and take the necessary steps to both protect it and heighten awareness of its existence throughout the community.

#### **Litter Control:**

Regular litter picking patrols in Strokestown are noted and we wish you success in securing signage to promote anti-litter awareness, particularly for approach roads. The overall standard of litter control was quite good in Strokestown on adjudication day, however an overflowing bin beside the Bank of Ireland premises on Church Street was contributing to the litter problem here. A number of litter bins were quite gaudy in appearance and some thought might be given to acquiring attractive new bins. At some stage it will be necessary to formulate a litter management plan and an important element of this must be a litter analysis to establish the source, type and frequency of litter with a view to preventing it at source.

#### **Waste Minimisation:**

Well done to the students of both St. Mary's National School and the students of the school on Elphin Street; Green Flags were noted at both schools and the students are no doubt proud of themselves. Strokestown's recycling point was neatly presented. An over emphasis on recycling to the detriment of waste prevention should be avoided, a community waste audit should be undertaken to involve all sectors of the community, business interests, residents, schools, etc. to establish the amount and type of waste produced and to explore ways of preventing it at source. Other waste minimisation initiatives might include a communal composting site, water harvesting, wormries and more.

#### **Tidiness:**

Derelict buildings are the main problem under this category and no doubt the committee is both aware of this and is actively engaged with representations to Roscommon County Council and property owners. Where the committee are talking directly to property owners try to impress upon them the importance of having traditional features retained upon refurbishment where possible. The curtilage area of Walsh Mushroom premises looked very bad on the day of adjudication and too many signs at the junction of Kilmore and Elphin Streets gave an untidy appearance here also, some stretches of weedy footpath had the same effect. It was a pleasure to note the wirescape-free aspect of Strokestown.

#### **Residential Areas:**

The planted green open space at the residential development on Elphin Street near the junction with Kilmore Road was especially admired as was landscaping at The Maples and the island on the Tusk Road has already been noted. French Court is a charming small development with a lovely aspect, however weather stained walls here mark the entrance together with some stretches of weedy footpath. To make serious progress under this heading in the competition it is necessary to get Strokestown's residents to take responsibility not only for their own properties, including their roadside boundary walls, but also for the areas immediately outside of these and of course for communal green space. The Lios na Ree development together with the Killdalogue Heights are commended for flower and shrub displays in their communal areas.

#### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Street furniture is nicely presented and lampstandards throughout Strokestown were admired. Car parking is orderly and road and footpath surfaces are quite good. However, as noted above, weed growth along some kerbs was allowed to flourish. A few gaudy looking litter bins might be replaced with more attractive ones. The bridge is being nicely maintained and approach roads and nameplates looked well also.

#### **General Impression:**

Strokestown enjoys a good standard of maintenance and overall presentation, the adjudicator now feels that it is time for the town to move onto the next level in the competition and the committee may have to rethink their

strategy. This of course will require the formulation of a three year plan. Thank you for your continued participation, the adjudicator looks forward to repeat visits and to charting your progress.