

# Tidy Towns Competition 2017

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Millstreet** Ref: **480**  
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **314**  
Category: **C** Date(s): **13/06/2017**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2016</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2017</b>
Community Involvement & Planning	60	44	45
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	41	42
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	43	44
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	33	33
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	15	16
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	65	66
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	34	34
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>314</b>

### **Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:**

This adjudicator welcomes Millstreet to the 2017 Tidy Towns competition. Your long association with the competition is acknowledged and evident in your comprehensive and well put-together application. The map was a great guide - just a point to note for future submissions would be to clarify which numbers the map number scheme refers to (we started out thinking they referred to the numbers of your projects listed in your Entry Form), however, the differently coloured and shaped stickers is a great key system for the map. It is easy to see that Tidy Towns is at the heart of the Millstreet community with your impressive list of other community groups, local businesses and agencies who support you. With 18 active committee members and 25 more volunteers, the volunteer spirit is clearly thriving in Millstreet and long may it last. Also the strong involvement of 20 asylum seekers from the Drishane Community is very heartening to see – it is an expression of the very best of the Tidy Towns spirit fostering a sense of well-being and belonging for those in our local community who can be experiencing loneliness and isolation.

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

The streetscapes of Millstreet are very attractive, making the most of the beautiful backdrop of Claragh Mountain. The Town Square is a great success with its well organised parking and the clever build-outs. The Hornbeam trees give a lovely structure as well as the relief of green foliage in the urban landscape. The new pedestrian crossing at St Patrick's Church was working well during our visit, the church is a beautiful building and immaculately looked after. Its stained glass windows took our breath away and should be a must-see for any Millstreet visitor. Your planned history panels for here will really add to the visitor's experience. The painted cottages on Church St looked well. Millstreet has some lovely details in her Main St buildings and these too could feature in Heritage Trails of the town – sometimes just looking up will reveal the beauty – we loved the shamrock arches over the upper windows of Tangney's.

### **Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:**

St Anna's graveyard is a wonderful oasis in the middle of the town. The bright orange of the Marigolds growing through the gravel and the red of the benches made beautiful contrasts with the grey of the stonework. This area could be a great biodiversity oasis too if the grass was managed as a wildflower meadow - just mow it first in July and then again in September, the only seed needed would be some Yellow rattle to subdue the grasses – less work in the long run for your grass cutters and more colour and biodiversity for all to enjoy. The informative sign on the upright in the graveyard was very hard to read due to algal growth on the panel. The Town Park is a great amenity and we saw the three patches/islands of wildflowers – these made such an impact that maybe you might consider extending them into winding 'rivers' of wildflowers around the Park edges – again less work and petrol costs for your

grass cutters! The tree-lined avenue in the Drishane Estate is a beautiful feature to the right as you drive in the Mallow Road, however, the bases of the trees had been needlessly sprayed with herbicide. The new flower boxes were noted all around the town looking very well.

### **Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fiadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádúrtha:**

It is great to see that you are working to a three year Biodiversity Action Plan. Millstreet clearly has a wealth of wildlife habitats and increased knowledge and therefore enjoyment of them can only enhance the lives of all in the town. The involvement of the local schools is great – ensuring a good future for Millstreet's biodiversity. In addition to your BAP there's excellent guidance to be had in the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan – in particular the Local Community version should be most helpful for Tidy Towns with the Junior version for schools (free copies downloadable at [www.biodiversityireland.ie](http://www.biodiversityireland.ie)). The plans for a Pollinator Park at the old petrol station on the Mallow Road are a great idea, although there was no planting on the adjudication day, there is great potential for it to be a wildlife haven. Remember to use lots of flowering perennials and small shrubs for a long-lasting and more cost effective strategy. A wealth of wildflowers was noted in the graveyard beside St. Patrick's Church - a real pollinator haven in the middle of town. The Wildlife Area on the Clara Road was visited - bands of dead vegetation at lawn edges and around shrubs (after herbicide use) was disappointing in this area that's meant to be wildlife-friendly! Maybe it might make a good spot for a schools pollinator project of the future?

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

The Recycling Centre is a great community resource and you certainly seem to be making the most of it. The three GIY projects are very positive – there must be great vegetable eating going on in Millstreet! The water butts and rain water harvesting tanks is a great initiative and it is good to see you are availing of the guidance offered now to Tidy Towns groups through the Local Community water Officers.

### **Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:**

Millstreet was beautifully tidy and litter free throughout during our visit – all the hard efforts of the Millstreet Tidy Towns volunteers down through the years have resulted in a beautifully presented town where pride in the local place is obvious. The great community involvement by various different groups such as Transition Year students and Drishane direct provision residents is clear to see through Millstreet's clean and tidy environs. The Best Frontage Awards is a great scheme and is clearly having a good response. We were very taken with the newly refurbished 'Old Creamery' building on the Mallow Road. Both Bank buildings have been sensitively maintained and the Credit Union looked very well with particularly nice window boxes. The Doggie bins were noted at the three different locations – all well placed for local dog-walkers and they are clearly working well.

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

The Steering Committee for the different housing estates is a good way to keep everybody on board and on track which can be hard when dealing with a large area. We drove into all the estates around the town and it is clear that all are well looked after. The residential streets around Millstreet featured well-painted houses with lots of colour and plenty of planted baskets and pots. We loved the idea behind the Old Millrace project and the area was looking very well. Unfortunately there's only a few white stones left now to represent the water – what about planting the area with something like Candytuft (*Iberis sempervirens*) that has pure white flowers with a long flowering time and is a hardy perennial only needing planting once (and pollinators love it!).

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

The laneways of Millstreet are a great heritage feature of the town pointing towards its long history. Tom Cat and Jerry the Mouse were spotted in the windows of some well-painted empty houses! The roadside picnic area on the Mallow Road is beautifully maintained and the use of different colours to paint the street furniture is very cheering as you drive in to Millstreet. The bed of roses at the Killarney Road junction was in full bloom for our visit making a lovely welcome into that side of the town. Some of the trees on the West End of Main St are looking unhealthy and may need replacing – it's likely that their roots aren't getting enough water and air as the paving has come very close to the tree trunks.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

The beautiful presentation of Millstreet by the wonderful voluntary efforts of her residents compliments the town's beautifully picturesque situation. Keep up your great work, it is of such benefit to both residents and visitors alike.