

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: Milltown - Baile an Mhuilinn	Ref: 868
County: Kerry	Mark: 259
Category: D	Date(s): 23/06/2019

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	42
Streetscape & Public Places	60	37
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	38
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	27
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	8
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	52
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	25
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	30
TOTAL MARK	470	259

Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Milltown Baile an Mhuilinn páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019.

Welcome back to the competition after a period of six years. With a committee of 5 members and another 10-15 volunteers there is great support for your activities in the community. Meetings are held with the Chamber of Commerce Alliance and the local primary school and scouts are involved. You receive support from Kerry County Council and the Rural Social Scheme. We suggest you contact LEADER for more support. Social media via Facebook are your means of communication. The polytunnel for the school, site will be a valuable resource for education and for flowers to plant in Milltown.

Many thanks for attaching a map of the area but we advise that you can do much better for next year by taking one from the internet or seeking assistance from Kerry County Council. It is important to mark project locations and landmarks because the adjudicator (like this one) is most likely not familiar with your town. We 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.

Streetscape & Public Places / Sráid-Dreach & Áiteanna Poiblí:

The Nagle Rice Primary school is a large modern building on a spacious site with plenty of sports facilities surrounded by tall fencing between the school and the road. Visually, these fences, even though being green in colour are not attractive and therefore, it is a pity that the facilities were not provided at the back of the school where they would be less conspicuous. The tall trees on the roadside margin help to soften their appearance, but the best solution would be to plant hedges or ivy against the fence which in a few years would soften their appearance. The low stone wall and railing on the boundary looks fine. Scoil Maria Assumpta National School which was built in 1960 is a low rise building with a combination of dashed wall surfaces and stone facing at the building entrance and also a recess from the footpath. This large site would benefit from more tree planting especially inside the front boundary wall to soften the hard impact of the building and grounds and be used by the children for nature studies.

Mean Scoil Toirbhirte, the Presentation Secondary School is a large building on a spacious site opposite the Sacred Heart Church. We noticed the Green Flag flying so well done to teachers and students on that achievement. The R.C. Church is a fine limestone building with an elegant bell tower and is enclosed with a plinth limestone wall and railings. The monastery is a large stone and brick building beside the church that looks very well. The older church of Ireland is enclosed by a high limestone wall. There is a large sycamore tree in the grounds and a need to control the growth of ivy before it takes over the tree. We were pleased to see elm trees on the boundary leaning

into the adjacent car park. The grounds are well-maintained, but we suggest that less use of weed killer on the pathway edge would look much better visually. Top station and Londis was clean and we noted planting in the front. The Shop and Post Office has a good car park. Denny's and Spar were well painted. On Spout Lane, Backstreet stone cottages and roses look very well and the paving here is fine. In Bridge Street there is a mixture of facades some painted and some stone-faced. Some weeds in gutters here need attention. Milltown Community Hall looks well and is surrounded by good quality trees. This street has fine lime trees in the footpaths. The little pavilion is nicely painted in red on the ground floor, and Larkin's Bakery has a lovely stone façade with brick surrounds on the corners and windows a nice sign. Weeds on the chimney need attention. The playground at Nagel Rice community centre is very good. An existing tree is threatened with ivy. There is an old buildings partly in ruins on Church Street. Naiolann Solais is a nice building and play area and we liked the established birch trees growing inside the boundary wall. Ashborough lodge Nursing Home looks very well.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Trees are the main structural elements in the landscape, and you have many good examples in Milltown, but we stress the need to continue planting for future generations to enjoy. Some guidelines to consider are in planting new trees it is best to use a single species on a road or street for uniformity such as you have done with the birch trees beside the Community Centre. Also, it is important to ensure that the base of new trees is maintained free of weeds, grass and 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. This is a problem in Steeple Meadows residential estate. It is great to see trees planted at the Square, but the inclusion of specimens with purple foliage from a design viewpoint is not recommended. Much greater use can be made of climbing plants such as ivy to soften the hard appearance of concrete walls. Those planted against the boundary wall of the GAA grounds will in time make impact.

Guideline for plant containers is to use them only where planting directly into the ground is not possible; they should not in themselves attract any notice. It is better to have fewer well planted containers than a large number in which the quality of plants is inferior. Empty or poorly planted containers are less effective than no plant container at all. If considering more seasonal flowers the use of permanent planting including herbaceous perennials for floral displays is encouraged rather than relying on annuals which are more time consuming.

Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality / An Dúlra agus an Bhithéagsúlacht i do cheantar:

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. Appreciating your local wildlife resources is vital in order to achieve under this category. We noted the Dolmen structure on the roundabout on the Killorglin Road and wish you well with that venture. Hopefully, there will be more wildflowers growing there for next year's adjudication. Habitats of value include specimen trees, hedgerows, treelines, streams, woodlands and wetlands. Try to list the plants and animals to be found there and recognise their significance (native, protected, or alien invasive?). This information can be fun to gather and can involve the schools or other interested parties. Raise awareness through holding events such as hedgerow walks or bat walks. Contact the Irish Wildlife Trust for more information.

Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:

This category is about tackling the growing waste mountain that is creating problems of pollution, unwanted land use, and the use of dwindling resources. It is a global and a local problem. To save the Earth we need to move quickly to a zero-waste society. Your town can play its part by first looking at the volume of waste that is generated. The emphasis here really needs to be on reducing the volume of waste produced rather than recycling (which is taken for granted). The adjudicator wants to see innovation in tackling bigger issues of food waste, plastic disposal and energy use. What are homes and businesses doing to tackle these?

There are several measures that your town 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.
- Regarding water usage, self-watering containers are a help in reducing the amount of water used and also the task of watering.
- Working with retailers to cut down on packaging, reminding people to re-use shopping bags, encouraging the re-use of water bottles and coffee mugs at school and at work.
- In response to an overuse 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. For more helpful tips and case studies from other Tidy Towns entrants please take a look at <http://localprevention.ie/tidy-towns/>

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Well done on litter management as our visit was during the music festival and there was no evidence of litter associated with that event. In general, we found Milltown reasonably clean and tidy. Some posters on poles near the

R.C. Church need removal as does an advert and on a bin. Overhead wires are a problem for you, so we advise contacting Kerry County Council with a view to having these placed underground when an opportunity arises at some future date. There was some untidiness near the mart area.

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

In Orchard View estate, the two-storey houses looked very well, and the open space is well planted with trees. Staple Meadow estate has an attractive sandstone wall at the entrance. There are well planted areas, but some trees are in difficulty. The supporting stakes need attention. Monastery Gardens estate has nice Birch trees and Hypericum shrubs with strong displays of yellow flowers. Kilcolman is an older estate with more mature trees on the open space. Near the entrance we admired the evergreen oak tree.

An Tuairin Lin has single story cottage style houses and looks well. Kerbside weeds need attention and tree replacements are recommended for this coming winter.

Ard na Greine estate was admired; there are young trees here; there is great scope for planting more trees on the open spaces.

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

On the Killarney Road approach, there is a variety of bungalow styles all looking well with some gardens landscaped. Mangan's garage was neatly arranged. The 50 kph sign needed cleaning. On the Tralee Road the unmown grass looks well but you could just cut the very edge. Flowerbed needs weeding. Outside the GAA grounds there is an elaborate raised feature with the letters Milltown St Nicolas written in flowers. This feature may have seemed a great idea when it was done some years ago, but at this stage it serves little purpose, especially since the flowers are making very little impact and the over use of weed killer around its base looks unsightly. The angle is also not sufficient to be able to read it. We suggest you reconsider this feature as it makes more negative than positive impact. The ivy growing on the concrete wall of the GAA grounds will in time provide some greening. A look inside the grounds revealed an untidy car park.

Concluding Remarks:

It was our first time to visit Milltown. Well done on getting involved again in the competition. We hope this report provides some guidance for your future projects and especially next year's application.