

# Tidy Towns Competition 2019

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Strokestown - Béal na mBuillí** Ref: **715**  
County: **Roscommon** Mark: **273**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **03/07/2019**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2018</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2019</b>
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	36	36
Streetscape & Public Places	60	37	38
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	34	35
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	27	28
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	17	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	50	51
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	33	33
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>273</b>

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

Cuireann an moltoir seo faille roimh Strokestown (Beal na mBuillí) chuig Comortas na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu 2019.

Thank you for your hand written entry form, map, and copy of three year plan which is now in its final year, other ancillary support material and a most impressive one page succinct document on bio diversity from the St Patricks Boys National School.

The entry form obviously was filled in by two people- handwriting the give away –and the adjudicator had a little difficulty deciphering the main body of the submission because of style of writing.

A small complaint but legitimate one also, it would be better if it was done online or in a word document under all the headings.

One notes that your committee is small enough but that you have 10 volunteers to call on.

The map was iffy enough and it did not identify the Churches and the extensive Leisure Facilities and GAA Grounds all of which were identified by a “recent local” originally from Templeogue who gave a glowing overview of your town.

How good is that and many thanks to that articulate younger man and his daughter.

You have good links to Roscommon County Council and with the Strokestown Town Team who seem to be the main driver of economic activity in the town.

Involvement with the schools is well documented and example of this of course is the aforementioned the document produced from the Boys National School.

30 years is a long association with the competition and you are to be lauded for this.

Well done on taking the right approach to collaboration with like minded groups in the, this is the best way to get things done in any community.

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

Well done on taking the cooperative role with the Town Team in the proposed project that will hopefully have create a positive transformation in parts of the town.

Like any similar sized town Strokestown has a number of unoccupied premises some in a very poor condition.

The committee is aware of these and there is no point in harping on about the matter except to say that your proposed painting and camouflaging initiative will for all intents and purposes totally revitalise parts of the town.

A coat of paint expertly applied is a transformer and money well spent.

One assumes that you have been n touch with owners of these properties to get permission

The following are a number of observations the adjudicator made on his walkabout.

Public feature in the core area of the town nicely presented with excellent seating and cobble lock area cordoned by

newly placed bollards and lovely light stanchion  
Hanley's Bar with its Guinness mural on the wall and lovely combination of paint colours deserve mention.  
Roscommon Credit Union with nice colour blend, Pat McHugh's Bar simple sign but well presented on the day.  
Donal's Hardware is of older vintage but still looked good on the day in question.  
J Beirne Grocery and Bar with old petrol pump in front was a throwback to a different era.  
Both the Bank of Ireland with its impressive frontage probably dates back to the early 1900s or further back and the Percy French Hotel were in good condition.  
Brogans Tractor Sales large industrial type building on the outskirts of the town well managed and McDonnells is an example of a well run pharmacy.  
The leisure and community facilities including the GAA Grounds are all clustered together and were well maintained and accessible for people of all abilities.  
Both primary schools and the fine secondary school were visited and all looked well managed with attention paid to health and safety measures.  
The old C of I Building is now the genealogy centre but was closed at the time of adjudication.  
Good number of businesses closed in the town but one assumes that the Town Team are in the process of trying to redress the situation and get things back on track from commercially.  
This is a slow process and you are wished well with your efforts,  
A few buildings that were unoccupied over a long time were camouflaged by way of murals and this was very appealing.  
The Ballroom a link with a different past was part of the very interesting heritage trail depicted by stone plaques on various premises around the town.  
Finally one of the main things that adjudicators always look for is the overall standard of roads, footpaths, street lighting and street furniture.  
There may have been one or two street furniture pieces that needed to be treated with wood preservative but overall that standard was very good.  
The town skyline is not overtly obstructed by unsightly overhead wires and it looked as if most had been put underground over time.

### **Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:**

You may think you limited numbers of green spaces but the adjudicator was very impressed with the Town Park near the Roscommon and N5 slipway junction.  
This was maintained in excellent fashion with green area just mowed and grass cuttings ready for the nearby compositor.  
The little gravel walk round was weed free and the park furniture was clean and on the day it was being used.  
The green area, planting arrangements and little biodiversity measure like but hotel and wildflower area at Kildalogue Heights were a sight to behold.  
The little green area at the junction near the schools and the genealogy centre had a nice shrub – maybe needs some attention as it could get a little choked.  
There was a wonderful elongated perennial and annual flower shrub at base of newly constructed wall but cannot remember the area – possibly Lisnaree.  
The adjudicator just curious to know under what programme is the proposed project at the Grotto being funded.  
An update comment should be included in next year's entry form.  
Overall the standard was very good and the individuals, particularly the lady that tends that wonderful planting arrangement at Lisnaree, and the residents of Kildalogue Heights deserve great credit for the continuous maintenance that they provide.

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

Noted a Biodiversity Meeting was due to take place in the Percy French Hotel mind you it clashes with an evening of music and song in Roscommon Town!  
Wonderful awareness document from St Patricks Boys National School well done to the children, teachers and of course good parents.  
The key components of this adjudication category are a) knowledge of local species and habitats and knowledge of local designated areas and b) being able to promote the knowledge gained to the local community and the passing visitor in format that would be easily accessed such as wildlife information boards in a central location.  
Good wildlife advice and communication of the importance of the local wildlife heritage to the local community is so important  
Being aware of invasive and possible destructive plants such as Japanese knot weed is also essential.  
You have quite a number of natural habitats at your disposal, and amongst these is the River but you also have a myriad of lakes in your catchment and Strokestown Angling Centre seems to be the hub.  
One notes that you have a comment in this section pertaining to proposed consultation with Waterways Ireland in 2020 but the adjudicator could not decipher the rest of the sentence but deduced that it may have some in connection with the angling centre.  
Well done on your work on swift conservation as the swift population has declined over 40% in the last 15 years or so.  
The adjudicator missed the pollination garden at the Grotto – mea culpa.  
Very good work in this important category earns you an additional mark and hopefully we will see additional work or projects done in conjunction with the schools for next year.  
For further ideas and also information on the National Pollinator Plan access the following [www.biodiversityireland.ie](http://www.biodiversityireland.ie) as well as [www.pollinators.ie](http://www.pollinators.ie)

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

The objective in this category has moved on from one of reduce reuse and recycle to one of promoting the concept of reducing the production of potential waste at source such as excessive packaging.

“Doing more with less” is a very strong message that needs to be promoted more to the general public

The practical benefits of good waste management and control of unnecessary production will be seen as a major contribution to a better environment.

What you put into your entry form under this category is very much keeping with the above statements.

Hope the coffee cup initiative and the launch of the biodegradable straws takes off and you get due recognition for your efforts.

St Patricks NS Environmental Awareness and Care proposal very much fits the bill as well.

This is a category that additional points can be got if you could put forward more basic innovative ideas for say next year's competition.

To get more out of this sector in terms of creating even a greater awareness of all things that contribute to a more sustainable environment consider looking at the following websites for idea generation.

[www.localprevention.ie](http://www.localprevention.ie) ,[www.greenhomes.ie](http://www.greenhomes.ie) and [www.sustainableprocessing.ie](http://www.sustainableprocessing.ie)

Also something that this adjudicator became aware over the last year or so is the circular economy.

It is a bit too long to explain the concept in detail in this report, but if you access the following [www.dccae.gov.ie](http://www.dccae.gov.ie) you will get a pretty good idea of what it's all about.

The idea of what is called a linear economy of “take, make and waste” is now being seen as not sustainable and alternatives need to be found

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

The standard of tidiness and litter control was quite good on the day of adjudication.

There were a few back areas that could do with some excess material being removed or stored elsewhere.

One or two side areas on Elphin Street and one further up at the Garda Station were untidy and overgrown with weeds

In a small town of the standing of Strokestown little things like the above stand out.

Organising litter pick groups is an effective way of ensuring that all areas of the village are addressed and cleared of any litter on a regular basis.

Also the installation of new anti litter signs is a very good measure that is in the process of being delivered.

It certainly has paid off as the town and its surrounds were free of litter except for a few pieces.

The adjudicator would like to see more involvement of both National Schools and Scoil Mhuire in the practical work of litter collecting.

Maybe next year you could consider a specific litter project to be driven on by the school teachers and pupils.

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

We have noted the collaboration with the Town Team on the proposed project to paint unoccupied premises in another category but it crosses over to this one as well.

Maybe it has begun as the adjudicator thought that one or two vacant premises seemed to have been brightened up somewhat very recently.

Yes the Conerstone Building was noted and those two streets looked very well but there still were a few vacant, not tended to, buildings to be seen.

On this street the Centra Stores was very well presented and offered good service.

Last year's adjudicator suggested that you carry out a survey of ties on trees but there was no comment on this in this year's entry form.

The adjudicator visited a cross section of housing estates including Forge Hill, Tower Virew, Caslin Way, and Lisroryne Oaks where I may have seen the exceptional flower arrangement.

All were presented well but as in most town and villages there were a few non conformists.

Well done to all the residents associations who give such strong support to Tidy Towns in Strokestown.

Kildalogue Heights was the place that appealed to this adjudicator with its lovely name stone-make sure that it's unsighted by the shrubs.

It also has some community spirit.

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

The entrances in from both sides of the N5 were presented to a good standard with verges where relevant cut back in accordance with good practice.

On the Tulsk side many fine individual homesteads were viewed and some of these had expansive and well maintained gardens

The Road in from both sides of the R368 was very acceptable as well.

Most internal roads and lanes were in good condition and it was heartening to see a few residents out sweeping the bases of boundary walls and painting gates in another location.

A number of other side roads to Drumsna and Kilmore were visited and noted as being in good condition.

The overall standard with a few exceptions of untidiness was good.

## **Concluding Remarks:**

It was a long awaited return to first off do the adjudication and then pay a visit to Strokestown Park House Visitor Centre and Famine Museum

The adjudication job was a duty but a pleasant one.

The visit to the Famine Museum on Strokestown Park house was a sobering reminder of what the Great Hunger did to this country.

You are wished in your quest to develop projects in conjunction with the Town Team and ultimately to move up the rankings of the competition.