

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Silverstream** Ref: **2173**
County: **Monaghan** Mark: **238**
Category: **A** Date(s): **08/07/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	27	28
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	25	27
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	30	32
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	27	30
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	11	12
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	48	50
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	30	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	26	28
TOTAL MARK	450	224	238

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

We are pleased to welcome Silverstream Tyholland to the 2015 tidy towns competition and we applaud your decision to build on the progress you made in 2014. Your committee has attracted a very impressive number of volunteers with 14 members – this is a very high rate of participation for a small village. We were delighted to read that your committee enjoys good links with Fas and Monaghan County Council and that you are active members of the Community Forum and the tidy towns network (both excellent initiatives). Perhaps the County Leader or Partnership Company can be approached in order to ascertain whether they can provide funding, advice or assistance? Waterways Ireland may also be able to offer you some help. It is heartening to read that a local business (Robert Wilson Drapers) and a local employer (BD Foods) support your activities. We note that your communication strategy is quite effective (given your high rate of participation) but we wondered if you had given any consideration to developing an online presence? Well done on involving the local school in your litter pick and we urge to consider involving them in some of your projects in other categories too. Thank you for your completed entry form and hand drawn map as both were very helpful during adjudication. Consider preparing a tidy towns action plan for the years ahead as it is an effective of identifying projects under each of the tidy towns categories, scheduling your work load in advance and for earning extra marks under this category!

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

There is certainly more than meets the eye in Silverstream, Tyholland. The adjudicator was delighted to find that there were a number of features of interest to be explored in your village during our visit. The windmill ruin could be spotted from the N12 but there appeared to be no obvious means of walking to it. Is public access available to it? If so, perhaps, you could indicate this detail in your entry form in 2016. Even better, could some signage be located on the public road indicating where the ruin is and some information on it? The Ulster Canal is an excellent resource for the village to have and we are pleased to see that some restorative work appears to be taking place to it. We note the suggestions of the adjudicator in 2014 with respect to information signage and we wondered if any progress had been made on this project? Your map indicates that there a number of items of interest along the Ulster canal (such as a milestone and a lock) and we wondered if it is possible to explore this lovely historical feature. The town well on the verge of the N12 was also observed and we loved the name sign boat (with landscaping) at the junction with the Glaslough Road. Well done also on your work to the raised bank and the verges of the N12.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

This category was a highlight during adjudication with a number of high quality schemes to be seen. The planted bank on the Glaslough road is a very impressive project and we applaud everyone that has been involved in it. It has turned a rather incidental road side area into a lovely colourful feature of your village that also serves as a very

effective habitat. The committee is commended on the landscaped boat at the junction of the Glaslough road as the summer flower plants in it provide an explosion of colour and help to enhance this key junction. The attractive circular stone beds (with colourful hanging baskets of seasonal planting) in the verges on the N12 also drew positive attention as they looked particularly well while the planted beneath the Glaslough sign was admired. The baskets on the fence surrounding the well also help to draw attention to this feature of the town.

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

The committee is congratulated on its work to the biodiversity area at the Glaslough road. This is an excellent addition to your village as it serves a number of important functions – it provides a beautiful natural feature in a prominent location in Silverstream and it acts as an important habitat for local wildlife and birdlife as a result of the diversity of plant species used. The bird boxes were spotted during adjudication and as was mentioned by the adjudicator in 2014, we would be very interested to hear about what bird species have nested in your biodiversity area and elsewhere in your village. Are there plans for a survey? The results of this survey could then be used to inform future landscaping and wildlife projects. Perhaps the school children would like to carry out a survey of your biodiversity area as a school project? The committee is also commended on seeking the advice of the Glaslough tidy towns group for your biodiversity area as your combined efforts has resulted in a first class natural amenity! We were pleased to read in the 2014 adjudicators report that you have planted natural hedgerows along the concrete post and wire fences and we wondered if native hedgerow is being planted along other roadside boundaries in the village?

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

This tidy towns category has increased in importance and it now has the same marks allocation as that of built environment and streetscape, landscaping and open space and wildlife and natural amenities. Therefore, it is recommended that projects for this category are given equal importance as those under the aforementioned categories. We are pleased to see that your committee has taken a practical approach to this category by making your own compost, harvesting rainwater and using recycled materials for planters. However, more can be done. You could develop a communication strategy based on zero waste by using a website, texting and email as your primary means of communication. Why not undertake a survey of residents in your village to see if householders are trying to reduce and eliminate waste? This survey could then be used to pinpoint specific ways to get the rest of your village to produce less waste. The community garden is considered to be an excellent initiative but we were surprised to find that few details seem to be provided on it in your application and we would appreciate further updates on it in 2016. More ideas for actions under this category can be found in the tidy towns handbook.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

We are delighted to report that the village of Silverstream was virtually litter free during adjudication with just a single item of litter spotted. This is an excellent achievement for a village located on a busy national primary route and it is a clear indication that your anti litter strategy is working. We were also pleased to see that the standard of tidiness is almost as high with very little weed or untidy public areas and road verges to be seen. The signage was also considered to be in very good condition and very well maintained. A small number of improvements are possible. An untidy field gate was spotted opposite one of the circular landscaped beds close to the junction of the N12 and the Glaslough road. The chain link and concrete fence at this location would also benefit from screening by a native hedgerow. We were also pleased to note that temporary signage did not seem to be posing problems in Silverstream in 2015.

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

We were pleased to find that the standard of presentation of individual houses and gardens within Silverstream is considered to be particularly high and this demonstrates that householders are supportive of the work of tidy towns and are particularly proud of their village. The house located beside the B&B also deserves a special mention as its gardens are stunning.

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

Your committee has certainly been busy under this category. Well done on following the advice of the adjudicator in 2014 by providing a name sign on the planted boat at the junction of the Glaslough Road and the N12. Not only does this enhance the appearance of the junction, but it also enables passing traffic to identify your settlement. However, we concur with the previous years adjudicator who stated that you need to define the entrance and exit points to your village and the most effective way of doing this is by providing place name sign and denoting reduced (50 kmph) speed limit areas. Has this matter (and appropriate locations for the village boundaries) been discussed with Monaghan County Council? Perhaps you could let us know in 2016? The approach roads to Silverstream generally achieve a good standard with the verges on the section of the N12 that runs through the village in particularly good condition with neatly trimmed verges and attractive landscaping to be seen. During adjudication, realignment work appears to be taking place on the verge of the Glaslough road (adjacent to the canal) and we look forward to seeing this complete in 2016. The newly seeded verges (protected by temporary bollards) were also observed.

Concluding Remarks:

We would like to congratulate Silverstream on maintaining the high standard that you had set for yourselves in 2014 and we look forward to seeing further improvements in the years ahead. Well done and keep up the good work.

