

Tidy Towns Competition 2013

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Millstreet** Ref: **480**
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **296**
Category: **D** Date(s): **13/06/2013**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2012	Mark Awarded 2013
Overall Development Approach	50	43	43
The Built Environment	50	38	38
Landscaping	50	41	41
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30	30
Litter Control	50	35	35
Sustainable Waste And Resource Management	20	11	11
Tidiness	30	24	24
Residential Areas	40	32	32
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33	33
General Impression	10	8	9
TOTAL MARK	400	295	296

Overall Development Approach:

Millstreet TidyTowns and Tourism Association is welcome to the TidyTowns Competition for 2013. Thanks to the person/people who compiled your submission to this year's competition. That is a year's work in itself. Thank you for the entry form, the Three Year Plan, the content on Clara Wood, the photos which were well worth including and any other material enclosed. This committee is now an experienced group of people who interact with the various agencies that support your ideals, who keep their community aware of activities, who make themselves known to the schools. Your reward is the reaction of the many visitors to Millstreet who enjoy their experience here. Last year's adjudicator advised you to expand on your Three Year Plan and this year's adjudicator agrees that you need to explain what is meant by the present headings, include how the task is to be funded, who is responsible for undertaking the work, a time limit for completion and if the Plan is to be of value.

The Built Environment:

The traveller passing through will often judge the appearance of a town by the appearance of its Main Street. There are many visual highlights on that Main Street. And as in other categories of this competition the climb either up or down the street brings the colour and shop front design of buildings into a greater focus. Many businesses are so attractive and then when one adds to this the appearance of the two wonderful churches in the town, there is a delightful streetscape. Make sure that the maintenance of the cemetery area beside the Catholic Church is prioritised. Residences along the streets look very well in their many shades of colour. The County Council can be proud of the all of its building and of the surroundings, schools look well, as does the Wallis Arms and the GAA Community Hall.. The AIB building tells us that this is and has been a prosperous town. Siopa Deas, Reens Poitigéir, Christys, Corkery's Lounge and Clara are fronts that caught the eye among others. Two fire stations were noticed, one modern and fine, the other needing a coat of paint, especially to a door. Well done on your work at the pedestrian entrance to the town park. The playground is a beauty in colour, design and appearance. Is that a hexagonal or a heptagonal building? Whichever it is, it is a feature of the built environment.

Landscaping:

Millstreet creates its own unique stamp in the landscaping section with the use of specially designed concrete flower tubs painted in strong, attractive bright colours. The fact that all seem to be painted freshly made them a delightful theme of street furniture. Not only did their uniqueness impress but they provided a unity to the

landscaping of the town. In this section one can see that Millstreet has a long history in TidyTowns, dating back to at least 1993. Those information stones that are all over town give just recognition to the people who preceded you in TidyTowns. But there are at least two beds with those information stones that need your attention, one in the centre of town and another out the country. But it is not only the flowers that impress but the appearance of so many shrubberies all over town. There is one, half hidden at the entrance to the Co-Op Stores whose colouring and shading caught the eye of the adjudicator. There are two junctions, one on the Macroom Road and another also up that side, and the landscaping is miraculous. On the Clara Road there is more delightful painstaking work done. The water features illustrate the variety of presentation of which you are capable. The colour in this area, a central part of the town, is beautiful. One admired all of the planting and the general maintenance of the town park. That is a lovely feature near the Mills. Great work on the wall.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Having read the volumes of work on wildlife that you had forwarded the adjudicator was certain that there would be an increase in marks in this category. The adjudicator felt that at least some of the Clara Walk had to be traversed to acknowledge the efforts you made in including two folders on the walk with your submission. The timber fencing was discovered, a great entrance, but the lack of a parking area and the request not to park along the lane dampened the enthusiasm of the adjudicator, and what a pity. This is the area of the genuine untouched wildlife of the town. But the adjudicator also praises the wildlife awareness reserves that you have created at either side of town. Having achieved this much the next step for your committee is a Bio-diversity Plan for Millstreet.

Litter Control:

You are justifiably proud of your achievements in this category. But there is litter, or put differently Millstreet is not litter free. Well done on integrating various groups from the local population to assist in keeping the town as free of litter as it is today. There was very little litter along the street or on the approach roads, none in the town park despite heavy enough traffic around but some of the estates must keep an eye on litter. The adjudicator saw one dog fouling sign and is sure there must be more.

Sustainable Waste And Resource Management:

Well done on the projects that you describe. The school book scheme is an authentic re-use scheme. The recycling you mention is also pertinent to this category. Water conservation is an important measure in resource management. The fact that a school is now involving itself in the Green Flag process is also praiseworthy. But this section of the competition has moved along, as you will understand from the content of the revised guidelines and suggestions in the TidyTowns handbook. You will notice that the emphasis is now firmly on waste and resource management. The adjudicator feels that you have not got your teeth into this section yet. A look at your Three Year Plan suggests that you will have fallen further behind in this category in three years time. So you need help and there is no better place to seek it than with Cork County Council who has helped other centres onto a new rarefied plateau in resource management.

Tidiness:

Millstreet achieves a very high mark in this section which is merited by the attention given to roadsides throughout a long expanse of roadway. The planting and shrubberies along these roadways create an impression of care, planning and maintenance that helps justify the high marks. On the other hand the appearance of the unoccupied businesses on the Main Street challenge that high mark. In the case of a number of these buildings a modicum of treatment would help their appearance. Your treatment of the flags of the Song Contest is an example of the wonderful work that can transform an area. Your inspirational work with the historical mural on a gable end is another example of how creativity can transform an area. There are many advertisements at the front of another business that threaten your mark, but in general fly posting is under control. Another problem is the condition of road surfaces in a number of areas but especially on the Killarney approach road. Retention of such a mark is a challenge in itself. Thankfully no Christmas decorations were seen as happened last year.

Residential Areas:

There is a special small town charm to the various terraces of houses. Sadly some of the houses are unoccupied and their deteriorating appearance detracts from the wonderful image that is generally portrayed. A scheme of houses near the entrance to the town park is devoid of any landscaping and badly needs an uplift. Your submission stated that there are four estates in the town. The adjudicator visited more than four and, in general, they present very well and these estates add no end to the colour of the experience of a visit to Millstreet. Mount Leader and Murphy's Terrace are among the favourites visited but there are two or three areas that need your enthusiasm. There are some magnificent individual houses about, their landscaping highlighting their majesty.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

There are quite a number of approach roads to Millstreet, each of varying character. You rightly give pride of approach road to the Mallow Road, but the adjudicator also liked the treatment of the Station Road approach. Well done to the Council for the shrubbed screening they have provided along their property. The footpath, general appearance and neatness of this road are very good. By contrast the Killarney approach road lacks colour and vigour. Mowing one width with the lawnmower along the wall and wild vegetation would improve its

appearance. Your work on the railings on the Mallow Road woke the adjudicator up to the fact that we are approaching the town. But we were still miles from town and yet it is clear that your vision stretches far out along that road. Great work being done at a gate entrance on this approach road. A little more care could be taken of the minor road onto the Mallow Road.

General Impression:

The people who compiled your submission deserve great credit because it gives an overview of the work you do, the difficulties you face and the pride you feel in the tasks you perform. Be careful that what you include is upto date. Let the adjudicator wander off around the town, as leading the adjudicator around the area knocks some of the surprise out of the journey and you could be accused of leading the witness. But make sure you let the adjudicator know where to park the car for the Clara walk.