

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Milltown** Ref: **202**
County: **Galway** Mark: **312**
Category: **A** Date(s): **25/06/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	47	47
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	39	39
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	47	47
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	35	36
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	18	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	62	63
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	27	28
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	32	33
TOTAL MARK	450	307	312

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Milltown is very welcome to the 2015 SuperValu TidyTowns Competition and we compliment your group for maintaining your place in such splendid condition that makes it a lovely place to live and work in, but also to be enjoyed by the thousands of people that pass that way every day.

I note that you have 14 committee members and it is wise to have two people in charge of the 7 categories, and good commitment is shown by the attendance at all those committee meetings. The efforts of your group are appreciated by the list of agencies and bodies that are willing to support you.

The competition embraces the entire village and its people and it is good to see that the locals are so well informed of your activities, and this ensures cohesion in working towards a common goal. I note you have set up a Website and Facebook page and this now enables our relations living in distant parts to keep in touch with the news from back home. The contacts with the schools are worthwhile and great to hear that they are participating in the green flag initiatives. We read that the Foroige and Brownies are also on board. You have a very long association with the TidyTowns competition, and it is sad to see that Mr Glynn is retiring after 53 years of service, but undoubtedly his experience and leadership will not be lost as he most likely can be persuaded to act in advisory role.

You have included a lot of additional information but some of it is of a historical nature, and we are reminded in the rules that you only include relevant backup documentation that strictly relates to your work for 2014/2015. Old plans or documents that are now out of date hinder rather than assist the adjudication process. But I appreciate that a huge effort has been put into the preparation of your entry, and there are great photographs of your many achievements

You have a very good approach to the competition.

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

Glynn's Hardware is very well presented with the nice trees by the roadside and with good quality floral arrangements. All the other business houses in the village are beautiful and compliment the great effort of the TidyTowns committee to present this lovely location at its best. The Catholic Church in Milltown is beautiful in every way. Your Day Care Centre is a well kept place. We are pleased to find that the visually impaired and disabled are catered for with the use of tactile tiles at the pedestrian crossings. This village has much to recommend it. I saw a signpost for the Jockey's Monument, this is an outstanding historical structure, and it great to see the building styles of hundreds of years ago done by brilliant tradesmen. The old style script on the stone there is most interesting.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Landscaping in Milltown provides splendid aesthetics and streetscape with the ESB cables underground. We admire the line of the new native hedging on Dunmore Road. There are beautiful strips of grass all along the main road.

Little delights of shrubs and flowers add freshness and colour to the surroundings and this was particularly noticeable at the Catholic Church. We parked our car in the lovely car park across from the Church where some unexpected delights are encountered such as the splendid children's playground and tennis court, and then we see the well appointed picnic area; it is pleasing to find that this facility is used by people en route to Knock and especially by the Tuam Wheelchair Association. A stroll in the park in at the back is strongly recommended to explore all the information contained on impressive stones beside such interesting items as the wishing well. The array of antique farm machinery, so well preserved, is a great reminder of farming traditions in this area. A Famine era thatched cottage reminds us of the roofing styles and materials of long ago and here again we read the history of its owner Dick Dowling. You have achieved very high marks of 47 out of 50 in this category and it is my pleasant task to confirm them again this year.

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

Leaving the car park across from the Catholic Church and crossing the small Dawros River at the footbridge it was delightful to see some 4 to 5 inch trout swimming in the clear water and this indicated that there is no pollution in this river. At the start of the river walk there is good information on a notice board on bats and birds and later we came across the Bug Hotel made from old pallets, and the Butterfly Garden had appropriate shrubs and flowers planted there. Many fruit trees will provide welcome food for the wildlife of the area and the gooseberries looked enticing but unripe, and the birds will let you know when they are ready for eating.

I saw the pictures of the kerbing and works carried out to prevent land erosion and support spawning, and it was nice to see this work in reality.

This is a splendid walk along by the side of the river and we could see the high water marks on the banks at the sides reminding us that the water levels can rise very high, and good to see that safety is in mind with the provision of the life buoys. Walking along I read some interesting stone plaques with information on local history for instance O'Gradys Mill the remains of which can be seen across the river. Good information is also provided on the Dipper, the tall an unmistakable Grey Heron, the Pike and the Mute Swan. Going on to the new extension which is a couple of hundred meters extra facilities for rest and viewing are provided on sturdy stone seats, and then there is the new hedging and some more young trees.

There are hundreds of mature trees all around this area and good to see the new ones planted here and there. This is a haven for all types of wildlife, and you are making good use of the services of Sean Nestor who is president of the National Anglers Association, and I read of the valuable contribution Mr Nestor has made in relation to river enhancement projects on the Clare River. The fauna and flora of the area is enjoyed in the Sli na Slainte route that is well signposted.

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

Seeing the green flags proudly displayed at the schools is proof that the children, teachers and parents are now well aware of the best ways to preserve and enhance the local environment. The close contacts with Ms Ni Mhainin from the county council is the correct approach and we see this initiated the three information nights on Food Waste, Home Composting and the prevention of household hazardous waste. Interestingly we now find that a lot of families are monitoring and reducing food waste, and this raises the awareness of lots of other people. You have listed a number of other initiatives that are promoted such as the harvesting of water. It is not necessary to list all of those initiatives but they are taken into account.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

I am surprised to learn that litter from passing traffic on the N17 remain s a constant challenge, and I wonder how this can be. The entire village looked clean and fresh as a result of the power washing that you have undertaken. This village underwent a lot of disruption during all the recent road works and I appreciate the huge effort that was put in to bring it back to this state of tidiness. It is obvious that you are well supported by the local and business people of Milltown.

The screened off area is a bit unsightly on the Dunmore road, and I saw on a notice there that the TidyTowns committee are doing their best to keep the area tidy. We look forward to the work being completed by this developer. In the park I was surprised to see some grass clippings dumped which will cause pollution. Grass clippings in an area like this could be left where they fall and should never be collected

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

A brilliant house across from Sheridans at the junction for Dunmore sets a high standard and this is equalled in other locations. The house to the right of the Catholic Church really stands out in great fashion having been newly painted. Millbrook Estate is very well presented with attractive landscaping. Travelling about we admire nicely kept houses in the village and approach roads that are very well presented.

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

One is greeted on arrival to the village with the bi-lingual road sign and the Tidy Towns sign giving details of Bronze medal win in 2013. Traffic Management signage is quiet good with a perfect crossing point at the church, and the pedestrians are well catered for with splendid footpaths, some of which are new, stretching over a long distance towards Tuam and Knock. The white washed wall at the bridge stands out and reminds us of times gone by. The multi coloured wall paintings at both ends of the village are attractive features as we pass along.

Concluding Remarks:

This is a splendid effort by the people of Milltown to present your lovely place in such great condition. You love Milltown, and I look forward to a visit again in the near future.