

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Castleisland**

Ref: **131**

County: **Kerry**

Mark: **232**

Category: **C**

Date: **01/08/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	42	40
The Built Environment	40	33	32
Landscaping	40	32	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	23	23
Litter Control	40	30	29
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	23	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28	28
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	232	226

Overall Developmental Approach:

Many thanks for your entry form, sketch, map and copy of 5 year plan - all of which were most helpful on adjudication day. Your consistent progress since your first entry back in 1992 is commendable and during those years you have made a valuable contribution to the environmental and commercial status of Castleisland. Your task is not an easy one, but you have built on your strengths, especially on the main street, which is your strong point and is now benefitting from the tree planting of previous years. Your strategy of planning and phased implementation is a prudent one as many projects are long-term and many are so dependant on the good will of people outside your control, especially in the area of dereliction.

The Built Environment:

You have a plethora of fine period buildings, both commercial and residential. Public buildings of the 19th century are numerous, e.g. churches, schools, convents and banks, all combining to remind us of early developments. You are endowed with a lovely wide main street that offers endless opportunities for progress and you have made good use of this layout. The downside is that you have an inordinate amount of valuable sites, premises and unoccupied buildings that are poor in presentation and taking from the excellent work of the many attractive new developments. It is unusual to find so much dereliction in a main street. I liked the following shop fronts; the credit union, Charlie Nelligan, David Costello, the Poets Inn and of course, others. If we lose the traditional shop front in places like Castleisland we will lose an integral part of our heritage - so well done on

the new ones. The Slaney Divane Garage is very attractive and some floral development (I am sure its planned) would further enhance. The large buildings behind Rhynos are quite an eye sore. What a delight to visit an Ríocht Athletic Club and witness so many juveniles in training - this is a real gem, but worthy of improved access to the landscaped entrance.

Landscaping:

You have worked hard on this section and the great display of flowers, shrubs, trees, window boxes and hanging baskets create some great colour. You can see the value of tree planting when you look down the main street from the Limerick entrance. The day-care centre is so welcome on this poorly presented street and, hopefully will spur further development of a high standard. Grass cutting was good and as usual St. Stephens Cemetery is well presented. Most disappointing is the sad and neglected appearance of Desmonds GAA field on both entrances. If small centres like Finuge can present their premises to a high standard - so can Castleisland.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

You are so fortunate to have a fine river flowing through the town and your wildlife problems are looked after naturally. Along the river walk, a host of wildlife was observed on adjudication day and the Mallard seemed happy in a natural environment - perhaps some display boards similar to ones in Ennis would further enhance.

Litter Control:

As a critic of litter control in previous reports, it was heartening to find the town almost litter free on adjudication day and an obvious effort is in place to keep Main Street, in particular, free from litter. Unexpectedly some litter was to be seen in the forecourt of Muire Gan Smal on a Monday a.m. inspection. The mural here is informative and artistic.

Tidiness:

As stated before, your problems here relate to a host of untidy open spaces (especially the one in Chapel Lane), dereliction in Main Street and other areas, unoccupied houses and poorly presented back areas - even off Main Street. This is your most problematic section and the above mentioned are keeping your marks down in the area of adjudication.

Residential Areas:

The estates - old and new - are well presented and the landscaping works on the estate entrances are praiseworthy. A litter trap was found at the end of the road at St. John's Park. There are some very good individual efforts at Desmonds Avenue. The new housing estate at the end of Chapel Lane has potential to boost your marks over the coming years and should also be used for recruiting new members to your endeavours.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads are good, despite the long standing black spot on the Limerick approach and Tralee and Killarney approaches - you have another black spot at the open space opposite the Snug. The road structure is good. Well done on the Patrick O'Keeffe sculpture - you should consider more sculpture projects if finance permits - consult with Ennis Tidy Towns for advice.

General Impression:

It is always a pleasure to visit Castleisland. Each visit encounters new improved developments (e.g. An Ríocht Athletic Club). You can be well pleased with your efforts and your five year plan will now

act as a discipline for further progress - well done.

Second Round Adjudication:

The grassy open space, with its low stone retaining wall on the Tralee Road was admired. Weed control was a problem at entrance areas to houses on this road and also along the Limerick Road. A lot of litter was evident on this road, particularly at a recessed area opposite Desmond Avenue. The advertising hoardings, particularly in the centre of the town, should be strongly discouraged. Traffic congestion is a major problem in this busy town. The main street is a wide one which sports attractive trees marching down its length and fine examples of traditional plasterwork. However, this adjudicator is in agreement with the comments made by the first adjudicator in relation to the great number of derelict properties in this location. Do resist the temptation to "gild the lily" by means of hanging baskets from stands along main streets as a number on the facades of buildings is quite sufficient. Try to concentrate your efforts on permanent planting which will look good all year round and pay dividends for future generations. Entrance railings and piers to the GAA pitch were still in bad condition on Second Adjudication Day and need urgent attention!