

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Lahinch** Ref: **80**
County: **Clare** Mark: **230**
Category: **B** Date(s): **23/07/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	40
The Built Environment	50	27
Landscaping	50	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20
Litter Control	50	31
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	26
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	230

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for your entry and details of work in hand. It was an unusually quiet Lahinch that greeted this adjudicator late in the season and consequently there was great comfort in traversing the various streets and visiting the various attractions. The town continues to grow at an inordinate rate and there is now a huge imbalance between the numbers of permanent residents and the influx of summer visitors. The growth in residential buildings is placing great strain on your Tidy Towns Committee as you endeavour to maintain the centre to a high standard. This is unlikely to change and you need to plan your work programme accordingly taking cognisance of the increased amount of area under adjudication.

The Built Environment:

Development works continue unabated and the town centre in recent years has been transformed into various commercial outlets, both large and small. Parking did not seem a problem for this adjudicator due to the lateness of the visit and road markings and in general roads structure is good on the principal approaches. Main Street continues to be your best effort although we note some unoccupied business premises and wonder if plans are in train for improvement. The roofless corner building at the end of Main Street is quite an eyesore and in urgent need of attention: any plans for restoration? Well done to those maintaining the traditional ethos of the shopfronts mentioned last year. Public buildings are well presented although the Garda Station would benefit from fresh painting, especially the boundary walls.

Landscaping:

We commend those many households with attractive floral displays, especially on the Ennistymon approach. We would welcome more colour on Main St and wonder if you could generate a painting/floral blitz for 2008. Tree planting of previous years continues to enhance and illustrate the great value of sustainable landscaping. The car park at the town entrance is poor in presentation and the landscaping here needs attention. You have

potential to raise your marks here by introducing large floral containers in early spring and maintaining them to a high standard throughout the summer. We liked the flower display at the Atlantic Hotel. Congratulations on the Blue Flag status.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

More than most centres you have opportunity to highlight the abundance of wildlife in and around the town. As mentioned last year we would welcome some display boards outlining the local wildlife of the area. We visited Lahinch Seaworld which is a fine development. However, the entrance gates are badly in need of cleaning and fresh painting. Indeed, the whole building would benefit from fresh painting outside. You have a problem with cigarette butts in many places and you need to impress upon visitors the need to control this form of litter.

Litter Control:

In general the town has good litter control but some bins, including one on Main Street need replacement. It was waste collection day when we visited and the disposal truck was busy collecting and emptying large bins from all areas.

Waste Minimisation:

This is a new category aimed at reducing, recycling and reusing materials and we urge you to get involved with a project aimed specifically at improving your mark here. The bring bank at the promenade is poor in presentation and the environs here are very untidy. Do you have any school with a Green Flag, if so we would like to hear about it as it would boost your marks.

Tidiness:

Your problems here relate to numerous undeveloped sites, poorly presented open spaces, unfinished developments and many weather stained boundary walls. Even within the town core you have many poorly presented areas in need of attention. The small narrow pedestrian access route from Main Street to the car park should be surfaced, cleaned and given some landscaping, either by hanging baskets or other means. Tidiness extends to excess weed growth and unwanted building materials.

Residential Areas:

You have secured a good mark here and in general residential estates are well presented. Station Road housing scheme is good and the new estates are well presented. Developers should be encouraged to give due thought to the landscaping aspect of residential developments, even if space is restricted, small open spaces should be developed to give colour and some greenery. We liked the landscaping at Fairways Housing Estate: good individual effort here.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

As mentioned road structure is good throughout. However, the road to the promenade is below standard and needs upgrading. Road markings and street furniture are good. However, one would expect that by now the overhead cables in Main Street in particular should be undergrounded. Most villages are now in the process of putting cables underground and Lahinch should strive for improvement in this respect. We found many side and back entrances in poor condition and many are being stored for unwanted materials and creating untidiness. The garage, often commented upon in previous reports should be improved in presentation. The Bus Shelter on the Liscannor approach is in need of repair. The Defence Forces base on this approach was getting a fresh painting on adjudication day: it needs an identity sign here to reflect the new name.

General Impression:

It was a great pleasure to visit Lahinch on a warm late August day and see first hand the activity on the beach with many children learning the skill of surfing. The town is renowned for its high quality golf and Golf Courses, together with the fine Club House. Your challenge now is to cope with the new developments and ensure they integrate appropriately with the traditional character of Lahinch. We commend all associated with the Tidy Towns efforts and hope to witness further progress in the coming years. Your natural landscape is unique and it behoves planners and developers to ensure the town progresses in an orderly fashion. We wish you well for 2008.