

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Lismore** Ref: **229**
County: **Waterford** Mark: **298**
Category: **C** Date(s): **25/06/2008**
22/07/2008

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	48
The Built Environment	50	39
Landscaping	50	40
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30
Litter Control	50	39
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	37
General Impression	10	9
TOTAL MARK	400	298

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you very much for the completed application form and the supplementary material ,consisting of the very comprehensive 3 year plan,Newsletter,waste minimisation plan, correspondence and accompanying map which was an invaluable asset in ensuring that all relevant areas were identified and visited.

Congratulations to the Lismore and its town's folk for consistently maintaining such a high standard in the Competition over the years

To achieve this type of success and to retain consistency of performance necessitates immense collaborative input from many sources.

You set a benchmark for this type of team work approach with a committee of 28 and support from the greater Lismore Community.

Harnessing the efforts of all for the betterment of the town is a rather daunting task and the main committee has handled this task with gusto.

Ongoing interaction with other town organisations and schools has resulted in targeted action items being completed within the given timeframe. The fact that some school teachers are also members of your committee is a benefit

The support of Waterford County Councils and other agencies has to be recognized as these bodies are in a position to supply resources in terms of professional support and possible funding support to match your own inputs and fund raising activities.

It has been a number of years since this adjudicator visited and spent some time in Lismore although it was known to me in my youth in that I spent some time in an educational establishment nearby.

My regret this year is that I did not time my adjudicating duties to coincide with the Imrrama Festival of Travel Writing.

Lismore does have significant advantages over other similar sized towns; the legacy of the Devonshire influence, Heritage Town Status and the majestic Blackwater on whose banks the world renowned Lismore

Castle sits.

But it takes a strong community commitment to exploit these advantages to the fullest, for that you are to be commended.

The Built Environment:

As you rightly state in your 3 year plan Lismore's greatest asset is its rich built environment.

To give in depth comment on the recent new developments alone would require a couple of pages in their own right so one has to compromise and condense as best as possible.

Lismore Castle and its grounds dominate the town and set a standard of excellence in building preservation that would find few equals in the island of Ireland.

The Estate Agent and his team are supporters of the Tidy Towns Committee and are responsive to requests and suggestions judging by some of the correspondence in the attached application form.

The oldest hotel in Ireland Lismore House Hotel has been tastefully restored and commands a prominent position in the town.

All public buildings and surrounds, as one would expect, are well maintained and presented to the highest standard; St Carthage's RC was undergoing some remedial work on adjudication day.

Lismore Health Centre is an example of a well looked after public building and it should serve as an example to other health centres around the country many of which are in poor condition,

Pairc Na Milaoise was developed to mark the end of the old and the onset of the new millennium and it will in years to come be readily identifiable as one of the main attractions of the town.

Lismore is not totally devoid of dereliction and a few buildings were observed in East Main Street and off Mayfield Road, one in particular had the unusual name of the Bears Den.

One lauds your efforts to address this problem but it has to be accepted that there are some people, not many thankfully, who do not have a sense of community and are not into Tidy Towns.

All you can do is to offer encouragement and suggest ways that you as a committee might be able to help – big stick or carrot approach hard to judge which the best option at times is.

The Road surfaces and footpaths in the core area of the town were in excellent condition, Waterford County Council has played its part in supporting your endeavours.

It is nice to observe that some older establishments like McGrath's, Creehy's and O'Brien's have retained the old plaster type name signs.

The following is a cross section of commercial premises in addition to the Lismore House Hotel that appealed to this adjudicator; Eaton's Place, Crotty's Jewellers, the Rustic Café restored since last year, Mari Mina, Roche's Centra and the Red House which was once the staff quarters of the Hotel in days gone by, I am open to correction but this what I was told.

The GAA Grounds are situated in an idyllic setting in what I believe was once part of the Castle estate.

Landscaping:

The town possesses many fine examples of mixed landscaping arrangements and the balance achieved is quite remarkable.

To maintain this standard of presentation requires a lot of effort and resources as well as patience so well done to the county council team and the volunteers entrusted with this work.

The new wall baskets at West Street and Main Street were noted as was the revitalised areas at Bankfield.

This adjudicator was impressed with the extent of floral combinations that prevailed both in public and private planting arrangements around the town notably the stone beds opposite GAA grounds on Tallow road and at the North Mall near Foleys Pub.

The colour and richness of the tuberous begonias, busy lizzies and petunia was quite staggering at this time of year.

A feature of the landscaping effort is the high standard of individual gardens seen around the town from the extravagant to simply laid out cottage type gardens observed at Fernville Houses on Chapel Place. No doubt this is the community's positive legacy from Entente Florale.

The Bandstand at the Millennium Park has been enhanced so much by a simple rejuvenation of the planting area around it.

Striving for seasonal rotation is an excellent objective but to be honest if the resources were not available to do this work it would be very unlikely that a voluntary body could undertake it.

The adjudicator is at one with the comment in last year's second adjudication that you may have reached saturation point with hanging baskets as the built environment in Lismore is of a particularly high standard in its own right.

Summing up it is fair to say that the committee is fortunate that it has such practical back up from both the local authority and the larger Lismore community, long may it continue.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Some centres struggle with this category as they feel that they may not possess basic natural habitats from which

projects could be developed.

Lismore does not suffer from such a dearth of wild life habitats it is quite the opposite.

The work that has been undertaken in this category has been exemplary.

The canal banks on the way in from Cappoquin have been trimmed and the canal itself was free of any residue and it was good to note that a local resident has undertaken a breeding programme for geese by developing a nesting shelter.

One did not have the time to examine in exacting detail all the work that was being undertaken under wild life and natural amenities, but it was very pleasing to note that the younger generation are being brought on board in a very practical way by involving the schools on specific projects.

This was a strong performance because you did not sit back on your laurels and just accept that you have so many natural wildlife habitats at your disposal you strived to exploit them to the fullest.

Litter Control:

Like last year the standard of litter control was top class and you as a committee are be commended for being "in your face" when promoting the message of anti litter.

It is important to put in place initiatives that will ensure that both locals and visitors are aware that Lismore wishes to be a litter free zone if possible.

One or two plastic bottles were noted as were a number of the ubiquitous cigarette butts

One has to contend with the odd non conformist but for the most part people will respond to good example, the towns people of Lismore have have shown good example when it comes to controlling litter.

The fact that both schools have attained Green flag status is also a big advantage in that it gives school children a sense worth.

Waste Minimisation:

The committee has certainly embraced the concept of Race Against Waste with gusto and it has mobilised other sections of the community to make meaningful and practical contributions to the scheme.

The Waste Minimisation survey for 2008 is a very concise and a well produced document but much on the same lines as 2007. Outside of the obvious, forming part of your Tidy Towns application, this report should prove invaluable to the local business fraternity and I presume that it will be circulated to them.

Good to note that both schools have achieved and retained Green flag and pupils are no doubt well versed in the Race against Waste concept.

The Race Against Waste booklet and the up dated website has many other idea generators under selected headings and no doubt a Committee member has been assigned to filter this information back to the main group.

Keep up the excellent work which is reflected in an increase in marks from last year.

Tidiness:

The problems that the town has with the small number of either derelict or unoccupied has already been dealt with under the built environment.

It would be churlish if this adjudicator went looking for innocuous issues under this category as one can see from your submission that you have made every effort to address points of concern mentioned in last year's report.

The directional signs mentioned in last years 2nd adjudication have been improved upon and the barrels were removed from beside Foley's pub, which incidentally is an excellent establishment.

In relation to street furniture I find it slightly surprising that the street furniture you chose has to be of the imported variety given our tradition in wrought iron carftwork. I presume the decision was cost related.

You have regained your lost mark in this category.

Residential Areas:

As you rightly state the standard of public and private housing is high, the success of the town in the competition has rubbed off on the vast majority of residents and there is a great sense of Pride of Place.

The standard of local authority housing t was very good and Parks Road residents deserve praise for the manner in which they have presented their properties and surrounding areas

There were one or two railings and gates nearer the main entrance to the aforementioned estate that need attention, nothing that a coat of Hammerite or equivalent would not rectify

Ashley Court estate which is nice and compact was also well maintained.

The new name signs are very attractive, legible and unobtrusive, these have been noticed in other Waterford towns so well done to Waterford Council for putting these in place.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The town has a distinct advantage on other towns when it comes to entrances, Waterford County Council has served you well and in doing so has recognised the standing you have both as Heritage Town and also as Tidy Towns national winner.

The Cappoquin entrance, with its excellent road surface, trees lining one side and the canal with its exquisite railing is picture postcard in appearance.

The approach in from Ballyduf/Araglin is also impressive and the presence of the Castle Estate is all around. The cross over point on the road at the Lismore Golf Club can be a bit disconcerting and doesn't seem to be well flagged (excuse the pun) or maybe I missed the warning sign.

Both the Tallow Road, with its attractive stone welcome sign and stone flower bed, and the Glencairn Road were of a very high standard with name, directional and speed signs clean and more importantly visible.

Parking and internal road linkage within the town was of a good standard and it was noted that you have addressed the problem of the Castle entrance with the Estate Agent.

General Impression:

The citizens of Lismore obviously care very much about their town and that is reflected in the way it was presented in an overall context.

It is a very welcoming town with a rich history that is well documented both on information boards and on a few publications that one can avail of at the Heritage Centre

The Town is also fortunate that it has such a proactive committee dedicated to making sure that no stone is left unturned to have it looking its best.

Contentious issues are addressed, relevant bodies are lobbied and because of this voluntarism is at its zenith in the town.

The town's high standing in the National Competition could not be achieved without commitment and hard work.

The developments and improvements that are in place are very sustainable and certainly will be a legacy for future generations.

A couple of years back the town achieved the ultimate success and you want to reach that pinnacle again.

Will a couple of your favourite sons reach their pinnacle for Waterford hurlers this year - now theirs a six marker

!!

Second Round Adjudication:

Lismore looked beautiful on the day of second adjudication, landscaping seems to be your forte! The Town Park looked particularly well and also has some beautiful features. Your interpretive panels/town maps and walks are an excellent facility which enables the visitor to achieve an overview of the town and to negotiate it with ease.

The Built Environment is to very high standard and work accomplished on a number of buildings is acknowledged; both Foleys and the Summer House were particularly admired; someday perhaps the dated soft drink and ice-cream signs will vanish from your streetscape; encourage shopowners to avoid the thoughtless positioning of posters and stickers in doors and windows as these can spoil an otherwise good presentation. The presentation of Blackwater College and adjacent sports building is to standard of excellence as is that achieved for the First Station; well done on the presentation of The Hall and the neat storage here. The charming terrace of cottages along New Street was admired in respect of its colour scheme and new dwellings on the entrance to the town from the Cappoquin road are a welcome development to what was once a derelict site. Residential developments throughout the town are nicely presented and greens areas are nicely maintained.

Litter control was quite good with just sporadic amounts here and there, nothing that constitutes a problem but does call for a review of your litter control activities to prevent it from becoming problematic. Road and footpath surfaces are generally good as is most street furniture with the small exception of seating in the park that is in need of revarnishing. Well done on the new (to this adjudicator) rails along the canal bank. There was plenty of wildlife in evidence on the day of second adjudication despite the accident/air pollution earlier in the week.

Semi mature and mature trees enhance further the stately appearance of Lismore town; the green verge along one side of the road to the Saint Carthage's Cathedral was patchy and in need of regrassing.

Congratulations on yet another fine presentation.