

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Castlebridge** Ref: **133**
County: **Wexford** Mark: **229**
Category: **C** Date(s): **06/07/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	35
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20
Litter Control	50	32
Waste Minimisation	20	4
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	27
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	229

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the very comprehensive application form, copy of 3 year plan and excellent sketch map of the village and surrounds.

It was the adjudicator's first visit to the village of Castlebridge for some time and one was struck by the positive changes that have occurred during that period.

The village was quite busy for a Sunday morning, I presume because of its link to the N11 and a direct route from Wexford to Enniscorthy.

The committee of 10 is very proactive in its approach to TidyTowns and it certainly looks like it has strong community backing judging by the practical support that it has received thus far.

Very strong links have been forged with the local school, this is important in that children will react very positively to encouragement when asked to become involved in your activities.

Thank you for the positive comments on TidyTowns.

The 3 year plan is both practical and achievable with year on year work targets clearly outlined.

The adjudicator will endeavour to be fair in adjudicating the village in this report which has to be very concise and may not touch on every issue mentioned in your submission.

The Built Environment:

The level of heavy traffic through Castlebridge has created its own problems for both locals and visitors alike as at peak times it can be a very congested village.

Very little can be done about the layout of the village, the issue was dealt with in great detail in last year's report and a suggestion was put forward to consider a foot bridge to solve the difficulty for pedestrians

That may be an option for the future and might form part of an updated village renewal proposal to be submitted to Wexford County Council.

To deal in specifics there were many positives to report under the built environment, some changes could be effected pretty quickly that would enhance the infrastructure even more.

For instance a simple re surfacing with blind would improve the car parking area in the Old Mill and make that area more receptive and less messy.

The old stone wall in that area could be restored and some obtrusive and dated signs removed.

These practical changes would make a huge difference to the core of the village.

All the public buildings in the village were well maintained, credit is due to those responsible for the upkeep of Churches and the excellent National School, parish hall and local graveyard.

A special mention for the excellent community centre which houses some novel activity facilities, such as the artificial bowls greens.

So many old schools in communities around the country have been left idle, so well done to the Castlebridge community members who had the foresight to re adapt the building as community centre.

The problem of dereliction is something that has challenged the village for some time with the most obvious culprit in a central location.

Unfortunately this fine historical former commercial premises is falling further into disrepair, one is aware that the issue may not be solved quickly because of problems with title deeds.

The future of Castlebridge House is a major concern for the community and it beggars belief why it has not been even part restored, one wonders what plans Wexford County Council have in mind for this historical building

There are a number of well presented commercial premises none more so than Culleton's Porter House which particularly appealed to this adjudicator.

Freddie's Shop has a quaint frontage but unfortunately it has too much fly posting to be considered for shop front award.

The new commercial development, further up the Wexford end of the village, has blended in well with the existing street scape.

Overall the positives far outweighed the negatives.

Landscaping:

The standard of landscaping within the village and at the outlying housing developments was very good.

Your ongoing work for 2008 was noted and that can be seen to maximum effect at the previously mentioned community centre with a mix of shrubs and colourful annual and perennials to the fore.

The memorial garden, with its proliferation of lavender, and the village green were also admired for the attention to detail and the efforts to ensure year round effect.

The village green now possess an excellent information board, tastefully designed and containing interesting history on Castlebridge House and the village association with hurling as well as an informative map of the village.

Your work in this category over the last year deserves an increase in marks.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Committee has been very proactive in helping to increase awareness among the community for the need to embrace the concept of wildlife appreciation and nature conservation.

Castlebridge has such a rich hinterland and base for wildlife initiatives, such as the depicting of local nature trails in the village green, these can be expanded upon over the years.

Involvement of the local national school is a key component for success in this category, it is important that committee approach the Principle to ensure that the school has an input into the development of the proposed fauna and flora information board planned for the village green.

Continuation of the progress being undertaken in this category, as well as possible increase in marks, will see a legacy for future generations in Castlebridge.

Litter Control:

Considering the level of traffic and the volume of visitors the Village had very little litter, some was observed inside the boundary wall at the Millhaven Housing Estate.

The regular litter picks are paying dividends and the committee is to be complimented for promoting the concept of good litter control management to wider local community.

Do continue with your community promotion programmes as the message of anti litter has to be constant

Waste Minimisation:

The committee should continue involve itself in an awareness programme to encourage the community to continually be aware and be involved in better ways of segregating waste.

Consulting the publication How to win the Race Against Waste in your Community or the website of the same

name is a good way to get information on relevant project ideas
The School has Green flag status and both teachers and pupils are to be complemented for their efforts.
The needs analysis is an excellent idea and one that has not been noted by the adjudicator so far, well done on this initiative

Tidiness:

The standard varied within different parts of the village.
The adjudicator appreciates that it is hard to achieve a level of near perfection when certain contributory factors are outside the control of a voluntary body.
The aforementioned car park area at the Mill and Pottery Gallery is quite untidy; the simple remedial measures mentioned in the built environment category would make such a positive improvement.
A number of rusty gates were noted during a walkabout, maybe a committee member might approach owners to apply a coat of hammerite to make these more acceptable.
On the positive side the village is not over encumbered with a proliferation of overhead wires and we note that you have plans to lobby for the ducting of existing ones
The vast majority of properties and homesteads are tidy and well presented and road surfaces are good.

Residential Areas:

The standard of presentation of private residences in the village and its immediate surrounds was very good, it is very obvious that a pride of place is very much to the forefront of residents.
Whether it was premonition of the arrival of the adjudicator or not or not but there was a number of people cleaning boundary walls and tending to gardens on the day which was a good one by Irish standards.
The village and the outskirts has a large number of both established and newer housing developments.
All were visited which demanded more than a modicum of leg work, all were presented to a very high standard.
One does not want to be seen to favouring one area over the other but the residents of Oak Tree Heights deserve special mention for the way the estate and especially the green area is kept.
Barleycourt is a nice new development near the core of the village, the bank opposite was unsightly because of dead grass which was treated with strong weed killer.
Can the developer be approached to either re seed or landscape the area?
Congratulations to all the local residents for presenting their respective residences, be they large or small, to such a high standard

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The main roads into the village had very good road surfaces and the entrances were enhanced by the fact that signs were both clean and visible which is the basic requirement.
Verges and hedgerows were treated in accordance with recommended guidelines
It is a bit of a nightmare trying to walk within certain parts of the village and its extremities.
The Enniscorthy road exit out by Bridge Rovers grounds, the Bogside is an apt name! and further out could do with a narrow footpath.
Outside of these gripes the standard of roads and back areas was quite good.

General Impression:

It was nice to visit a village with such a rich history as Castlebridge has.
The job in hand did not allow me the luxury to explore the history of the parish in detail, this I will rectify by returning very soon for a more leisurely visit.
The spirit of Tidy Towns is strong in Castlebridge due in no small measure to the work and plans of the very proactive committee.
You have tackled contentious issues with sensitivity, do not despair that some of these are taking time to put right as you have done your utmost.
The village has great potential in the competition and is improving each year.
Tackle the issues that can be solved in a relatively short time and just hope that circumstances will change to allow the major ones to be solved.
You are wished well in future years.