

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ferns** Ref: **842**
County: **Wexford** Mark: **211**
Category: **B** Date(s): **03/07/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	28
The Built Environment	50	31
Landscaping	50	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	21
Litter Control	50	27
Waste Minimisation	20	3
Tidiness	30	12
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25
General Impression	10	6
TOTAL MARK	400	211

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the entry form that contained a useful map of the area. I also read over the 3 year plan and I see you are to contact people in new housing estates re setting up residents associations, and this is the correct approach. In other areas they run a competition for the best kept housing estate or area, and it is found to be very beneficial and brings out a pride of place approach in people. Other aspects of the plan indicate you intend to keep up the good work.

I note you have 23 committee members and monthly meetings are held plus walkabouts of the area. The cuttings from the local newspaper and the newsletters show that you are communicating well with the parishioners, and the photographs supplied are good records of work in progress. You are interacting well with Wexford County Council and the other local agencies. It is worthwhile, as you do, to keep in touch with the local schools as this gets the children to become aware of their local environment from a young age. It is interesting to learn that there is a positive feedback from the TidyTowns Competition. Congratulations again to Rita Reid and her team of gardening enthusiasts plus the parishioners of Sr Edan's Cathedral whose garden was named as the adjudicator's favourite in last year's TidyTowns Competition.

The Built Environment:

Ferns Castle in ruins is very well secured by National Monuments with suitable mortar that points the stones. The grounds are maintained in superb condition and one can enjoy the unique architectural features of the building. The visitor centre on the grounds of the castle is a great modern stone building and is situated neatly away from the ruins. The Catholic Church has wonderful architectural characteristics where the quality of the workmanship is high, with some good landscaping around it. The Church of Ireland Cathedral is a stately old stone building with an imposing belfry and sported some attractive landscaping. Congratulations to all concerned in keeping the two churches in such wonderful condition. All the business houses in the town are

maintained to a high standard and the one that attracted me were Centra, Dunbars, Apple Green service station. The new developments near the Green Apple that contains Rynhart hair designs, Chieftain bookmakers and some other new shops is a very well designed complex and built to a very standard, and it fits in very well with the rest of the town. The Courtyard looked splendid with impressive sign writing. The schools are well maintained, and the one across the road from the Garda barracks, looked crisp and fresh and appeared to be extended a few times. Simply Tasty has a decorative shop front as has Doyles bar. Howard's betting sported good quality window boxes and good sign writing.

Landscaping:

There is some wonderful landscaping right through the town, and I admired in particular St Mogue's Well and the adjoining monument to the well is a very attractive stone structure. There are some great stretches of grassed areas that were kept in a very good state with lovely shrubs and flower beds and these enhance the town greatly. The graveyard looked spectacular and is secured by that fine, herring bone style, stone wall. The Grotto looked very good. The landscaping in the centre of the town going up towards the church is of a very high standard. The children's playground is a good amenity, but I feel it could be improved a bit. Splendid landscaping was admired in the grounds of the Church of Ireland.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

I note you are trying to identify a place for a picnic area, and you suggested near St Mogue's well, and I have to agree with the comments from Wexford County Council that that area is not suitable due to the heavy traffic. Ferns is a haven for wildlife with all those great old mature trees and hedging, plus all the new plantings and of course the stone walls. It is good to find that you are still encouraging a river walk.

Litter Control:

It is obvious that you are giving this topic a lot of attention, and there was practically no litter on my visit.

Waste Minimisation:

I inspected the bring bank area at the side of the Garda barracks and saw just four bins, which would not be enough for this size town, unfortunately in this area a number of black plastic bags of some kind of waste were left there. Is there another bring area in the town? You could encourage the concept of composting.

Tidiness:

The town was presented, for the most part, in a neat and tidy fashion. Some weeds were growing on the footpath near the new bus stop.

Near the children's playground there was some material in plastic bags either stored or dumped there, and it was quite unsightly. There is an unsightly building on the Carnew road with a galvanised roof that needs some attention near Doyle's bar.

Residential Areas:

Most of the houses around the town are maintained in very good condition, and some of them are in wonderful repair and complimented the excellent public landscaping with splashes of shrubs, mature trees, neat lawns and an array of flowers. St Mogue's cottage looked splendid. The housing estates are maintained in very good condition and there is good signage in nearly all of them, and some of them have very impressive entrances. There is a very nice small housing estate on the Carnew road that does not have a nameplate.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

All the roads leading to Ferns are in very good condition. But the N11 main road through the town is very busy, and I feel that there will need to be a bypass built there in the near future. It is quite dangerous to cross this main road. Some great fencing mainly traditional stone walls are in place. There is a really fine stone wall on the side road out by Dunbars, but unfortunately there is quite an amount of ivy growing on it, which will eventually destabilise the stonework. You could consider the removal of this ivy, and if that action is taken, with respect, could I suggest that it is no use cutting the ivy at the butt, as it will continue to grow further up on the wall. Ivy feeds from the lime in the stones and from the mortar in the crevices.

General Impression:

It was a pleasure to visit Ferns and stroll along those streets. This town has improved very much over the past few years and the new developments are done in a very responsible manner. Well done for presenting the town in such a pleasant fashion.

