

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Blessington** Ref: **713**
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **208**
Category: **D** Date(s): **08/07/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	28
The Built Environment	50	28
Landscaping	50	23
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	18
Litter Control	50	32
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	13
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	24
General Impression	10	6
TOTAL MARK	400	208

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for your completed entry application form submitted by email. Your entry makes clear the difficulties you are labouring under. and we are delighted that you have by your own efforts successful reached the target you set yourself. Blessington is enduring very heavy traffic volumes and on the day of adjudication this was exacerbated by the pipe laying work currently in progress. The new complex of shops in the side street have given a new vitality and attractiveness to the centre. St. Kevin's Community Centre was very well presented and we liked the markers which have given a definition to the streets. The luminous strips attached seem to have cheapened them somewhat. The Wicklow County Council Offices were well presented, neat and orderly and of a modern new design. The Fire Station looked well but the grass does need to be cut. Meanwhile the Downshire Arts Centre in the former hotel was very well presented.

The Built Environment:

The Garda Station caught the eye as did the attractive horseshoe design gate dated 1852. Blafe's Ladies Fashion and Childcare looked well while the Credit Union House had a good level of presentation. The St. Mary's Church of Ireland building incorporating the Family Service and Children's Club did look well. The West Wicklow House was attractive as was the SuperValu Supermarket. The Church of Our Lady featured good flowers to the front but the moss on the roof does need attention. The small scale Post Office in its attractive green livery looked well while the Headstart Cocoon was cheerful and fresh with very well cut grass. The Grangecon Cafe, off Main Street caught the eye.

Landscaping:

The central and imposing monument to the Marquis of Downshire is a fine element of hard landscape. The front panel which is now unreadable need to be re-cut or otherwise treated. The general presentation around

the monument needs attention. There are excellent flowerbeds at St. Mary's Church of Ireland and the monument in the town centre. There are good examples of planting at the commercial centre notable Statioil. For best effect when grass is being cut it should be cut back to the start of the curbs tops so that the curbs stand free of the encroaching grass.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

We welcome your intention to discuss the pond area to the north of the relief road with both the schools and the major local developer. We hope these talks advance this interesting project. There is increasing importance being given each year on the need to incorporate project involving the enhanced presentation of wildlife or on those designed to enhance public awareness and appreciation of the bird and wildlife in the area. Discuss the options with a local bird life enthusiast who may be able to assist in the creation of a programme of interest to the schools.

Litter Control:

The general level of litter on the day of adjudication was modest in extent. The litter bins in places do need to be replaced as some have been badly interfered with and are disfigured by graffiti. There are good bins on show at Oak Drive and also at the Church Of Our Lady. It is unfortunate that there is no street sweeping available from the local authority and one hopes having regard to the high traffic transit figures plus the adherent importance of the centre that this policy decision can be amended over time.

Waste Minimisation:

The new location for the bring centre in the car park behind Dunne's Stores is a very large improvement. It was being used and respected on the day of adjudication. This category also is concerned that the community at large and individual households implement methods of reducing the generation of waste in all its forms. Considerable guidance is readily available, read the booklet from Race against Waste and discuss the staging of a seminar to address these issues with the environment department of Wicklow County Council. The object of this campaign is to reduce the amount of waste being carted to landfill sites. Its success means everyone wins.

Tidiness:

Your efforts to maintain the Main Street in a fit and proper manner are applauded. The removal of weeds, posters and even to the extent of dealing with blocked drains is a commendable effort on behalf of your local town. We commend the standards achieved at Kenny's Supermarket car park, very well maintained grassed areas. Out side Dunne's Stores an informal pathway has been trampled across the newly laid grass. The strategic positioning of a litter bin or other street furniture to "guild" people around the grassed area might help matters.

Residential Areas:

Glenview Court featured an excellent wall at its entrance and was very well presented. Oak Drive featured good individual gardens but standards did vary. In Ashton Estate a number of the front facing walls needed attention.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The surface on the Tullow Main Road, even allowing for the current works in progress there, is not good. Perhaps when the present extensive works have been completed the road surface will receive must needed attention

Many road signs badly need to be washed due to traffic staining especially those on Ballyknockan Road. St. Joseph's Road while not as critical does need attention.

General Impression:

Running through your entry form is the extent to which you feel constrained by the current lack of basic services from local authority. It may be helpful to draft a 3 year programme setting out the priority projects Blessington Tidy Towns hope to achieve over that time span and indicating the role you would envisage of the local authorities. A second part of the same plan or programme is to identify the ongoing continuous operations which you are currently undertaking or propose to undertake over the next three years. Again this should identify the role you expect and require the council to undertake. This should then be discussed with the various stakeholders including local elected representatives for their thoughts and support. A formal meeting with appropriate officials from the environment section and road section of the local council should then trash out what aid and assistance can be made available.

Thank you for your effort to project Blessington in a favourable light. All involved in this years entry are

thanked for their interest and applauded for their efforts. You are wished well in 2009.