

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Inistioge** Ref: **394**
County: **Kilkenny** Mark: **291**
Category: **B** Date(s): **19/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	46
The Built Environment	50	40
Landscaping	50	44
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25
Litter Control	50	32
Waste Minimisation	20	13
Tidiness	30	19
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	37
General Impression	10	9
TOTAL MARK	400	291

Overall Development Approach:

Your entry form was full of useful information and your map was one of the most comprehensive received – would that all other committees did the same! Yours expresses the careful attention to detail seen in the village itself. The ‘Snapshot in Time’, including the excellent Newsletter, should be preserved as a collector’s item. It is good to read of the support you enjoy from a number of public and private bodies, and particularly good to read of the co-operation of the pupils and staff National School. Features in this report receive mention either because they are of exceptional quality, or because they may require some improvement; unmentioned features may be considered to be satisfactory. This year the village was having to endure building developments which inevitably caused some disarray; such disruption is unavoidable, but it does result in a slightly smaller increase in marking than one would wish to give; the judges can only report what they see rather than what they would wish to see.

The Built Environment:

The buildings of Inistioge are very much a part of a townscape that has grown up over the centuries in an unplanned and uniquely characterful way, each separate structure relying on the next for its effect in a distinctively neighbourly fashion. In the two categories listed here, let us consider the public and commercial buildings under the above heading, and private buildings under ‘Residential’ (below), but always remembering that the two categories are inter-dependent for their pleasing overall effect: united we stand. In the first category, the two churches and Prior’s Tower must take pride of place for their architectural interest and for the loving manner in which they are maintained. The graveyard that unites them is unusually interesting with its examples of tomb sculpture from so many periods; it is not possible for such a heterogeneous and ancient cemetery to be ‘tidy’, nor would one wish it to be so, but it is extremely well kept. The old ‘Castle’ is a quaint structure, one of a kind that unfortunately were so often swept away in development schemes in the 20th century (Kilkenny city had a number of them); the rusticated fountain on the approach to the Woodstock gates

is another. The business premises in the village are well presented; the Daybreak shop especially catching the eye. It is worth mentioning that mass-produced signs, of which there are very few in Inistioge, should be discouraged; shops and pubs that have such signs are not selected for consideration under 'Best Shopfront' awards.

Landscaping:

The immensely long herbaceous border on the Thomastown road provides a wonderful welcome to Inistioge. It was photographed and will be entered for the Landscaping award, as was the charming walk up to St Columcille's holy well. Planting at Hatchpenny Lane, and on both sides of the magnificent bridge, was admired. Pyramids of red geraniums added interest and colour. The Square gives a delightfully refreshing air to the village centre, and the Riverside Park is notable for its well-kept green spaces and for not being trammelled with endless flowerbeds. The interpretative and informational board in the same park will be hugely helpful to local people and visitors alike.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Trees normally come under this heading. Your entry form declares a remarkable inventory of tree-planting over the last year – significantly adding to the extensive stock of ancient and newer trees in and around the village. Work on the stream, the supply of bat and bird boxes (some of which were seen), and the creation of an additional wild life area at the lower end of the Riverside Park, demonstrate extensive informed activity.

Litter Control:

Very little disposable litter was seen on the day of the visit. Congratulations to those people who undertake patrols, and special congratulations to school pupils.

Waste Minimisation:

The activities listed on your entry form are numerous and impressive. Very few towns or villages do so well under this heading – a heading which will become more and more important as time goes on. Special congratulations to the pupils and staff of the school for their green flag status.

Tidiness:

In an usually tidy village it was a pity to see some dereliction in Hatchery Lane; the derelict house on the corner of the Square appeared to be about to be renovated. Essential ongoing construction work was seen near the WC. The excavation on Mill Road is probably attributable to the site for a new house. The 'House for Sale' and adjacent ongoing development below the churches give a temporarily less than prepossessing look to the area. All these will be overcome, probably quite rapidly.

Residential Areas:

The stock of older houses that clamber up the hill is of course one of the great attractions of Inistioge. These homes are maintained with real pride. Of newer developments, the houses in the estate adjacent to the bring bank were richly painted. New 'dormer' type town houses opposite the bring bank are very much in keeping with local tradition – congratulations to the architect and developer. Perhaps a variation in colour might be considered for the new houses higher up off Mill Road. Sandford Court is very promising indeed, especially the use of traditional materials. The Black Church development, in progress, will be looked forward to; you might use your influence to ensure that there is adequate tree planting here.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Well done to the committee for painting the traffic signs. Strong representations should be made to the local authority to have unsightly poles and wires removed and more attractive lamp standards installed, as has been done with success in so many other centres. Road surfacing had still be to completed on the date of judging in one of the new estates off Mill Road, and this will be looked forward to next year.

General Impression:

Not only the most attractive and best kept village in the county, but also one of the best in the country as a whole, the people of Inistioge may deservedly be proud of their committee and of their volunteer helpers – and proud of themselves for their individual contributions.