

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Castletownbere** Ref: **597**
County: **Cork(West)** Mark: **253**
Category: **C** Date(s): **17/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	42
The Built Environment	50	36
Landscaping	50	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	26
Litter Control	50	31
Waste Minimisation	20	13
Tidiness	30	14
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	23
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	253

Overall Development Approach:

Congratulations to the Castletownbere Tidy Towns Committee for participating in the Tidy Towns Competition 2009. Thank you for your submission, the photos, the Plan, the supporting material and for your map. A hand drawn sketch of the town which highlights the places you regard as being most important for the Tidy Towns Competition should be easier to follow than the detained map provided. Your submission suggests you are an enthusiastic group of people who keep their public informed and who are doing their utmost to involve new members. You are interacting with a wide variety of groups and agencies. A particularly laudable feature of your submission was your description of the benefit to your committee of your interaction with each of the various bodies. Your engagement with the schools is also having the desired effect with the achievement of Green Flag Status by Scoil Croí Ró Naofa. Influencing the behaviour of teenagers can be challenging and working with transition year students is a good start. As the harbour area has a major bearing on the appearance of Castletownbere, the cooperation of the people involved is crucial to the advancement of your ambitions. Continue to be involved with the people whose decisions shape the appearance of Castletownbere and to be involved with the people whose behaviour influences the quality of life of all who live there.

The Built Environment:

One is struck by the renewal that has happened in Castletownbere in the past few years. This renewal has eliminated problem sites and improved the image of the town. Your submission lists so many of those improvements. Your 3 year plan states that you will 'continue to encourage people to repair derelict sites and damaged walls'. In what way are you tackling this problem at the moment? There are many buildings that detract from the image you aspire to, so this campaign needs to be targeted. There are a number of sheds in

places that could be heritage buildings in a few years if tended to. What is the status of the school building and site on the Back Road? Main street is a joy. The overall colour scheme and the shop fronts are most attractive. The Church and the Harbour Lodge are a joy. Maintenance of the wooden bell stand in the Church grounds is a priority. Another unique feature is found on the roofs of the buildings by Super Valu where those dormer windows must have a particular heritage significance. Berehaven Credit Union and the Garda Station all contribute colour and traditional design to the townscape. One admires the Beara Adult Education Centre. Further out of town the Community-Action building and landscaping are attractive and a credit to all involved. St Joseph's Hospital area is attractively maintained. The schools are very well presented. The buildings and streetscape of Castletownbere represent a town at a particular time of development in its history, shedding the old and embracing the new. A challenge is to marry the various traditions and maintain a fishing harbour ethos.

Landscaping:

The protruding natural stone is a wonderful backdrop to many examples of the landscaping in the town. Some residents have made great use of this stone with bedding plants or azalea or whatever lighting up the summer. The stone is complimented by a beautifully dressed stone wall at the Glengarriff side. Locmicquelic Gardens are a joy. The area around the Harrington bust is most pleasant. As a general comment Bed and Breakfast houses make a special effort with their landscaping. There are some corners that would benefit from landscaping to brighten up their surroundings. Weeds are a problem even in a beautiful bed as at the staff car park of one of the schools.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Castletownbere has to be a haven for wildlife of so many different varieties. The challenge is to identify what wildlife visit and inhabit Castletownbere, when they are about, what their needs are. A lot of work has been done by you in this area already. The railed bridge onto Dinish Island is an invitation to visit and well worth the trouble. Even though the sign said to keep off the grass one has to walk in this area and one looks forward to the restoration of the amenity walk. The sculpture here seems to reflect the importance of the sea in the lives of the inhabitants of Castletownbere down the years. One hopes that the bats have greater success in finding their boxes than this adjudicator had and that they do not get their Churches mixed up! Compliments on the many signs throughout which point one to a walking adventure.

Litter Control:

It is clear that the Tidy Towns Committee is active in the fight against litter and dumping. One saw at least two notices. Your initiative in having the ashtrays installed for the various businesses is a clever plan. Well done on your success in the Litter League Challenge for 2007. The amount of litter noticed suggests that your work is proving successful. The numbers participating in the Spring Clean and the school involvement also have an educational and awareness value, apart from the hand they lend. As collecting of litter is labour intensive this awareness of the impact of litter may also help reduce the amount created.

Waste Minimisation:

Well done on the projects outlined in your submission. One is especially pleased to note that a school is involved in the 'healthy eating' programme and won an award. As this is a fishing town your interaction with the fishing enterprises is commendable. One notes that there is no mention of plans for next years in your submission for waste minimisation.

Tidiness:

The well painted shop fronts create a tidy and neat image to the main street. Houses that are painted and well landscaped add further to the image of a cared-for town with good community spirit. But there is evidence of negligence. The weeds in estates and on back roads are a problem. Road surfaces have suffered with the recent building boom. Dirty signs or rusted posts on signs need to be identified, cleaned, painted or replaced.

Residential Areas:

The private houses throughout the town are proudly maintained and provide wonderful colour by their landscaping. The older estates, for instance, the stone terraced houses on the Castletownbere road reflect the early years of the last century and add to their surroundings. There is a lovely, cosy estate behind the hotel but it is in need of upkeep. Closer to the Community School is a beautiful estate overlooking the town. There are many new schemes about, many of them as yet unpainted but all creating promise.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Your submission outlines all of the improvements that have been taking place in the course of the year and the list is impressive and worthwhile. The Glengarriff approach road is certainly impressive. Yet none of the approach roads herald the imminence of this very special fishing town. Roadside weeds or kerbside weeds create an impression of lack of care. There seems to be no coherent philosophy regarding management of roadside verges. The area described on the map as the Back Road is in need of attention. A attractive feature of Castletownbere is the number of entrances to main street from both sides. One outstanding example is the stepped way beside the Church. Access to the harbour is also well facilitated. There are so many bits of walls about the town, usually untreated block walls and none add to the attraction of the town.

General Impression:

One is almost exhausted from the description of the planning and the litany of activities outlined in the your submission. One feels that your efforts are achieving some success but that many challenges still exist. Target certain clearly defined projects or schemes where immediate improvement will be tangible.