

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Leixlip** Ref: **376**  
County: **Kildare** Mark: **259**  
Category: **G** Date(s): **07/07/2009**

|                                | Maximum<br>Mark | Mark<br>Awarded 2009 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Overall Development Approach   | 50              | 35                   |
| The Built Environment          | 50              | 32                   |
| Landscaping                    | 50              | 35                   |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 50              | 30                   |
| Litter Control                 | 50              | 30                   |
| Waste Minimisation             | 20              | 8                    |
| Tidiness                       | 30              | 16                   |
| Residential Areas              | 40              | 32                   |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas  | 50              | 33                   |
| General Impression             | 10              | 8                    |
| <b>TOTAL MARK</b>              | <b>400</b>      | <b>259</b>           |

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Welcome to the 2009 competition. Thank you for your considered submission and maps which made it easy to identify projects and tasks around the town which have received your attention. Your analysis of previous adjudicators' recommendations and listing of your actions on foot of them was very informative. It is also indicative of your determination for progress. I hope that on reviewing your progress over the past few years you felt a sense of well deserved achievement. The work load of a Tidy Towns Committee expands rather than contracts with success. However as with many great creations often the trick is to know when a piece is finished. One feature of this year Tidy Towns assessments will I'm sure be the problem of empty or indeed unfinished properties. You already have some experience of this in Leixlip, and you have my best wishes in using the planning enforcement laws to help resolve these problems. Your committee is effective. I noted your successful publicity, effective working relationships with schools, youth groups and of course the local authorities. I admire the sentiment of your logo, meitheal, it is of course an essential element in any successful community, and you seem to have encouraged it in Leixlip.

### **The Built Environment:**

Leixlip was a rich heritage of Georgian and nineteenth century residential architecture at its core, which should be protected jealously. Many of the shops are object lessons in facade restoration and conservation, good examples being The Fiddle Shop and Murphy's Pub. I note your interest in restoring the trees opposite the Georgian townhouses on The Mall, perhaps best I think to leave well enough alone. Trees in front of these buildings will obstruct our view of them and light into the properties. Good luck with having the broken sections of wall opposite the Springfield Hotel repaired, its current state represents a poor welcome to the town. It is not always necessary to go for the antique look in a heritage town. The Police Station, which is relatively new, looks splendid, crisp and clean and the best of modern design. I was impressed with the quality of the street furniture. The chrome hand rails and seats along the river walk look and function well. The use of a consistent

brick paving, on all of the town's foot paths, is functional and looks well. I enjoyed the new steps to the Scout Den with its surround, at the top portion, of wild flowers. The work on St Mary's Church is worth encouraging and should see it survive for a few more centuries. Well done with targeting of illegal signs and empty premises. The enforcement section of the planning act will be of great help to you in this endeavour.

#### **Landscaping:**

I was impressed with the number of landscape projects that you have undertaken. These are of real visual benefit to several hitherto neglected looking sections of the town. Easton Roundabout, Gallivans Hill, Captains Hill Alcove, the welcome beds at the town signs, and the work at Rye River Walk entrance and the butterfly beds are all a credit to your work. The new design for the planters is highly effective. Some areas of the town do not need any more planting. I am mindful of the advice of last year's adjudicator with respect to the Jarlet Daly sculpture on Main Street. Personally I am of the opinion that the hard surfaces compliment the artwork and that it does not need any further adornment or softening. Your idea for themed sculptures on the roundabout is great and I look forward to seeing the results. The oak barrels are decorative and are evidently well looked after. I was very impressed with "key hole entrance" to the river side walk, and the quality of its furniture, hard and soft landscaping.

#### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

Your plans for a bio-diversity project in Sileachan Valley are now well under way and I look forward to seeing your proposed information boards and improved access to the Valley. The benefits of the scheme's success are numerous, educational, environmental, and indeed preserving a green lung within the town. Equally important are your long term plans for the Rye Valley. Congratulations on your success so far at the entrance to the valley from Pound Street. The walk is a delight, well presented with inviting picnic tables and the butterfly beds are an inspiration.

#### **Litter Control:**

I was impressed by the lack of litter evident around the central village area. I have the impression that you have helped to considerably improve the cleanliness of this area with the achievement of more frequent sweepings. Good luck with your campaign to have bye-laws compelling owners of premises which allow smoking outside their premises to install butt containers. A litter black spot is the area around the re-cycling facility in the Lidl car park. It should be attended to more frequently with special attention paid to the amount of rubbish dumped behind the containers. The amount of litter in the car park itself was disappointing. Another black spot was the amount of rubbish including open plastic bags lying to the rear of the Lousia Apartment complex. The development is looking overgrown and in need more assertive management. Finally on my "crit list" is the path at the Rhy River Walk which was littered at the time of my visit. Your nicely named "Broomsday" clean ups play an important part in encouraging litter awareness amongst residents in addition to securing the removal of litter from specific locations. Keep up the good work with weekly clean ups Your application to this issue is clear and evident in the generally litter free state of the village.

#### **Waste Minimisation:**

Congratulations on the high number of your schools that have been granted a green flags or which are in the process of applying for one. It is an important opportunity for students in your area not only to learn about environmental issues such as litter, energy, travel and water, but also allows the students take ownership of these issues themselves, and to make plans on how to improve these areas within the school and the wider community. You are evidently not well served with facilities and I wish you well in your efforts to secure more recycling centres and bottle banks for the town.

#### **Tidiness:**

The village generally looks neat and tidy. Congratulations on your landscaping of the area in front of the ESB transformer. It now looks well and is an asset to the town. You are evidently making progress with the relevant authorities in have action taken against unauthorised signage. Some of the towns shop fronts are in need of a good cleaning and painting. It is of course in the interest of the letting agents to keep their client's properties in an acceptable condition. I noted some isolated cases of vandalism, particularly along the river walk. Good luck with the complex problem of tacking the nuisance of overhead cables. Graffiti however is still a problem. Tackling this problem requires wide community involvement in making a determined effort to ensure that it is removed quickly. A new graffiti reduction programme was launched in 2008. It has good advice on graffiti removal and community projects that offer an alternative for the spray can would-be artists. Information can be found on the Pobal website and in your TidyTowns information pack.

#### **Residential Areas:**

Your work with residents associations and organising of the Tidy Estate Competitions has paid dividends. Most of the estates through the town are well landscaped and neat. I particularly like the simple layout of the Rockingham Estate with its open space. It is typical of the standards through the area rather than an exception. Special praise should go to a number of gardens. Walking down Mill Lane was a pleasure. Your adopt an area competition is innovative and should quickly show results.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

I have already noted the quality of the pavements in the town, and I saw few problems with the road surfaces. Please keep up your plans for the roundabouts, some of which do not do Leixlip justice. Evidently some improvement works have been carried out on Mill Lane, and to the Captains Hill car park since the last adjudication. Back lanes were generally clean.

**General Impression:**

The village is looking well. I enjoyed my visit. You are doing a great job with a good team, keep up the good work.