

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Castlebar** Ref: **512**
County: **Mayo** Mark: **274**
Category: **F** Date(s): **14/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	49
The Built Environment	50	38
Landscaping	50	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	26
Litter Control	50	23
Waste Minimisation	20	13
Tidiness	30	16
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	274

Overall Development Approach:

Castlebar Tidy Towns Committee is welcome to the 2009 Competition. You have a relatively small committee, given the size of the town. It contains members from all of the relevant local organisations such as schools, chamber of commerce, town council, residents associations etc., which seems sensible and logical. We were pleased to hear of the 3 Year Action Plan. You appear to have a strong relationship with Mayo County Council, the Town Council, Chamber of Commerce, North West Fisheries Board, Bird Watch Ireland, an Taisce, local schools etc, which is all to the good. The competitions for schools for essays and photography sound very interesting.

The Built Environment:

The planning workshops sound very interesting, as do the retail guidelines and associated workshops. The plan for the redevelopment of main street sounds interesting, perhaps the drawings could be included in next year's submission if work is not completed at that stage. The mural project at Lucan Street sounds like another unusual and worthwhile idea. Ard Bhríde Residence and grounds looked well, a modern building set up above the hillside. The Fire station was well presented, with well maintained grounds. There are many new blocks of buildings on the Westport approach from the bypass, that with the Post Office and Peter Mark's was well maintained. Guiney's is a nice modern shopfront. Market street shopfronts looked well, with a few buildings not up to the same standard. The various churches around the town looked well, particularly the Catholic Church with its attractive Centenary mosaic. The parish centre looked well opposite. The Mall area looked well as ever, although the Christian Fellowship building could do with a fresh coat of paint before next year's competition. The Courthouse looked well in render and limestone. The Royal Hotel and Theatre is very bright and cheerful. The hospital looked well opposite. The grounds to GMIT looked well, but its signage was a little grubby. Do ensure that the render is not removed from traditional vernacular buildings to reveal the stonework below, as this is not only incorrect from a conservation point of view, but can also lead to problems

with water penetration.

Landscaping:

The new square right in the centre of the town is an attractive modern intervention with seating, lighting and sculpture. The lights needed washing to their base areas. The granite paving, trees and pike sculpture to the other side of the square look well. The Peace Park looked marvellous on the day. Work at the graveyard is commendable. Advice given to factories regarding landscaping is paying off, those along the ring road looked very well on the day, screening off the industrial premises very well. The daffodils along this road must have looked marvellous in the springtime. Congratulations on the appointment of Town Gardener and assistant, they must make a huge difference to your work. Proposed tree planting, work at Mc Hale Park and at the Pontoon/Turlough Road junction are looked forward to. The development of the playground areas are well worthwhile projects.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Lakeside walk at Lough Lannagh sounds like a worthwhile project, this area has matured well over the years, the bridge for this area to connect both sides of the walk is a good idea. We look forward to the wildlife information boards in this area and the wildlife survey, incorporating wildlife trail and plan. The bat nesting project sounds worthwhile, as do the bird nesting projects with the schools. The ecological report is excellent initiative, perhaps include it with next year's submission. What were its findings?

Litter Control:

We were pleased to hear that you participate in the National Spring Clean. The Adopt an Area project sounds like a worthwhile one. The coating of the Peace Park with anti-gum treatment sounds interesting. The clean up by the boy scouts of Lough Lannagh area was another worthwhile project. We look forward to seeing the results of the gum litter removal project. Some papers and bottles were evident on the Dublin Road, Westport Road and along the ring road, and to one of the roundabouts in the vicinity of Lawn Road. More papers were evident along Mountain View and the old Westport Road.

Waste Minimisation:

The proposed waste awareness campaign for schools and waste minimisation proposals sound interesting. Work with the schools in relation to the Green Flag programme is well worthwhile. Work with the Chamber of Commerce advising local businesses regarding waste minimisation is also a good initiative.

Tidiness:

We were pleased to hear of your success regarding flyposting and graffiti. We look forward to the proposed project at the entrance to the IDA Business Park. The town generally looked neat and ordered on the day.

Residential Areas:

Housing seemed a little inconsistent on the day. Some modern two storey flat roofed houses, with pre-cast concrete fronts, spotted from the ring road, were quite neglected, while houses and gardens on the Westport Road looked very well, particularly one adjacent to the garden centre on this road. B&B's contribute well to this category of the competition, in terms of standards of buildings and gardens. Competitions for landscaped open spaces and maintenance of houses are excellent ideas. Providing financial assistance to the residents associations is a good idea. Work with developers regarding signage is well worthwhile. The use of local horticultural experts to advise estates and the residents garden competitions, both sound like excellent ideas, and we look forward to seeing the results of the estates competition. Houses in the town centre were generally well cared for. Individual houses and estates along the periphery of the town were also looking well. The guidelines for housing schemes, including colour schemes, sounds most interesting. The apartments in the vicinity of Humbert Way looked well in stone and render, with their butterfly roofs. Have you had problems with incompleting housing estates and apartment developments due to the economic decline? This has been a problem in a number of towns entering the competition this year.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The road works should make a huge difference to the town in terms of new lighting, surfacing and footpaths, particularly proposals for Main Street. The development of the car park areas in terms of landscaping should also have a huge impact. Do discourage advertising hoardings, as they give roadsides a very cluttered appearance. There were many visible in the town, in particular along the Dublin Road. This road also appeared a little overgrown to verges, although this improved further in closer to the town. The roundabouts are always a pleasure to see, with their landscaping and sculptures, the spiral brass one on the Westport side of the town being particularly attractive. Verges along the ring road were well maintained. Road surfaces were a little rough on Tucker Street. New copper lamp standards were noted and admired. The Westport Road was somewhat overgrown, on the day.

General Impression:

It was a number of years since this adjudicator had the pleasure of visiting Castlebar and it was pleasing to note that it continues to perform well in the competition.