

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Lismore** Ref: **229**  
County: **Waterford** Mark: **301**  
Category: **C** Date(s): **04/06/2009**  
**23/07/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	48
The Built Environment	50	40
Landscaping	50	41
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30
Litter Control	50	40
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	37
General Impression	10	9
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>301</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

Lismore is a wonderful town with a rich heritage having great potential for the future. It is a charming town in a great location and the commitment of the TidyTowns committee will prove a great asset. We wish you well in your future plans.

### The Built Environment:

Lismore Castle is undoubtedly the most striking feature of this town and its location on the river provides a stunning setting. The Castle and its surroundings are extremely well presented and link magnificently with the town proper. The monument looked well, set in an ornate bed of red geraniums. The surrounding buildings, particularly the hotel, an imposing structure, looked well, as did the AIB Bank and the Red House on the opposite corner. The Red House was being painted on the day of adjudication and this building forms a spectacular vista when viewed from Gallow's Hill. Lismore has a fine stock of really attractive shop fronts, too numerous to mention them all. Some of the noted examples were Crotty's, The Connoisseur, the Rustic Café and Madden's Estate Agent, and further along is J.P. Daly, O'Brien, Cahill's, Summerhouse and indeed many more. On the junction of North Mall and Main Street, there is an attractive cluster of commercial buildings including An Post, Foley's on the Mall, and M.J.'s Sweets 'n Treats. The vista from here enclosed by the Cathedral is truly magnificent and the ongoing conservation works at the Cathedral were noted. The area was well presented with the grass areas neatly maintained and the vivid red of the geranium bed at the corner was spectacular. Further along the East Main Street at the FDI Centre, restoration work was being carried out to the ornate fanlight of a magnificent entrance door on the day of adjudication. There was a high standard of presentation of buildings throughout the town and the many recent reconstructions and redevelopments outlined and highlighted in your report were noted. Also noted, as outlined in your report, are your ongoing efforts to address the small remaining areas of dereliction and it is to be hoped that your committee will be successful in this endeavour in the years ahead.

### **Landscaping:**

There is a substantial amount of high quality landscaping provided and maintained in the town centre particularly in the Millennium Park with its attractive water displays and Bandstand feature. The tower of St Carthagh's Church looks magnificent when viewed from this park. Opposite, it was noted that, ongoing landscaping works were being carried out in the hotel car park and on completion this will be a substantial improvement to its town centre location. The linear shrubbery and flower bed, located outside the stone boundary wall of the hotel car park, looked magnificent. The newly landscaped park and picnic area at the canal is a fine addition and the topiary features, wishing well, sunflowers with centrepiece floodlighting, and lanterns together with the polished sandstone tables and seating are truly impressive and a most welcoming feature at this important introduction to the town. The linear zig-zag shrubbery located opposite also looked well. Lismore continues to have a very high standard of landscaping presentation to both incidental public spaces and private gardens widely dispersed throughout the town. South Mall is impressive and the box hedging to the base of individual trees here is a fine feature. Attractive hanging baskets located to the front gardens of private residences at Chapel Place were noted, as were replacement plant boxes at the entrance to the grounds of St Carthagh's Church. St Carthagh's Home is nicely landscaped and grass was being mown on the day of adjudication. The timber seating and kneeler in front of the grotto would benefit from a repaint. The Poorhouse is an attractive building, now becoming substantially derelict. Its presentation could be vastly improved by weeding and grass-cutting to the front garden and the removal of an inappropriate rubble heap here. The Blackwater Community College and its grounds were well presented and the shrubberies and flag poles were well maintained.

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

As outlined last year, Lismore has an abundance of natural wildlife habitats. In conjunction with the local schools, the Lismore Estate and Heritage Centre, the committee has developed a nice network of wildlife areas and on the day of adjudication the geese on the canal were being admired and photographed by a number of visitors. Your progress under this heading is impressive and the reports submitted clearly outline the tasks that lie ahead and the progress already made. The survey by Paul Green and the student action plan will help to raise awareness of the rich wildlife and amenity heritage of the area. Well done on this initiative!

### **Litter Control:**

Once again the town appeared to be substantially litter free and the high standard of the past is being maintained. On the day of adjudication, the two litter bins located at the Millennium Park were full and some litter had overflowed and blown on to the grass area. It is great that you carry out a daily litter roster in all areas in the town from March to October, and no doubt this initiative together with the regular street sweeping by the County Council will maintain a high standard in this category.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

Your waste minimisation programme is obviously a great success and it is great to hear that all stakeholders have been contacted and informed of your initiative. No doubt this effort, together with Waterford County Council's initiative on recycling and waste minimisation, will provide a lead for other centres to emulate. The bottle and clothing bank located at the Poor Law Workhouse had a number of discarded cardboard boxes close by, the ground was strewn with broken glass and the receptacles themselves would need to be freshened up. Your involvement with the schools is again noted and no doubt this very commendable initiative will continue to bear fruit in the years ahead.

### **Tidiness:**

Your progress on the continuing development of derelict sites is impressive and is clearly outlined in your report. The overall impression is generally one of tidiness and of a high standard. Your intention to have Louisa's Gates painted is noted and this will provide an attractive entrance to the canal area. The diesel pump at the Ballyrafter filling station needs freshening up. We note your comments relating to anti-social behaviour and your efforts to control this ubiquitous problem. On the day of adjudication, the gable wall of the public toilets and the information boards adjacent were defaced and stained with mud. We wish you luck in this endeavour. The presentation of street furniture throughout the town was generally to a very high standard and the attractive street name signs are a feature and hugely complimentary to the historical trail.

### **Residential Areas:**

Working with residents groups is critical in a town such as Lismore and well done on your innovative and effective approach on this. The adjudicator visited a number of estates and was reasonably impressed with the standard of care and maintenance visible. Railway View is as yet uncompleted and this scheme would benefit from a substantial tree and shrub planting scheme. The adjudicator felt that, although the name of the

scheme relates to the railway, the design of the scheme does not take its influence from the wonderfully attractive adjacent railway buildings in relation to scale, materials and texture. Castle Court looked splendid with individual gardens presented to a high standard. Líos an Óir integrates well with the small scale houses of New Street. The green area here was nicely presented and well maintained. Along New Street, the flower tubs and planters, together with the street furniture, were presented to a high standard with Bonnie's Bouquets being a highlight here. The Bankfield housing scheme has well kept gardens and the grotto at the entrance is an attractive feature. The scale of traditional housing at Church Lane is unique and it is good to see that reconstructions here respect this special character. A highlight here was the magnificently maintained green and the adjoining Mountain View scheme also looked well. We note your continuing programme of enhancement to the residential areas.

### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

The adjudicator has noted over many years the high quality of the road infrastructure in Waterford County. Road surfaces, linings, signage and verges continue this high standard to this day. This factor, coupled with the magnificent stock of deciduous trees, the rich natural vegetation and the beauty of the Blackwater Valley contribute to the charming atmosphere of the approach roads. The Poor Law Workhouse approach road is bounded by well maintained private residences and contains strands of wild flowers. This contrasts with the Vee entrance road lined with attractive stone walls and nicely maintained grass margins and some fine mature trees. The planning notice for the development of a trout hatchery and the proposed re-thatching of the hut in this location is noted. The residences on the Knockanore approach road are of a particularly high standard with the thatched house being the highlight.

### **General Impression:**

Lismore is a lovely town with a strong historical tradition. The town has many opportunities for the redevelopment of buildings of a high architectural quality, some of which has already been successfully achieved. The team drawn together in the existing committee are well placed to see the town go from strength to strength and the adjudicator looks forward to visiting again. Thank you and the best of luck in your future endeavours.

### **Second Round Adjudication:**

I arrived at the area from the Cappoquin side and this is a most attractive approach to the town, with the substantial and really beautiful railing along the left hand side under attractive street lights bordered by a cobble lock footpath. On the right, there is a great traditional stone wall with a fine footpath as well. The backdrop of the Castle, Church Spire and mature trees make for a most picturesque setting. I drove into an amenity area which has a well appointed car park with tarmac surface, and this amenity area is most unusual where the cables for low positioned lights are concealed in box like hedging. A feature resembling an old well was again adorned with box like hedging. The garden furniture consists of cut stone tables and stools, and paving runs through the shrubbery. The beauty of this area would rival any similar feature in Ireland.

I got an immediate introduction to the wildlife of Lismore as there were groups of ducks and swans merrily swimming along in the river. All the other approach roads are of a high standard and give a welcoming effect to the traveller.

The landscaping at the cross for Clogheen, near the petrol station, was impressive, but the County Council signage could be freshened up. Then there is this great signpost Welcome to Lismore Heritage town, which has its own particular charm and the landscaping at the back of the stone is great. The playground is a great facility for the children of the area and it is enclosed with most attractive wrought iron railings. There is a nice picturesque view from the entrance to the Castle looking up to AIB in the distance, and the flower arrangements on the wall are supreme. Lismore castle is visually striking, it displays distinctive architectural qualities and is a stark reminder of bygone days.

The visitor information panel giving details of Lismore Heritage trail is very informative with wonderful pictures of the town, the legend makes it easy to find the different places. The Heritage centre is a great traditional building, festooned with appropriate flowers. The Millennium Park is unusual and very well laid out. I read the notice board stories from the river of time and it outlines in good detail the history of Lismore. The waterfall, timber carving, traditional stone walls, mature trees, box hedging, bandstand, water feature and Lismore Ice house are spaced out very neatly surrounded by well manicured grass lawns. I admired the Grotto with the garden seats. On a stroll around the town I rested here and there on some of the fine public seating. There is a natural landscape to Lismore to a large extent made up the traditional stone walls and mature trees which do not require much intervention above normal maintenance. There are some great shop fronts around the main streets, and Eamon's Place is a good example of this. Bunscoil Bóthar Naomh Scholl nestles beautifully and it is wonderful to see the green flags outside it. I admired the old Convent Building beside the school, now a private residence, and although its function is now very much different it has retained its original identity. The beech hedging on the Mayfield road is a welcome change from the traditional stone walls.

Tidiness and the control of litter are getting great attention as the town looked splendid. I got the impression that your enthusiasm has infected the local people as the shops and private houses displayed great shows of trees, shrubs and flowers and this bolsters the most impressive landscaping that your committee has presented consistently around the town.

The first adjudicator has given you a comprehensive report that, in my view, describes your town and efforts very well, you are awarded additional marks and I am pleased to confirm this. Well done for a truly great effort.