

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Askamore** Ref: **144**
County: **Wexford** Mark: **237**
Category: **A** Date(s): **02/07/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	33
The Built Environment	50	32
Landscaping	50	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	19
Litter Control	50	39
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	237

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the Tidy Towns Programme for 2009 and thank you for the Completed Entry Form which included the useful map of Askamore and area. Rural and small scale the community have done a fine job in identifying the chief tasks to be undertaken if the centre is to be seen in the best possible light. It is recommended you spend some of the winter period examining your village and identifying projects and objectives to achieve over the next three years. This process will form the bases of your Three Year Programme. Such a written statement is beneficial in terms of firstly concentrating your own minds on priorities, secondly in securing the wider engagement of the community at large and thirdly in the context of discussions with other agencies such as the Local Authority who's funding, co-operation and involvement you are seeking. Refer to the Tidy Towns handbook which will give you many pointers in this regard.

The Built Environment:

The church and its surrounds are very well presented. The cemetery already looking neat and well ordered is enhanced still further by the fine grotto you have recently installed in the car-park area. Well done. We admired the herringbone stone walls to either side.

You note that a number of significant items are outside the confines of the village proper, but they are more correctly seen as very much part and parcel of your heritage and history, in the same way for example as the sea is clearly part of the appeal of a small sea side town.

The improvements at the community hall are impressive and well maintained. The setting would be enhanced still further if you can arrange to set out bays for the cars which would put order on parking within the newly cover yard area. The village pump, surely the iconic symbol of the small village is well respected and suitably

presented. The school and grounds are neat and reflect well on the attention it is receiving.

Landscaping:

Pride of place goes to the cemetery and new grotto. These are been maintained to the highest standards. Clearly this voluntary effort reflects the respect and indeed affection, with which those involved in this work view their area, and by extension those who have lived there and contributed to its growth and wellbeing in the past. Such sentiments are common-place. Backing them with work, energy and continuing commitment as your community has done is sadly all too rare. Well done indeed.

The area around the church and all of the approach roads into the village proper – from quite a distance from it - have been presented in a manner that again springs from this deep pride of place which is such a joy to experience. The level of expertise in the selection of plants and shrubs is of a high order leading to an agreeable blend of colours and textures in each of the many floral displays.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your selection of wild grass and flowers at Kiltilahane Bridge designed to provide the base link in the food chain for bird life is admired. The school grounds should not be over looked as a small area here could be set aside to act as a nature reserve. An introduction to bird life at an early age can lead to a life long enriching involvement with nature in general and bird life in particular. Accordingly it fits perfectly within the educational frame work of the young students there.

The reintroduction of the red partridge to the area will be watched with interest. Success is hoped for this initiative.

Discuss other options with a local bird life enthusiast or consult the Wild Life Officer attached to the Office of Public Works for additional ideas and opinions.

Litter Control:

The eradication of litter is an ongoing process which is clearly having one of its “good days” in Askamore this year. Undoubtly prevention is better than cure and it seems that the people of the area – young and mature – have got the message. Like mentioned before they are following through not alone with honeyed words but with good example and as necessary hard work. Well done on another good presentation which again earned an additional two marks over last year’s impressive score. The anti litter signs around the place are a good idea as when it comes to litter it is a case of tell them what you are going to tell them about litter. Then tell them. Finally tell them what you have told them about litter. Repeat as required!

Waste Minimisation:

The Waste Minimisation Category is as much about encouraging a change of mind-set in respect of waste minimisation as it is about dealing with material recycling as such. Each of us is charged with firstly reducing our usage of scarce and expensive energy, with deciding to reuse items wherever appropriate and recycling materials wherever possible. In this way the amount of waste generated that has to be carried to landfill is minimised.

The location selected for the bottle bank is suitable in that it meets both requirements - it is convenient to reach and facilitates cars pulling up close which is convenient. The success of your scrap metal collection has been replicated in many other locations and looks like becoming an annual event all over Ireland.

Tidiness:

The small village is very neat and well ordered with little to include in this category. Your regular Tuesday evenings gives an opportunity to check all is in order and such matters as need attention can be seen to and corrected.

Residential Areas:

The housing stock of this little community is clearly limited but the manner of the presentation of individual houses reflects well on the attention each receives. Attention has been paid not just to the actual house but to the surrounding walls and fences. The result is a delightful rural setting offering a vista of quiet and pleasing tranquillity to the visitor and no doubt quiet satisfaction to those who have the pleasure to live in the midst of such caring surroundings.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

In a village of this size and defused nature, approach roads assume an importance even more than is usual. In a village of this nature it is beneficial to strive for a clear cut start point – a dividing line between the village itself and the surrounding, rural countryside. This can be difficult to achieve where there is not a natural almost 'self-selecting' start point. Using a combination of village name plate, speed limit signs, coupled where appropriate with suitable cutting of the verge and hedges will often if not fully meet the need, will certainly help in this regard. A junction, bridge or even a corner can also serve in this regard. Finding the village can be a daunting task as the rural net work of Wexford's roads are notorious and signposting is not always up to the task. Once located however all the approach roads into Askamore are presented in an exemplary fashion and provide a fitting introduction to this charming location. Good to report that the road surfaces are themselves well up to standard.

General Impression:

Thank you indeed for this wonderful example of real Ireland where pride of place is not an outdated concept but a daily, living reality. To everyone – and that seems to be the entire community - associated with this year's entry our best thanks and applause. Please keep up the good work. Askamore, its committee and the entire community are wished well in next year's competition.