

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Castlebridge** Ref: **133**  
County: **Wexford** Mark: **232**  
Category: **C** Date(s): **19/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	35
The Built Environment	50	31
Landscaping	50	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20
Litter Control	50	33
Waste Minimisation	20	4
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	27
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>232</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Welcome to the 2009 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission, which included a completed application form, both a short and a long term work programme, and a very clear map of the village which was of great assistance to the adjudicator on the occasion of his visit. Your committee has outlined clearly achievable objectives and the progress since last year was noticeable. Your all embracing PR efforts to drum up support amongst the wider community for TidyTown activities makes impressive reading. The Castlebridge committee, consisting of ten members, is to be congratulated on engaging the help of other agencies. It is noted that the net is widening in relation to applications for development assistance and no doubt this approach will continue to pay dividends. Your continued liaison with the local schools is to be commended and the results are proving successful. Well done in this effort!

### **The Built Environment:**

The village core has a number of fine architectural buildings and, as outlined by yourselves, some of these have fallen into disrepair and disuse for various reasons. Notwithstanding this, many of these buildings have great character and form a strong part of your tradition. Perhaps now would be a good time for the committee to engage with the Heritage Department of Wexford County Council with a view to having these buildings architecturally assessed and to outlining proposals for their long term conservation. The development at the Old Mill and Pottery Gallery already sets a high standard of design for future buildings to emulate. The car park here was in need of weed control. There is a particularly strong streetscape of fine high buildings ready for regeneration opposite Forde's Pub. The regeneration of the old St. Ibars school is a truly impressive project. The designer's sympathetic approach protected the traditional character of the building in relation to materials, texture and scale. The external landscaping is presented to a high quality and the excellent planting was complimented by appropriate seating and tables.

**Landscaping:**

The 1798 Peace Garden is certainly maintained to a high standard and presents a colourful display at this high profile corner. The Village Green is well maintained and presented, notwithstanding the ongoing work in the park. St. Ibars School grounds are certainly the highlight this year and this attractively landscaped forecourt has a magnificent array of trees, shrubs and colourful flower arrangements. The tables and seating were being well used on the day of adjudication. Elsewhere, evidence of the committee's hard work and their effective mobilisation of the wider community, is clearly to be seen in the huge number of hanging baskets, planted tubs, window boxes and flower beds throughout the village, which greatly enhances the natural setting.

**Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

Your programme on the developments of wildlife habitats at the Village Green, Peace Garden and Community Centre are noted. As a rural village Castlebridge is rich in natural wildlife, green areas and habitats and perhaps a good way of raising further awareness of environmental issues amongst the local community would be for the committee to liaise with the Green Schools programme to encourage local wildlife surveys.

**Litter Control:**

The committee is to be commended on your involvement with the local school in the promotion of regular litter-picking days and on increasing publicity through the promotion of art competitions. The village was generally litter free on the day of adjudication. However, a small quantity of litter, together with some plastic bottles, was observed on the roadside opposite the school entrance. A small quantity of paper was also noted at the park, but the adjudicator took into consideration that construction was ongoing here in the development of a wheelchair access ramp.

**Waste Minimisation:**

It is good to see that St. Ibars School has achieved Green Flag status and that the committee are now working with local businesses in an effort to reduce waste. It is also good to see that you have commenced on a composting programme. To proceed further in marks under this heading, a good idea would be to encourage the various sectors of the community to audit the amount of waste produced by themselves and to devise ways of reducing it, in addition to segregation for recycling. The Race Against Waste website contains a number of good ideas on this. It is to be hoped that this programme will be developed in the coming years and that more initiatives from this website will be adopted in the future.

**Tidiness:**

Last year's adjudicator commented on a number of areas in the village which are in need of attention. It is to be hoped that the committee will be successful in their discussions with various owners and indeed Wexford County Council regarding a number of derelict properties. The redevelopment site for the proposed new Village Centre mixed development will possibly not go ahead in the short term due to the economic climate. However, this site would visually benefit from weed cutting or further screening.

**Residential Areas:**

Castlebridge now has a large number of individual housing schemes. A number of these have been recently constructed and some have not yet been completed. It would be a good idea for the committee to compile a full list of these with a view to making contact with one resident in each scheme in order to assist in your objectives. Your committee already has a strong linkage in place with various organisations in the area and this communication would be further strengthened by contact with individual residential groups. The Cloisters scheme has matured nicely and looked well whilst the nice pastel colour scheme at Foxborough was admired. Oaktree Heights is certainly the highlight of the housing developments particularly a number of individual private gardens and the linear open space. This elevated green area is simply presented with well manicured grass areas, stone wall features and some fine mature trees. It is its unfussy presentation that gives it its great visual appeal and indeed sets a precedent in open space development that other areas could emulate. Elsewhere, there is a myriad of private residences with well presented private gardens scattered throughout the village.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Both entrances on the N11 look impressive and have attractive backdrops and the announcement signs have a welcoming appeal. At the Wexford entrance, some weed control was required, as part of this sign was obscured. It is to be hoped that the ducting of overhead wire scape will be carried out in the village core in the short term and that on completion some road resurfacing enhancement will take place.

**General Impression:**

Castlebridge has undergone some substantial development in recent years particularly in relation to road and residential development. These areas are now maturing nicely and the hand of the hard working committee is much in evidence. Well done on this great effort! We wish you continuing success in the coming years.