

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ferns** Ref: **842**
County: **Wexford** Mark: **232**
Category: **B** Date(s): **01/07/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	32
The Built Environment	50	32
Landscaping	50	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	22
Litter Control	50	30
Waste Minimisation	20	5
Tidiness	30	14
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	28
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	232

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the Tidy Towns Programme for 2009 and thank you for the Completed Entry Form, well thought out three year programme, supporting documentation, copy correspondence, press cuttings and photographs. We read with interest your input to the EEC discussion on VAT and applaud your activities in this regard. The central roundabout was bedecked with suitable flowering.

Ferns endure very heavy traffic volumes at times which clearly must impact on your capacity to tend to road related improvements. The imposing 1798 memorial cross was as always very well presented, excellent planting being a feature.

The Church in its central position looked very well and was surrounded by a well tended grassed area. We applaud the flying of flags in this highly visible location.

The group of ancient and historic churches and abbeys were as always presented in a manner that clearly reflected the affection and respect with which this generation is tending to them.

The Built Environment:

The enchanted Cottage Saint Mogue's on the Dublin Road notes it was opened after restoration by the President of Ireland. Dunbars of Ferns was an eye catching display which was very well presented and was beautiful. The shop front of T Cahill, craft butcher caught the eye. Sadly a number of shop fronts are not up to this standard, while a number are well painted. Saint Aidan's Monastery chapel of adoration reflected well on the attention it is receiving. The National School (1887) was admired as was the nearby children's play area at Rosemary Heights. The Courtyard Restaurant was neat and orderly. The Garden Centre was colourful,

bright and inviting. The imposing castle and grounds were as always impeccably presented to the standards one has come to expect from an OPW heritage property.

Landscaping:

The large cemetery on the Enniscorthy Road was admired. The large and colourful grotto was very well presented. Replacing the simple post and wire fence with a low level stone wall might enhance its overall presentation. Incidental areas were used to good effect to add colour and variety to the scene.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your emphasis on education and engaging young minds is to be unreservedly applauded. It was an excellent idea to invite an individual member of your committee with a special interest in these matters to concentrate on the promotion of bird and wild life. He(she) should discuss the many options the river and surrounding rural area offers with a local bird life enthusiast or consult the Wild Life Officer attached to the Office of Public Works for some ideas as to how best to proceed.

Litter Control:

Your regular litter picking patrols are having a good effect as very little litter was noted on the day of adjudication. Well done. Dividing up the town into streets with designation responsibility for each helps very much in this regard. A similar strategy for residential areas will likely have a similar effect.

Waste Minimisation:

The treatment of the bring bank was noted with approval. It is well sited and seemed to be respected by its many users. Your activities as set out in your entry form certainly address the main thrust of this category in that this section of the competition 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. Your demonstrations and composting advice will help individual households and the community at large to reduce usage of scarce and expensive energy, reuse items where appropriate and recycle materials wherever possible so that the final amount of waste carried to landfill is minimised. Do continue to encourage and assist the schools to work towards securing Green Flag status.

Tidiness:

There is a need for an ashtray – large and obvious - outside the Tapestry exhibition to receive the sizeable number of discarded butts encountered on the day of adjudication. The GAA grounds were an example to others – the entrance area was very well presented as were the grounds themselves. The grounds had a very fine sign outside but one was obscured by encroaching vegetation. We enjoyed the (ignored) sign at the GAA gates 'The last person to leave the grounds, please close the gates!'

The presentation of the commercial premises opposite the Castle car park is not up to the standards noted with approval elsewhere. Small amounts of weed were noted around the main roundabout but in general the kerbs were free of weeds and overflowing grass.

There is still an undesirable extent of plastic signs and fascia boards which rarely entice visitors or customers in this more discerning age. A number seem to be well beyond their "sell-by-date"

Residential Areas:

Castle Manor is an imposing new development. Johnsville is a splendid house on the Bunclody Road which caught the eye. The splendid entrance pillars and treatment of Rosemary Heights projected a fine image. Cluain Caisleán housing estate looked well. There are many excellent individual gardens along the Enniscorthy Road. The Castle Land housing estate might turn its attention to the communal grassed area and flower bed at the end of the estate. Presentation of the individual houses varied. Alderbrook is a charming development with well developed individual gardens. The roads here are swept and the communal grassed area projected to an exemplary standard.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Check the visibility of speed limit signs including the Historic Ferns sign as a few have become obscured by encroaching vegetation. The stone name plates are most impressive on the main road approaches especially from Dublin. The Bunclody Road was well swept and it, in common with all approach roads, was presented in an exemplary fashion. The timber fencing with hedge behind was perfect in this rural setting. The high and constant volumes of traffic are factors that have to be contended with. There is certainly a clear need for the requirements and safety of pedestrians to be given more consideration.

General Impression:

You have done much to project the deep seated historic heritage of Ferns and it is there for all passing traffic to see, but not to see and enjoy, as the possibility of convenient parking places is not dove-tailed with line of sight of the various monuments, churches and abbeys. Traffic volumes almost force the casual visitor to keep going especially those travelling north. Your presentation this year continues the fine tradition of caring for your most interesting town. To everyone and each agency associated with this year's entry our best thanks and applause. Please keep up the good work and you are wished well in next year's competition.