

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Foulksmills** Ref: **118**
County: **Wexford** Mark: **264**
Category: **A** Date(s): **26/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	36
The Built Environment	50	34
Landscaping	50	41
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	22
Litter Control	50	38
Waste Minimisation	20	7
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	264

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the 2009 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission, which included a completed application form, photographs, a clear and helpful map which was of great assistance on the day of adjudication and publicity documentation backing up your achievements. We would encourage the Foulksmills committee to engage the help of other agencies, particularly in relation to the production of a three to five year village enhancement plan. It is to be hoped by widening the net in relation to applications for development assistance, that this approach will pay dividends in time.

The Built Environment:

The oak tree, located to the centre of the New Ross Clongeen cross roads, is a strong focal point for the village. The surrounding buildings here provide a nice charm and scale typical of vernacular village architecture. The pubs are well presented and substantially retain their traditional character. The Village House B & B opposite the Oak Tree Pub is a lovely vernacular building enclosed by a well presented boundary wall and railing. Further along the village this theme of enclosure with wall and railing is again reflected at the 1860 stone house with its well proportioned front porch. This attractive detailing should be borne in mind when new residential development takes place. At the other end of the village, the five storey mill provides a wonderful ambience. It's former function is still beautifully illustrated by the retention of the old water wheel. The stone is highlighted by bright red windows which look magnificent when viewed from the bridge. It is good to see that ongoing maintenance work is being carried out here. Behind the mill the development at Mill Farm is very appropriate and creates a great 'sense of place'. Bridge House is a fine imposing structure with a magnificent location opposite the park. The boundary wall here had been newly painted and the newly planted blue irises were admired. There are a number of sites in the village that need some attention and further screening. It is good to see that a number of new residences are under construction in the village core.

Landscaping:

The Foulksmills community is fortunate to have a mature backdrop that provides the village with such a wonderful setting. The committee has certainly exploited your natural advantages with the wonderful park which has been developed adjacent to the three arched bridge on the Corock River. The formality of the park layout, with its interesting level change, contrasts well with the natural setting of its surroundings. The low stone walls, edging the river banks, are a lovely feature. The huge leaves of the Gunnera planted here contrast starkly with, and almost mystically exaggerate, the small scale of the bridge arches. No wonder this venue was chosen for the RTE film. The adjudicator noted all the ornate recent planting which has been carried out here with the help of FÁS, particularly along the access path to the river. Congratulations to the individuals involved in this project! The shrubberies are well maintained surrounded by colourful flower displays and the grassed areas look pristine and neatly mown. The information board is an interesting point of reference. This adjudicator admired the old water pump feature opposite the oak tree and found its bright red colour charming. Elsewhere, evidence of the committee's hard work and their effective mobilisation of the wider community, is clearly to be seen in the many hanging baskets, planted tubs, window boxes and flower beds throughout the village, which hugely enhances the natural setting.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

In view of the fact that the village has many natural amenities and wildlife areas, it would be a well worthwhile exercise for the committee to examine this aspect of your development. The adjudicator notes your plans for a nature trail along the river banks and the introduction of ducks to the river.

Litter Control:

It is noted that you engaged with Wexford County Council on the question of litter and that a speaker from this organisation addressed your community. The efforts of the committee, through participation in the cleanup week and other ongoing initiatives, are obviously paying dividends as the village was almost litter free on the day of adjudication.

Waste Minimisation:

It is good to see your continued involvement with the local school who are high achievers in environmental matters. The Bring Centre is well located and was clean and tidy on the day of adjudication. To proceed further in marks under this heading, a good start 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 and it is to be hoped that this programme will be developed in the coming years with more initiatives from this website being adopted in the future.

Tidiness:

At Glanbia, the existing boundary trees could be reinforced by new planting to provide additional screening. Harpur's premises are well presented but opposite them, the storage yard needs tidying and abandoned vehicles should be removed. The phone box needs some renovation as one of the clear Perspex sheets is missing from the side panel. The long term plan for ducting overhead cables will be a great visual bonus when achieved.

Residential Areas:

The village has a small number of residences and you are fortunate that no large schemes have been developed. There is a nice stock of traditional houses that retain their local character and these houses and their gardens are presented to a high standard.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach roads are generally enclosed by wonderfully mature trees and woodlands as earlier mentioned. These are lined in many cases by attractive stone walls with hedgerows and strands of wild flowers providing a lovely atmosphere on arrival. Notwithstanding ongoing road works, and a number of constructions in the village core, surfaces are generally good and well presented.

General Impression:

Foulksmills is a charming village set in mature woodlands and the commitment of the hard working TidyTowns committee is proving a great asset. We wish you well in your future plans.

