

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Rathdrum** Ref: **998**  
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **208**  
Category: **C** Date(s): **19/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	28
The Built Environment	50	27
Landscaping	50	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	19
Litter Control	50	28
Waste Minimisation	20	4
Tidiness	30	13
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	28
General Impression	10	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>208</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Thank you for your completed application, map, photos and newspaper cuttings. The committee of 12 has been very busy indeed with monthly meetings, meetings with councillors and environmental officers. There are links with local businesses, Leader partnership, Wicklow tourism and regular school visits. For taking things forward, it would be good to put together a plan with input from the wider community. This should be for a 3 to 5 year timescale, indentifying priority tasks, timescales and costings of projects as well as lead partners. There are more marks to be gained here for evidence of having an organised approach to making improvements. Well done on work to date, in this your second year of the competition. Hopefully you will continue to make steady progress and do well in the future.

### **The Built Environment:**

The Credit Union is beautifully painted. Most of the houses in this row are also looking well. The R.D.A. has a fine big hall which is a great asset. The row of houses on Laragh Road (apart from the derelict ones) and towards the centre are very well presented, and some had lovely floral displays out. The baskets on the ESB poles were admired. The Garda Station looks well, on its prominent corner at edge of town. Synott's butchers looks well despite the messy surroundings. Many businesses have made a real effort to be freshly painted and put out baskets and tubs. There are smart houses opposite the church. Jacob's looks inviting, McAdam's and Rogers bookmakers are freshly painted, as is the Medical Hall. The corner house and 3 shops across from it, the Cartoon Inn and the Railway look well. The little courtyard at Bates is delightful. There are many attractive establishments for food and drink. The market square is a shambles but a decent job has been done with hoarding and the painted features are a satisfactory temporary cover up.

### **Landscaping:**

Memorial Park is a real asset and was much admired. A good job was done on the planting of beds near the recycling area. Interesting choice of shapes. The signs here are clean and in good state. The bin nearby is not in a good state however. There are lovely window boxes outside the Boys school.

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

The project on Jacob's Ladder, which was taken to mean the steps into the wooded area, sounds interesting. Please send in more information on this for next year. There was a reference to the community college study on flora and fauna which would be useful to submit with the application. Another walk being developed is from the Old famine graveyard. Is there a biodiversity element to this project? Again, it would be useful to submit further info on what's involved here. The bird and bat boxes were noted.

#### **Litter Control:**

There was quite a scattering around the town, mostly cigarette related and sweet wrappers. There were also many tags from the election posters. If there was a way to power wash the brick banks they would be much improved. There was a bit of litter around but appeared quite new and there are regular checks here by the committee. It must take constant monitoring to keep the place clean. It is noted that a joint approach to clean-ups in April are taken. Is this part of the National Spring Clean? Be persistent in requests for support from the council for new bins etc. as a partnership approach is appropriate for litter management. You might consider drawing up a litter strategy which sets out when litter patrols take place, visits from litter wardens, identifies litter hot spots, any need for enforcement action, awareness events, and so on.

#### **Waste Minimisation:**

The Boys N.S. has the green flag so well done for your achievement. Avondale Community College are working towards their flag so best of luck with endeavours in that area. There is much opportunity for school projects to link up with the community and the likes of waste audits, surveys and promotional events can work really well. There are plenty of ways to gain further marks in this section. Refer to the Race Against Waste website for guidance, look up the Change.ie campaign for energy efficiency guidance, An Taisce and environmental officers for support.

#### **Tidiness:**

The redevelopment of market square is obviously a source of frustration while derelict buildings go unchanged, and new builds are left unfinished. It sounds like some progress is being made however with footpaths improvement starting in September, and communications with the council on-going relating to derelict houses legislation. Good luck with continued work in this area. The barrier poles at the recycling centre are out of shape and paint is flaking, if these could be replaced and the railings painted it would look great. The poles at the Church look completely different as they are freshly painted. The entrance gates to train station and business park are missing and there is a pile of rubble in that area too which is untidy in appearance. There are few benches around and the only one found up Rock Street direction was in a poor state. The lovely green area here is well maintained and the planting around the RDA is good. There are beautiful roses outside the Credit Union.

#### **Residential Areas:**

The residential areas up Rock Road are great, some excellent work going on here and shows pride is taken in the area. It would be good to have new name signs for residential areas. It is great that there are residents associations now set up so this will really take things forward in making improvements. A lot of work on general tidying up has been done, including entrance to the Woods which has now been tarmaced.

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

Rathdrum is quite spread out with the first name sign appearing some way before reaching the village. This sign, on the approach from Wicklow, is almost fully obscured by vegetation. Once closer, the bridge has been cleared up and the directional arrows are clearly visible in strategic locations. Some other large signs such as those relating to sewage works upgrading are very dirty and should be cleaned if possible.

The road surfaces and drainage is in a state of upheaval in the area at side of Centra. Underground pipes open onto the road, sometimes outside peoples doors. This must be very frustrating for resident to deal with.

#### **General Impression:**

Rathdrum is steeped in history and is a lovely town. There are things like the building work in Market Square that are beyond the direct control of TidyTowns committee, but while keeping up pressure on people involved, do not let it hinder progress in other areas. The most important thing is that the community works together and there is a shared vision of what you want to achieve. You have made a strong start, and shown progress again this year. Set out some realistic, achievable goals and build on these on years to come. Well done and best of luck

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