

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Wicklow** Ref: **244**
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **266**
Category: **E** Date(s): **19/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	38
The Built Environment	50	38
Landscaping	50	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	30
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	266

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for your completed application and background documents. Four committee members is a very small number for a town of this size, and since reforming only in 2006, a huge amount has been achieved. Well done. It is noted that although small in number, the committee works closely with the Chamber of Commerce, local residents groups, local youth groups, schools and active retirement groups and therefore has a volunteer force to call upon. There is also support from Wicklow Town Council and an excellent working structure in the Wicklow Town Forum. The TidyTowns is becoming a group of some influence! You are commended for using public meetings and newsletters to communicate to the wider community, and for the extensive media coverage that the TidyTowns work is receiving.

The Built Environment:

St Patrick's church and grounds are splendid. The boys national school is looking very well. The houses along Leitrim place looking over the river are very well maintained and form an attractive sight. The shops and pub on Bridge St. look freshly painted (Bridge Tavern, Bridge coffee shop and the bookshop). The big red brick school is an impressive building and the green space across from it complements the area. The gaol looks splendid and its bike parking facilities, as well as neat bollards in front were noted. The whole area around market square is very well designed and all the planters and shops look fine. The wheelchair access ramps to higher level also noted. Nice to see some gaelige in use on Tá Sé's. There are many examples of good shop presentation in the centre. Fitzpatricks painted floral front, Cultus hair dressers, Cullens butchers, Derek Byrnes butchers, Anne Harris, Wicklow Kabs, Hannah's, Flood's menswear, Health and Healing, and many others caught the eye. John Hopkin's toys is full of character – bet the local children know this shop

well!

Landscaping:

The town centre looks very well indeed with many shops displaying baskets and window boxes. The William square area is nicely planted and a credit to those who maintain it. The blackcastle public area with replica canons and anchor is great and can be seen from a long way off on the approach by south quay. Plenty of green spaces and well mown lawns and excellent floral displays. There is also varied foliage – keep in mind the year round interest and wildlife aspects as much as possible.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Murrough side river walk is a good amenity, and the river is accessible in many parts with many water birds around. Black castle area, Ballykerrin is great amenity to have in town. Do try to plant native broadleaf trees and enhance areas with wildflower planting for supporting insects. With plans for new walking trails and working in partnership with Irish Rail this section should see marks further increase in future

Litter Control:

Litter control is not too bad in Wicklow. There was quite a bit of chewing gum on the main street outside centra, and also cigarette litter outside the cabs but otherwise, for a town of this size, it appears to be well under control. It is good that there was motivation to act following previous poor results in the litter league and its obvious that the town has come a long way since then. Keep up the good work.

Waste Minimisation:

The Murrough Centre is a great asset and is a wonderful, forward thinking, innovative facility. Credit is due to Wicklow County Council and all involved in its development. There is scope to increase marks in this section by becoming directly involved with promotion of waste prevention, through workshops or other communications. What is the situation with business waste management in the town and is there scope to work on a project with the Chamber of Commerce perhaps? What about surveys through the residents associations, setting targets to reduce waste or increase number of households composting? There are other projects now that Wicklow would be well placed to explore such as Transition Towns and Green Communities.

Tidiness:

The Greenfields BnB sign on Dunbar Road has fallen down. The Golf club front could do with some freshening up. The derelict building across from the church has been well painted to improve the look. There are many other derelict sites that could be improved by painting or removing defunct signage. Well done on progressing matters with the Suamhnais building as it is a dreadful eyesore. There seems to be quite a challenge with graffiti but for the most part, benches, bins, bollards were all in good nick. The yellow footprints were interesting and its noted this is part of traffic management and awareness raising of the implications of parking on the pavement.

Residential Areas:

The houses on castle street are gorgeous – the colours are cheerful and its set off with nice wooden benches and well trimmed green spaces. Similarly on Kilmantra Hill. Heatherbrook has good mixed colour foliage and nice lampposts. The majority of residential areas are obviously well looked after and there is a pride taken in their maintenance, including Marlton Park and Lakeview Grove. Harbour view stands out for the work they have put in, the entrance to Glebemount estate was noted.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

On approach from south on the coast road, its lovely to be greeted by nice big space overlooking the golf course and ocean. This area is well maintained but unfortunately the beach is restricted due to erosion hazards. There are good signs which incorporate the lions club. In other towns where the lions club signs are separate they don't always look as well. Road markings are quite new in places, even on small back roads like the area at bottom of St Patricks Road. The road markings, surfaces and traffic management are all good. There are plenty of pedestrian crossings and the inclusion of texturised surface stops for assisting the visually impaired. There are lovely flowerbeds on approaches. Enhancing presentation of the main bridge would be an improvement and plans for this are noted.

General Impression:

There is cohesion between the main stakeholders in Wicklow Town, and a renewed vigour over the past few years. The threat of losing the town gaol seems to have been beneficial in bringing people together with a common purpose. The success achieved in securing the future of the gaol is encouraging a united vision for the community and the formation of the Wicklow Town forum shows the strength and commitment of those involved. Wicklow Town is a pleasant, enjoyable place to spend time and is likely to go from strength to strength in coming years. Well done and I wish you continued success.