

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Old Leighlin** Ref: **774**
County: **Carlow** Mark: **232**
Category: **B** Date(s): **06/07/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	31	32
The Built Environment	50	31	32
Landscaping	50	31	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	17	17
Litter Control	50	25	25
Tidiness	30	13	15
Waste Minimisation	20	10	10
Residential Areas	40	32	32
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31	31
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	400	228	232

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you to Old Leighlin and to the community you represent in working towards entering your village in the 2012 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your succinct and well thought out application. Your map giving a rundown of areas to bring to the adjudicators attention, including photographs, was very useful on adjudication day. You have a relatively small committee of eight. Perhaps you will be able to increase your membership somewhat. Apart from sharing workloads, new members bring their own creativity and individual strengths and insights to a group. You seem to enjoy a close relationship with your local scouts. Well done on this. Judging by the number of local businesses and organisations supporting your work it looks very much as if the community is behind the TidyTowns movement in the village.

The Built Environment:

The entrance to the Cathedral graveyard forms such a lovely focal point as you approach the village core from Leighlinbridge and how lovely to see a fine specimen beech tree framing the view. The frontage and façade of Fordes furniture could be tidied up a little with all shutters painted a consistent blue and the old pipes perhaps removed. Residential buildings around the village core were all beautifully presented with clean facades and well executed paintwork. The tasteful dark green of the pub door was a classic colour choice given its setting and the use of traditional sash windows here also contributed much to its village charm. We are glad to hear that the recently completed pedestrian link to the school has benefited the community and no doubt helps with the success of your walking bus initiative. Once again we felt the community centre and its vicinity, although neat and tidy could do with a lift. Could climbers perhaps be attached to some of the bare walls here to green up the space slightly, especially at times when the centre is not in use, as on adjudication day, and the expanse of hard surfacing could be broken up or softened with judicious planting?

Landscaping:

The village is such a great example of how feature trees can form a space with the presence of the copper beach at the village core only improving as it ages. Ensure the railings surrounding it are not impacting on its root growth, are they required at all? The planting and hedges used throughout the village were generally species appropriate for your rural location. Can some of this hedge planting be extended to the areas surrounding the community centre? A habitat rich hedge could be established here along the timber railing? Also perhaps the black square planters along the verge here could be moved to another area of the village or to within the car park. Generally avoid placing containers where planting can be placed directly into the ground. Or perhaps establish a copper beach avenue here for long term landscape structure. Good luck with progress on developing the community garden to provide flowers for your group. Concentrate on perennials and self seeded annuals for a more sustainable approach to producing seasonal colour.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Given your rural location there is so much that can be done in this category. A basic ecological study will help establish what habitats and wildlife is in the area. It will also help inform you as to what actions need to be taken to provide for the needs of existing wildlife while also increasing your areas biodiversity. You may find the Department of the Environment's Nature website of interest www.noticenature.ie in particular the section on taking action at a community level. This is a category we feel you can really gain marks in.

Litter Control:

You seem to be on top of this issue as no obvious litter was noted in the core village area on adjudication day. On adjudication day there was some litter noted at the bring centre at Molaise Well area and the litter bin here was full. Good luck with your plans to relocate this important community service to perhaps a more discreet spot.

Tidiness:

Again the area around Molaise Well and the car park we felt needed some attention. When the recycling bins are removed perhaps some additional landscape could be planted to the roadside bank and the old concrete bin here removed and perhaps a more appropriate timber style bin put in its place if required. An empty and leaning pole here should be removed. The small circular planters to the ornate picnic tables also looked a little neglected and in need of a little TLC. However the core village area and all residential areas visited were very well maintained with no jarring details and so we feel you deserve an increase in marks here.

Waste Minimisation:

You have included little detail in this section of the submission but we see that your new committee looks to develop ideas for this category in the coming years. You have a head start in the community with the great success of your school in the green schools programme with no less than 6 flags. Keep us informed as to your communications with the school on this category as much can be learnt from the children's involvement with this excellent scheme. Other simple ways to advance in this category is to encourage your community's participation in for example earth hour or cycle week, nationally promoted programmes that you could take part in. Use only recycled materials in the community garden, wooden pallets, old troughs or old railway sleepers can all be used as old food containers for potting on seeds. Make your own fertiliser using comfrey and nettles for examples. Try to adhere to organic principles in gardening. Good luck with generating ideas here.

Residential Areas:

Once again all homes in the village were looking very well on adjudication day. The flower beds to the entrance to the St Molaise housing scheme were admired as were the planters outside individual homes in the village. Well done to all the residents for maintaining the standards here.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The stone sign at the gateways to the village were simple and attractively done. Verges and hedges in the town were generally well kept but keep verges in front of the brown village signs trimmed, even for a few metres, so they are legible for passing traffic. A concrete yard boundary on the approach to the village from Leighlinbridge, with a grass verge to the front, was neat and clean but crying out we thought for some planting to soften its impact?

General Impression:

The adjudicator enjoyed a stroll around your pleasant village and the simple treatment of buildings to the

village core were very appropriate for your rural setting. We note that each year you progress your projects with the resources available to you and slowly your works are making its mark on your surroundings. As you say in the submission your awareness on doing works only to enhance the village stops you from embarking on projects that risk overdevelopment and adversely impacting on the village and its setting. Well done to all involved in this years submission.