

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Castlemahon** Ref: **1458**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **235**
Category: **B** Date(s): **30/06/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	34	34
The Built Environment	50	36	37
Landscaping	50	24	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	14	14
Litter Control	50	31	30
Tidiness	30	16	16
Waste Minimisation	20	8	8
Residential Areas	40	33	33
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30	30
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	400	233	235

Overall Development Approach:

Your adjudicator would like to welcome Castlemahon to the 2012 TidyTowns Competition and your participation is important to the competition. Thank you for your completed entry form and supporting documents. The map was really excellent and the best that this adjudicator has seen this year – a model of how it should be done. The Committee of twenty is very large again this year and this is most encouraging. It was noted that a 3 Year TidyTowns Plan was not included with your entry and the committee should look at this in the coming winter. Using the ten adjudication categories as a framework will be quite helpful to the committee. You have made excellent progress with the County Council this year and their support for Castlemahon is commended. Thank you for the most helpful photographs.

The Built Environment:

The light industrial area was visited and found to be well presented. In this area the long limestone wall outside the Roche Group property was especially noted. The large closed factory premises is indeed a difficult issue. If permission could be granted to paint the road boundary walls on both sides of the road this would make a big difference. At the school the many white railings dominate the view on the approach to Castlemahon across the bridge. At future repainting an alternative colour might be considered. The presentation of the old stone building on the Main Street near the bridge is excellent. The good bright colour at the Redsetter Bar works really well and is complimented by the hanging baskets. Nearby the painting at Kennedy's Garage caught the eye. Indeed a key feature of the village is the good use of colour on freshly painted buildings. At the other end of the village the millstone feature was noted. At the Catholic Church the overall presentation is simple yet effective. It is suggested that the chain and supporting poles are painted. At the Graveyard the gates need urgent painting. The use of the Irish language on signage is required under present legislation and this should be encouraged where appropriate. On signage the Irish language must have the primary role.

Landscaping:

The River Park area was visited and great work has been done here and the new planting and seeding is coming on well. The six trees here are well located on the river bank. The provision of some seats and tables might be considered here. Planting at village signs was also admired as were the hanging baskets on the bridge with the stainless steel supports. Elsewhere hanging baskets, tubs and window boxes have been used with restraint. Your adjudicator reminds the Tidy Towns Committee that the cutting of roadside banks and ditches in the period 1st March to 30th August is not permitted under Section 40 of the Wildlife Act 1976, incorporating Section 46 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. At the National School good landscaping also stood out.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The provision of bird boxes was seen in various areas. Has there been any progress on the wildlife survey suggested in the 2011 adjudicator's report? Following on from a survey the next logical step would be to consider wildlife interpretation for Castlemahon and the river area would have a big role to play in that.

Litter Control:

The monthly litter patrols have been noted from your entry form. On first examination the standard of litter control seen in Castlemahon was excellent until this adjudicator examined the River Park car park. Here right in the heart of the village the area inside the gate on the left was very badly littered. It did not appear to be recent litter. The clothing bank at the garage was tidy.

Tidiness:

The car park at the River Park also has a tidiness problem with a length of black pipe lying on the ground and a pile of gravel and rubbish. The signage survey was a good project and next year we look forward to seeing the implementation of this. Your participation in the Spring Clean is commended. Weed control was found to be reasonably good but the base of some walls needed attention in this regard. Beside the old stone building the empty side was rather untidy and high grass needed to be cut. The entrance barrier here would be improved if repainted. Some fly posting was evident and this needs urgent attention to prevent it spreading.

Waste Minimisation:

Congratulations to the school on their Green Flag progress. The Carbon Footprint Survey is an important first step for Castlemahon but what is happening to reduce the carbon impact in the village as a result? This category is about the reduction of the annual waste generated in Castlemahon and you should do a simple survey on this in the year ahead. Do continue to support the school in their important Green Flag work.

Residential Areas:

At Church View a very untidy area at the entrance on the left was not cleared and this needs urgent action. However across from this the highly landscaped private garden caught the eye. In the estate the curved road boundary wall needs to be painted together with the wall that joins it. Private houses were quite well presented in Castlemahon and good colour use was admired.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The main issue on the three approach roads was the trimming of verge areas and banks at the correct time of the year. The banks should not be too tightly cut. Repair work to the bridge on the factory approach was examined as was repaired fencing on the laneway leading down to the Water Treatment Plant.

General Impression:

The support that Limerick County Council is giving to Castlemahon is really welcomed. Hopefully your partnership with them and other agencies and groups will lead to further progress in the year ahead.