

Tidy Towns Competition 2013

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Castletownbere** Ref: **597**
County: **Cork(West)** Mark: **274**
Category: **C** Date(s): **22/06/2013**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2012	Mark Awarded 2013
Overall Development Approach	50	43	43
The Built Environment	50	38	38
Landscaping	50	37	37
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	27	27
Litter Control	50	33	34
Sustainable Waste And Resource Management	20	15	15
Tidiness	30	17	17
Residential Areas	40	27	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	28	29
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	400	272	274

Overall Development Approach:

Castletownbere is very welcome to this year's Tidy Towns Competition. We were most impressed with the amount of engagement you have now built up across a wide range of public and private organizations. This is especially commended in respect of the fishing port element. This teamwork is a great achievement and we wish you well with it because the environmental results are there for all to see. Well done.

We note that you have twelve members on the committee. Your influence is clearly spreading as you state the entire town is now involved in presenting a better image.

Thank you for the comprehensive entry form and the additional information you present under various headings. This shows a great commitment. Your translation of leaflets into several languages shows the initiative you are taking in drawing in more people into community projects.

Thank you for the map; it is better than the one sent previously. However, details are hard to read. A larger scale map should be sent in next time.

We found an absence of street names to guide us along the streets as we passed around. This is topic that you might consider in cooperation with the Council.

The Built Environment:

We saw how the Sacred Heart church had been restored and rededicated just prior to our visit. It certainly looked well. Work has also been done on St. Peter's Church.

At several points we saw how the commercial premises had been well maintained. These included Hanley's and Donegan's, as well as O'Regan's Garage and Berehaven Credit Union (nicely painted). The Millbrook Bar, Olde Bakery and the Co-Action Group were praised. The Post Office was very neat and tidy, as was the Community Hospital.

The new lifeboat station has been noted and it is a great addition. We find that the lifeboat stations are invariably maintained spick and span and this is no exception. They have a great culture of cleanliness. Well done.

The GAA Grounds were well cared for, with the pitch itself in great order.

The Church of Ireland has a fine building but there are numerous weeds there that need to be removed. The tourist office makes fine use of the building within the church grounds and it was in good order on adjudication day.

The toilets at the pier were disappointing and require attention by regular cleaning. The BIM building is a pleasant structure but we saw weeds growing around it.

Landscaping:

It has been previously stated that you have potential for advancement in this category, and how the harbour is one area for a project. You are commended for your planting of native trees.

We admired the colonnade of trees at the GAA grounds. No doubt they afford shelter on blustery days.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

You are indeed fortunate in how your location combines a lot of the best of the land and the sea in terms of ecology. It has been suggested previously that carrying out an ecological audit would bring a wider appreciation and this is now being seen. The bulb initiative was praised and credit goes to the teacher and pupils of Scoil an Chroí Ró-Naofa. The bee and planting initiative at Scoil Phobail Bhéara are wonderful; they are bound to make these young people more aware of their natural surroundings and the value of the environment.

The use of broken fish pallets to make bird boxes is certainly a sustainable idea. We note that you planted fifty native trees as well as wildflowers at the grotto (and elsewhere).

This is a topic where guidance can be sought from bodies such as BirdWatch Ireland.

Litter Control:

You have demonstrated a great commitment to the control of litter and the results were evident when we saw the town. We note that your engagement includes four litter runs every week. Well done to all involved.

We note the good example shown in the Scouts clean-up and we see how well you did in the Cork County Council Anti-litter League. Credit is also due for the translation and for producing leaflets in several languages. At the last count these leaflets were made available in eight different languages.

We found the main pier well-maintained, with some litter around the adult education centre.

Sustainable Waste And Resource Management:

You have taken novel steps in tackling this issue, especially where the spent tea bags and coffee grounds are used to feed flower beds and for adding to compost. It is great to hear that all the schools now have composting bins, as well as water butts. You are also tackling waste plastic, and the segregation of waste is very useful. We saw the recycling facility on the Kenmare Road and we commended the reuse of old magazines.

We note how the fishing fleet is sorting its rubbish as well as the system you have put in place with the Harbour Master to collect these items. This will help to keep the waterfront clean.

You will be aware that what this category now seeks to do is to bring places such as Castletownbere up to the next level in the pyramid where the emphasis is on reducing the generation of waste in the first instance. There are some straightforward ways of achieving this such as minimizing the amount of wrapping that we use every day. Another one of these areas is to engage in composting. You will have seen the waste pyramid illustrated in your application form where it progresses from Recycling to Reuse and on to Reduction with the ultimate aim of Elimination. Guidance on this topic can be sought from Cork County Council.

Tidiness:

The statue commemorating the War of Independence has been improved, as has the Timothy Harrington Memorial. The initiative in getting school children to start their own composting is highly commended. It is a great way of getting the next generation involved in the protection of the environment. Who knows but one of them might end being a famous gardener like Diarmuid Gavin!

In the same vein the use of water butts will be a sustainable venture and will reduce future outgoings. Well done.

The playground has been tidied up. Several boundary walls have been cleaned up. It is a marvelous achievement to have only two overhead Eircom cables left.

We saw some weeds at the Drinagh Co-op premises and the ESB site also deserves attention.

The use of the large anchor and information panel complements the lifeboat station.

Some of the fisheries premises at Deenish Island have substantial detritus of plastic netting and refuse encroaching out onto the public road. Nearby, we greatly admired the memorial called Twilight Haul.

The graveyards appeared somewhat overgrown on adjudication day.

Residential Areas:

The last few years have presented a whole lot of challenges to the sector of housing. We see that you are making progress and we note what you have to say about dealing with both derelict or unoccupied dwellings. We appreciate the progress made with estate signage and this will help visitors find their way around the town.

The terrace of stone cottages opposite the ESB site (and that estate generally) deserve refurbishment. There were weeds on the road kerb adjoining Brookfield Estate. Castle Heights had a crop of weeds that need to be checked.

We came across a beautiful terrace of old cottages on the Kenmare road. Some of them really deserve attention. Again, as in other instances, the lack of identity names makes it more challenging. Brookfield and Bridewell Court impressed us although there is a need to tackle weeds at Tallon Road. Tallon Heights was well-presented and we admired the planting. The estate of stone-faced dormer bungalows on the south-west end (at the outer speed limit) need to be tidied up.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The three arches bridge is a fine landmark and its orientation allows travelers to see it properly. The causeway to

Deenish Island is another great viewpoint. We could see that there is ongoing work at the pier, and how this includes additional parking.

Part of the back road network has been upgraded, as well as provision of more estate signage. This is very welcome for visitors who are unfamiliar with the place. There is an overabundance of signs at the entry to Deenish Island. The sign on the Eyeries road was clear and clean, as was the speed limit sign at the GAA site. The numerous narrow laneways about the town convey a strong sense of history and interest for the visitor.

General Impression:

The new harbour extension is a boon to all and we hope it will bring the added prosperity and employment that you deserve for your enterprising spirit. The co-operation between agencies is great to see; this is a wonderful expression of the community element that will lift everybody up over the coming years.

The Square remains a key site for your projects and it will pay dividends in the finished product.

Your attitude to temporary signage is much lauded. You have made considerable advances now and we wish you continued success over the next few years.

Well done to all concerned. Guímíd gach rath ar bhúr saothar.