

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Wexford** Ref: **458**
County: **Wexford** Mark: **257**
Category: **G** Date(s): **02/07/2008**
24/07/2008

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	37
The Built Environment	50	33
Landscaping	50	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25
Litter Control	50	28
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	30
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	257

Overall Development Approach:

Your adjudicator would like to welcome Wexford to the 2008 TidyTowns Competition. Thank you for an excellent Entry Form and compressive supporting documentation that covered each adjudication category. The Map again this year was really excellent with the suggested TidyTowns adjudication route. The adjudicator used that route with some extensions where necessary. It seemed amazing that you have just three Committee members yet you had an enormous work programme in 2008 based on your entry details. It really indicates the great level of support that you enjoy from so many Wexford organisations, agencies and the community at large and this is really the true spirit of TidyTowns. Your communications process was admired by the adjudicator as you use a number of different but complimentary media. The Primary School visits that you organised are an essential TidyTowns building block. Do remember that the TidyTowns Handbook gives great information and suggestions. Both new Committees and those who have been involved in the competition for some time will find this booklet really useful.

The Built Environment:

Wexford has such a strong built heritage of really interesting buildings. The exciting thing about Wexford is that there is a willingness to embrace new design concepts for new buildings. The adjudicator really liked the Theatre Royal and the recreation of the streetscape to the front and looks forward to visiting the theatre in the future. The Whites hotel building is an attractive contemporary design of scale that makes a major architectural statement. Other modern developments that were examined included those along one side of Anne Street and the new Bank of Ireland building that occupies such an important corner site. The Tesco building was also admired and the design here seems to fit well with the site. For this adjudicator the past and present in architectural terms seem to rest reasonably happily together. Hopefully the old warehouses on Mill road will see appropriate redevelopment at some time in the future. In the centre of the town the adjudicator admired the historical panels noted in a number of areas including The Rights of Man in the Bull Ring. Arriving

into Wexford the adjudicator was impressed with the attractive banners on the Bridge. Both the County Council and the Corporation buildings stand out for the excellence of their presentation and the landscaping at the Wexford Borough Council Offices was admired. Many buildings seemed to have been painted recently including Scoil na gCeard with the attractive steps and Loretto Secondary School where a good strong colour has been used successfully. Beside the Railway Station the doors of the long building needed to be painted. The Quay area is hugely attractive where sea, rail and road meet and coexist in relative harmony. Another area visited that was much admired was the Potato Market and this area seems to have an atmosphere all its own that is appealing. Your work with the Borough Council on the ten derelict buildings is commended and it is great to see that some of the sites have been developed including Stafford's Yard. Thank you for the Architectural and Ecclesiastical Trail leaflet and the Study on the Town Walls. The Town Walls Conservation Plan is really interesting and this is such an important aspect of the history of Wexford. The plan for the new Library to allow a view of the walls is a great concept. Market Place and the Redmond Monument were presented excellently and the landscaping at the Monument is obviously receiving great attention in maintenance terms.

Landscaping:

The many landscaped areas bring much colour to Wexford and not just in the centre of the town. Areas such as Wygram Green, The Faythe and St. Peters Square are superb developments. At The Faythe some grass growth was noted at the base of the large planters. These large planters were very colourful and are strategically placed however the near Rome Street Church was damaged. The grove of trees at Ferrybank in the name of Wexford Festival Opera has matured well. On the main approach roads the landscaping created a great first impression of Wexford and such first impressions are so important. Another area of high colour impact was John's Gate Street.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Town Walls Ecological Study sounds a really interesting piece of research and hopefully the findings will allow further projects to emerge involving the walls. The Meadow and Tree Trail at Redmond Park adds further interest to this lovely area. Well done on your work with Kennedy Park School on their Garden project. The County Council's Schools Environmental Programme sounds an excellent initiative as a way of introducing young children to the importance of the environment.

Litter Control:

The Mayor's letter to businesses on the litter issue seems to have brought the right results together with the '5 Point Plan' approach as on adjudication day litter control seemed to have improved on last year. The adjudicator was delighted to read of your campaign that 'Cigarettes are Litter' as indeed they are. It was great to read that the Council's sweeping programme has been extended and that the Gum Litter Task Force is due to launch this month. It was a great idea to include 'Keep Wexford Tidy' on the parking tickets. These ideas in themselves are simple but so often these are the most effective concepts. The Litter Management Plan was examined and this is a constructive and comprehensive approach to the issue. On the Newtown Road some litter was noted near Texaco but the Bring Centre here was effectively presented. At Wygram Green the Bring Centre was also being managed effectively apart from a few pieces of litter under one bin. The Bring Centres Map is a great approach and so useful to all residents and visitors staying in self Catering accommodation in the area. Unfortunately the situation at the Tesco Bring Centre was very different as piles of bags with rubbish were noted beside the units.

Waste Minimisation:

Congratulations to the four Schools that have now achieved their Green Flag status and hopefully they will go on to earn additional Green Flags for their Schools. The recycling scheme for Small Business sounds quite interesting and you might let us have additional details for 2009. It is great that you now have all Schools involved in battery recycling – what sort of volume are they putting into recycling each term or year? The scheme for the disposal of hazardous waste is a welcome addition to your initiatives under this adjudication category and a very important one. The idea of sending a map of recycling facilities available in Wexford to each household is progressive and hopefully it has also been sent to the owners of visitor self catering properties also.

Tidiness:

Work continues on the removal of wirescape in the centre of Wexford and it will be great when this is completed. Hopefully when the Metal Signage Survey is completed it will allow the removal of all unauthorised signage. At St. Iberious Church the painted railings needed to be touched up in a few areas. In the core of the town a number of buildings needed to be repainted. The car park at the top of Keyzers Hill was extremely untidy and a lot of litter was noted here. However the adjudicator takes the view that this was largely due to the great work on the new Theatre Royal development.

Residential Areas:

Estate name for all Local Authority estates is great but can you also encourage all other estates to provide the same identification facility? Good grass areas were admired at Corish Gardens but the landscaping and overall presentation of Inisfail was really outstanding. The mature landscaping here and the high level of maintenance represents a superb commitment by the residents and any other organisations that assist them. In the general area surrounding Ivy Lane excellent private house presentation was noted. The well cut clopping grass areas at Fishers Row was complimented by excellent planting while in Bridge Place an excellent colour choice was effective. In other residential areas visited the standard was generally quite high. The adjudicator was especially impressed with the new street frontage created by the development of the Theatre Royal. Your work in giving encouragement to Residents Associations is vitally important as they have such an important role to play in TidyTowns.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The Main Street paving programme seemed to be making good progress even if it causes some temporary street chaos! It is such a pity that the trees at Selskar Avenue were lost as mentioned in your entry documentation. The adjudicator is a strong subscriber to the view that for every tree cut down at least one must be planted in its place. The resurfaced car parks have greatly improved these areas in presentational terms and they look much tidier than in the past. The overall presentation of the main approach roads was satisfactory and fine hedging was admired on the New Ross Road and the verges on the Dublin road were well presented.

General Impression:

It was a pleasure for your adjudicator to visit Wexford after an absence of many years. There is a great feeling of vibrancy about the town and a strong vision for the future that will also respect the heritage of Wexford. Good luck with your TidyTowns projects for 2009 when we look forward to visiting you again.

Second Round Adjudication:

Grass verges had been cut on the Ferrycarrig road on the day, but the dead grass had not been removed. New footpaths were evident along this road and the retention of the traditional signage in this area is commendable. Graffiti, unfortunately, was evident to directional signage opposite Dunnes Stores. Some magnificent floral displays were admired at West Gate by the County Council Offices, at the top of the town. Unfortunately, quite a lot of litter was evident along the streets of the town, indeed some litterbins were overflowing on the day! The new paved area at the top of Main Street, at Selskar was greatly admired, and makes a positive contribution to the quality of the urban spaces of the town. Hopefully some work will take place in the not too distant future in relation to the quality of some of the other surfaces in the pedestrianised zones of the town, as they are currently in poorer condition. The limestone drainage channels in these locations were greatly admired, however. The paved surfaces to footpaths opposite the waterside on the Quays were also in poor condition. Dead weeds were evident to the old goods building, yard and canopy between the train station and the lifeboat station. There appears to be a lot of development around the Potato Market since this adjudicator last visited Wexford. The traffic volumes were very heavy on the day and leading to congestion. New seats, paving and tree planting make the Quayside area an attractive space. It was a pleasure to re-visit Wexford in the capacity of adjudicator after a number of years. It is a vibrant and attractive town.