

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Wexford** Ref: **458**  
County: **Wexford** Mark: **260**  
Category: **G** Date(s): **25/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	38
The Built Environment	50	34
Landscaping	50	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25
Litter Control	50	28
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	31
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33
General Impression	10	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>260</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Welcome to the 2009 National TidyTowns Competition. Thank you for your submission, which included a completed application form and a comprehensive amount of backup documentation consisting of the Wexford Development Plan, (Wexford Town and Environs 2009-2015), Wexford Town Walls Conservation Plan, Record of Protected Structures and the Carcur Development Plan, together with many photographic illustrations of your work. Your all embracing PR efforts to drum up support amongst the wider community for TidyTown activities makes impressive reading. The Wexford committee are to be congratulated on engaging the help of other agencies. It is noted that the net is widening in relation to applications for development assistance and no doubt this approach will continue to pay dividends. Your continued liaison with Wexford Borough Council, Wexford County Council and local schools is to be commended and the results are stunning. Well done on your integrated approach!

### **The Built Environment:**

Wexford town has undergone many changes to the built environment in recent years. There is an exciting contrast in scale between the old medieval town centre and the immediately adjacent quays where the scale is dramatically larger. The boardwalk here and the busy maritime activities, both recreational and commercial, give an exciting and immediate connection to the water-front. The newly constructed R.N.L.I. Station at the Bridge is a nice development. In the inner town the pedestrianisation of Main Street is impressive and the atmosphere is of a busy, bustling street on the day of adjudication. Many nicely presented premises, both traditional and newly developed, too numerous to mention, were admired. Wexford certainly has successfully embraced new architecture and this is wonderfully illustrated at the important development of Green Acres at the corner of Main St. and Selskar Square. The development here makes a link between a Victorian building, incorporating a Georgian building whilst creating a totally contemporary expression on to Selskar Square. The contemporary transparent glass section at the corner creates interesting vistas into the square whilst reflecting

some of the very attractive older colourful shop fronts. This is a very good lead for new developments in older streets where proper conservation and preservation is not carried out and pastiche often seems to be the only solution. On the waterfront, a similar concept was admired at Stone Bridge where the old mill was successfully regenerated and incorporated into a well designed contemporary building. Unfortunately, the downturn in the economy seems to have left this building unoccupied and it is to be hoped that this well designed development will be occupied in the near future. It is good to see that Wexford is striving to keep retailing outlets close to the core rather than allowing slippage out to the suburbs. The Wexford Theatre Royal is a hugely successful development and this well integrated complex has been acknowledged with the recent winning of the R.I.A.I Architectural Award. Congratulations on this great achievement! Over the past number of years TidyTowns reports have mentioned the myriad of attractive shop fronts and generally again these were all well presented. It is good to see that Wexford Borough Council has produced the substantial report and record of protected structures as submitted by your committee.

### **Landscaping:**

Wexford has a good number of both hard and soft landscaped parks and incidental open spaces strategically located throughout the town. The committee has certainly been successful in achieving your objectives under this heading this year. There was much evidence of the committee's hard work and effective mobilisation of the wider community to be seen in the huge number of hanging baskets, planted tubs, window boxes and flower beds throughout the town, which hugely enhances this historic town.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The town has an extensive range of wildlife habitats and it is good to see that you have advanced plans in conjunction with local interest groups for this wide range of areas. The new twenty acre park at Carcur will be a great addition when completed.

### **Litter Control:**

Last year's adjudicator commented on your five year plan approach to litter. However, on the day of adjudication this year, there was evidence of litter in a number of areas dispersed throughout the town. There were quantities of litter scattered on the quay boardwalk and on a number of laneways connecting to the pedestrian areas. At the Railway Station, there was a scattering of cigarette butts along the front of the building, notwithstanding there were three cigarette receptacles placed here. Again at Wellington Place and Monck Street junction, more litter was observed and this area is highly visible from Wexford Bridge. The area along the pedestrian way at Main Street was generally litter free but on Abbey Street there was some litter scattered close to the Town Wall.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

The achievement of a Green Flag at five National Schools is impressive and it is good to see that you are working in close conjunction with the schools and that further projects are planned under this heading. Bring Centres are well dispersed and well located throughout the town and were generally clean and well presented, as witnessed at the Tesco car park. The presentation of the Bring Centre at the Green was somewhat disappointing as a number of plastic bags had been discarded and there was evidence of long term litter near the receptacles. The nearby storage yard of the Municipal Buildings should be screened as it looked somewhat untidy. The adjudicator understands that this important building is to be redeveloped by the Court Services. We look forward to this in due course.

### **Tidiness:**

It is noted that ground works are ongoing at Main St. and the high quality paving here looks very well. It is unfortunate that, in some areas, staining has occurred to the surface and this looks somewhat unsightly but we note your long term plan for the removal of chewing gum. At the Bullring, weeding was required around the base of the centrepiece Tree of Liberty. Your continued progress on the derelict sites issue is understood and we wish you well on this. Opposite the very attractive landscaped housing scheme at Fisher's Row, the undeveloped site here looks unsightly. In the short term even some weed control would make a substantial visual difference.

### **Residential Areas:**

The town has a lovely range of attractive terrace housing from the smaller scale at St. Columba's Villas and St. Enda's to the imposing Glenna Terrace. A number of these have now been included in the Protected Structures inventory. Outside the town centre, many more recent developments have taken place. Generally these areas are well presented, such as at Richmond, the Fairways and Brendan Corish Gardens at the New Ross entrance. Many individual houses and well presented private gardens in these areas were admired. The new development at Clonard Village sets a high standard in its presentation. This scheme was designed as a village complex with a centre green surrounded by a series of linked cul-de-sacs with the names of native trees. Both hard and soft landscaping here is of a high quality with the centrepiece, the village green being

particularly admired. The chrome street furniture has a nice contemporary design and the paved areas combine to form a high quality public realm. The linear park along the roadside connecting to the Whitford Hotel is enclosed by a nicely designed stone wall which provides an attractive visual unifying force for developments here. At the hotel, there is a magnificent array of colourful landscaping, including hanging baskets, planted tubs, window boxes and flower beds. These developments are a good illustration of how new developments can integrate successfully and, with appropriate landscaping, can provide a complimentary visual effect. Because Wexford has such a large number of individual housing schemes perhaps it would be a useful undertaking for the committee to compile an inventory of these schemes with a view to establishing communication with the residents and obtaining assistance with their ongoing maintenance and presentation programme.

### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

The N25 contains three attractively presented roundabouts, each one forming an entrance to the town proper. The Newtown entrance road has a nice mature atmosphere but some tidying up of advertising signs here, in addition to a number of derelict sites, would make a considerable visual improvement. The entrance from Rosslare is very impressive and the landscaping at the Wexford Business Park sets a high standard. Further in, stone walls are a feature and the mature trees, shrubberies and colourful planting here was admired. The Gorey entrance has a nice presentation of well maintained verges and the colourful landscaping arrangement, before arrival on the Bridge, looked very well. It is good to see that pedestrianisation works are now nearing completion and this scheme has introduced an attractive ambience to the town core.

### **General Impression:**

Wexford is a large town that continues to expand and develop. Many of the new constructions are to a high standard. The committee is to be commended in helping to ensure that this development is carried out in a controlled and attractive manner.