

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Leighlinbridge** Ref: **41**
County: **Carlow** Mark: **300**
Category: **C** Date(s): **22/06/2009**
29/07/2009

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	47
The Built Environment	50	38
Landscaping	50	42
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	31
Litter Control	50	37
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	19
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	39
General Impression	10	9
TOTAL MARK	400	300

Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator would like to welcome Leighlinbridge to the 2009 TidyTowns Competition. Thank you for the very detailed and comprehensive bound entry documentation, together with the perfect map for an adjudicator! The County Carlow brochure was also of great interest. FAS have been extremely supportive of your work and their dedication is strongly commended. With a committee of about twenty two people and very strong community, and agency support your strong performance in the Competition to date is easily understood. Your public relations initiatives are comprehensive and appropriate. The adjudicator really likes the idea of the Junior TidyTowns Committee – what a great investment in the future of Leighlinbridge. Your range of festivals and events is staggering and yet Leighlinbridge is so well presented.

The Built Environment:

The Thrones Monument and the Marina are attractive features of the town, as are the specialist Gardens. Your work on the old house at Poes Hill and the old Mill is remarkable, and it shows that derelict properties can become a strong and positive feature. The circular stone facing Bell Tower at the Catholic Church was admired, as was the excellent landscaping of the car park here. The Parish Centre sits well in its attractively landscaped grounds. Across from the derelict house, the yellow Pump is a strong heritage echo though some litter was noted here. The yellow colour scheme for the Rainbow Pub was very brave, but it works very well as this is such a prominent corner building in Leighlinbridge. On the Kilkenny Road, the Garda Station appeared clean and smart, and on the day of the visit, the black railings at the bridge were being painted – a long and slow process! The extension to The Lordbagnal Inn sits well on its site, to the rear of the main street. The street frontage paintwork however, needed some attention.

Landscaping:

Landscape features are a very strong aspect of Leighlinbridge. The Vivaldi Garden, The Garden of

Remembrance, The Millennium Garden and the Sculpture Garden were all much admired. The Sculpture Garden has an attractive and beautiful riverside location. The shrubs and roses in bloom here, together with the fine trees create a most relaxing atmosphere. At the Millennium Garden, the sloping landscaped bank down to the road was much admired, with the colourful shrubs higher up adding extra visual texture. The adjudicator totally supports your move away from hanging baskets and window boxes to planting for year round colour and texture. This is a mature move in the landscaping strategy. New planting around the tennis courts enhances this area, as do the rose beds at the Garden of Remembrance. On the Kilkenny approach, a small roadside landscaped area was admired, with what appeared to be the shaft holder for a Cross? Along the road, by the Sculpture Park, the half barrels of flowers added colour here. The many smaller incidental landscaped areas in Leighlinbridge add much to the character of the town.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The various wildlife information boards add much additional interest to a visit to Leighlinbridge. Wildlife was evident along the River Barrow and the swans were out to greet the adjudicator! We look forward to reading the update of the 2005 Wildlife Survey, now under way. Your concern in regard to any intervention that might disturb nesting is strongly commended.

Litter Control:

The Anti-Litter brochure with the National School is a great concept and should be widely circulated. The School is involved actively in litter patrols and this is a great way of getting youth interested in environmental excellence. Just a little litter was noted in the Church car park and by the yellow Pump. The Bring Centre, at the top of High Street, was well presented and the landscaping here much admired. You have made a positive feature of your Bring Centre and this works in terms of proper public usage.

Waste Minimisation:

You are working very closely with the County Council in regard to waste minimisation matters and this is the proper course of action. The adjudicator really liked the concept of the Waste Green Code that is signed by the teachers and children at the School - what an innovative idea.

Tidiness:

You have done good work on trying to eliminate signage clutter and your objective of having excellent standards of tidiness is well on the way to being achieved. At the old Leighlin Road, the field gates near the main road junction would be improved if painted, while at the Sculpture Garden some graffiti, on the inside of one of the structures, was disappointing. A rusty litter bin, by the river bank here, needed to be repainted and many cigarette butts were noted in the water of the triangular stone feature, at the tables and in the seating area.

Residential Areas:

A very good central grass area at Conicare impressed, but this area lacked trees and other landscaping. The older Seskin Road estate was well presented with the fine trees. One white iron railing here needed to be repainted. All other estates impressed for various reasons and obviously the residents of Leighlinbridge are making a really important contribution to your work.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

All the approach roads were quite impressive in landscaping and first impressions terms. The great thing is that these positive first impressions were delivered by the town core on arrival. Stone walls are a key feature of most approach roads and they appear to be in excellent condition.

General Impression:

It was a great pleasure to visit the lovely town of Leighlinbridge for the first time. Well done on your progress to date and good luck in all your work for next year.

Second Round Adjudication:

Leighlinbridge looked charming on the 2nd day of adjudication with the approach road from Carlow making a striking first impression. The river Barrow is an excellent natural feature through the town and is part of a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). This means that it is among the most important site in Ireland for nature conservation. The well maintained river path is excellent for allowing people to appreciate the wildlife and habitats.

The town is spotlessly presented with buildings beautifully painted e.g. along Church street. The combination of planting and sculptures makes for an excellent landscaping scheme and ideal for year-round impact. The

numerous heritage signs located across the town really gives a sense of place and history. The lack of overhead cables and well maintained footpaths lend an extremely tidy air. While the streets were litter free dog fouling was a minor problem. That said, this adjudicator found it hard to fault the town and the community's hard work is evident at every turn.