

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **NEWCESTOWN VILLAGE**
County : **CORK**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 13-06-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	34	31
The Built Environment	40	27	26
Landscaping	40	30	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	16
Litter Control	40	32	32
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	20	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28	27
General Impression	10	8	7
TOTAL MARK	300	211	201

Newcestown, Co Cork

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

As remarked by last year's adjudicator, Newcestown has an enviable record of support from the locality and from official bodies. This adjudicator had never visited Newcestown before, and was immediately struck both by the high standard of maintenance and by the enlightened attitude of the Development Association to time-honoured traditions of building and respect for the natural environment. The SuperValu Endeavour plaques were noticed within a few minutes of arrival: they are richly deserved. This was a real visit of discovery.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The well-painted Church and its beautifully appointed grounds were much admired; the same may be said of the School nearby. St Patrick's Church at FarranThomas may be too distant for inclusion in the village competition; it is an important architectural landmark, and its frontage and graveyard are superbly kept. The strongly chosen colour of the Community Hall seemed entirely appropriate, making a firm visual statement. The shops and filling station were well presented on adjudication day. A whitewashed barn with black-painted windows and colourful gable was much admired.

LANDSCAPING

Places where old walls have been exposed and repaired, and where verges and banks have been improved, added enormously to the general sense of care. In this context it should be noted that the rush to over-sprucing of outlying roadsides and hedgerows (not evident at Newcestown) should always be avoided, as a judicious balance of what is natural (on the outskirts) and what is neat (in the village centre) should be maintained at all costs. The picnic area with its neat gravel, lawn, table, and pump sets off its particular location extremely well. Stone-surrounded beds of annuals were favourably noted in the village, as was new tree-planting on the Kilmurry road. Shrubs and flowers near the Church (J) and the green area near the School (K) are a huge improvement and the result of extremely hard work. You may wish to reconsider the white chains as they seem rather suburban.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The bird sanctuary below the Ballymahane bridge is an innovation entirely in accord with the thinking behind this relatively new category. The merging areas of stream, marsh, field, hedges and trees suggests that the selection of this spot should prove ideal. The plantation of conifers above the bridge is a bonus. (Wild yellow irises were enchanting in this area on adjudication day).

LITTER CONTROL

Very good, as last year.

TIDINESS

There were one or two weedy entrances just east of O'Mahonys, but in general this is a very tidy village.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Newcestown is almost entirely residential. A good variety of well-kept homes was noted - it is worth mentioning that quite distantly situated farms also contribute to the sense of good husbandry of which the village is the focus. The transformation of the derelict house (E) to the fine new one has been remarkable. This adjudicator particularly admired the house adjacent to the whitewashed barn, and the Parish House with its stone walls and solid wooden fencing.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Good surfaces, and good new paving were noted. The car park on the Kilmurray road was well maintained, as was the car park at the Community Hall. Improvements to drains, watercourses and walls have improved the infrastructure and enriched the visual amenity. Further improvement of the old wall between the picnic area and the village might be considered in the same vein.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

A naturally charming village, where the dedication and hard work of residents is creating something even more special.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (7/8/97)

Newcestown Village is a charming and simply presented village. As noted by the first adjudicator the landscaping strikes a nice balance between creating a natural appearance and maintaining a neat and ordered presentation. The abundance of wild ferns, orange montbretia, wild foxgloves and fuscia in the hedgerows was quite delightful. The stone planted beds at the village nameplate sign on the Crookstown Road was admired as was the attractive but simply natural presentation of the landscaped area to the Enniskeane Road beyond the grotto with its stream flowing along in front of the colourful stone planted bed. The stone grotto was neat in its presentation. The church was well maintained and its boundary wall was extremely fresh. However, a boundary wall opposite the church should be re-whitewashed before next year as it looked quite grubby.