

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **NEWTOWNFORBES**
County : **LONGFORD**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 05-06-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	32	29
The Built Environment	40	25	24
Landscaping	40	31	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	12	12
Litter Control	40	18	19
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	21	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28	26
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	188	182

Newtownforbes, County Longford

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

This adjudicator had not been in Newtownforbes for three or four years and found a remarkably significant improvement under almost all categories. The Draft Report for 1999-2003 makes very interesting reading and its detail on both the man-made and the natural environment must be very useful to the Committee in selecting their priorities. (One item which is missing from the very comprehensive documentation supplied with the entry form is a map which shows Newtownforbes as it is today – for example, neither the large suburban development to the south-west of the town, nor the smaller housing developments were included. On such a map you should mark locations which should be visited by the adjudicator that might otherwise be missed.) There is every evidence of positive activity throughout the town and its immediate environs – congratulations.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

St Paul's Church appears to be very well kept, though there was weed growth on its path. The RC Church is well presented, and the rather bleak conventual buildings seem to be enhanced rather than otherwise by the new buildings alongside. The gates to Castle Forbes form a dignified central feature. The nursing home appeared to have been recently painted.

LANDSCAPING

Planting in salient locations is attractive. A pleasing feature not previously noted by this adjudicator is the extensive trim creeper opposite Smith's – small well-cared-for details such as this make all the difference. Troughs on the Sligo road did not seem to have been prepared for planting. The entrance to the Nursing Home is certainly not untidy, but it could perhaps be made less formidable with planting. On wider issues, the verges of the approach roads were trimmed on adjudication day - they give an important and good initial impression of the town on both sides when arriving. The GAA development will be looked forward to when completed – it is a worthy scheme, for the surrounds of playing fields are often problem areas in other centres.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

It is good to learn that the amenity walk is much frequented by residents. It is also very good to read of the plans for Slí na Sláinte routes in your report, and to see their locations on the map. You might consider including an illustrated sign board showing the species of flora and fauna likely to be seen, at the town ends of An Slí. You may expect a substantial increasing in marking when the fruits of your Wildlife programme are available.

LITTER CONTROL

This was disappointing on adjudication day as there was litter in a number of places along the main street. Your awareness programme is impressive and there are plenty of bins, so perhaps this was an unusual day.

TIDINESS

While Newtownforbes is undoubtedly better than average in tidiness, there are a few matters which might be considered – for example, the street-side advertising at Smith's spoils that section of the street, there is an untidy entrance into the main street on the left as you come from Longford, and an unpleasing entrance next to the Castle Inn. There was some kerbside weed in the large estate opposite the nursing home – something residents ought to be able to cope with in a few minutes every month. Poor weed control at the imitation Tudor houses was mentioned last year and a vacant cottage opposite needs attention. The effect of construction work was taken into consideration, but in fact the building sites are well contained.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Most of the traditional street houses are very well looked after and a credit to their owners. At least two of the 'Tudor' houses are a problem, and it is hoped that this can be resolved. The new housing at the Convent was favourably mentioned last year. A terrace under construction opposite the Convent looks promising and will form an interesting point as you approach from Sligo. Two new yellow houses in the main street are of exceptionally neat and of simple design and lead to a small trim estate favoured with pleasant planting. The completion of the circular development on the Longford road will be looked forward to. It is hoped that tree planting will be included in all developments. The sumptuous un-named suburban roads to the south-west of the town are especially well looked after; most of the gardens are splendid.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Traffic calming measure were noted. Perhaps now that improvements have gone so well throughout Newtownforbes it may be the time to mention the possibility of removal of overhead wires and the substitution of the present lights with lamp standards of a more attractive design. This is, of course, a very costly operation.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The possibility of stopping for a cup of tea in a pleasant café may not seem of much importance, but it is something not found in most small towns and villages, and where it occurs it is usually symptomatic of something greater – a sense of confidence, prosperity and maturity. Congratulations to the Tidy Towns Committee for helping to move the community on in a sympathetic and imaginative way towards these enviable

conditions.