

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Navan**

Ref: **375**

County: **Meath**

Mark: **216**

Category: **E**

Date: **19/06/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	39	37
The Built Environment	40	34	32
Landscaping	40	33	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15	17
Litter Control	40	24	27
Tidiness	20	15	14
Residential Areas	30	21	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	27	26
General Impression	10	8	7
TOTAL MARK	300	216	212

Overall Developmental Approach:

The Committee is thanked for their entry into this year's Tidy Towns Competition. This contained a well completed Entry Form, an excellent three-year Plan and a Town Map. Well done. These documents are of great help to the Adjudicator in seeing the work being done and they should also be of benefit to the Committee in monitoring the yearly programme. The Committee's liaison work with the County Council and other statutory bodies, the local community and the pupils of the schools is very good. It is important to continue this liaison work as these bodies can provide invaluable help and advice to the Community. The Committee has been extremely active as can be seen in a walk around the town.

The Built Environment:

Navan developed as a mediaeval town, but most of that is now more than partially gone and what now remains is an eighteenth, nineteenth and twenty century fabric, build around a series of roads, the N3 and N51, the R161 and the R162. It is the County Capital and a vibrant one. Like many towns in Ireland it has, basically, turned its back on the river Boyne and provides none of the popular facilities for boating or bathing that could be associated with the river. Trimgate Street, the main commercial and shopping street, is a very fine street with a pleasant mixture of shops and other businesses. The Parish Church opens out onto the street and makes an interesting interruption. The Fair Green is built over on its eastern end, but there is still a large open space remaining. However, this space is now a large car park which disfigures this very important town

site, although it is noted that this is transformed into an open market each week, which is very acceptable. On the day of adjudication the stalls were beginning to leave and the Council cleaners began their cleaning up. This was a most unsuccessful operation with much litter left to be blown around the adjoining streets. A street vacuum machine could have done a more successful job here. It was not good enough for such an important site. Hopefully, the car parking could go partially underground on this sloping site and the site developed as a fine open space with hard landscaping and related artefacts. What is wanted now is a bold solution to the Fair Green. Bridge Street is again a very pleasant street. The large shopping centre, adjacent shops and car parking which has developed further west of Trimgate Street, however has little character. This area should be taken in hand and given a strong setting of soft and hard landscape. The area is somewhat grotty at present.

The administrative area on the south and east side of the town are a very fine group of buildings. The curved road up from the riverfront road - Circular Road - and passing the Library headquarters is very fine and is further enhanced by the outstanding ground shapings and finely maintained grass, trees and other plantings. This continues onto Railway Street. The Council are to be commended on this area.

Landscaping:

The banks of the Boyne, up to Somerville Bridge, are very pleasant, after that the Boyne is lost. Again, the riverside road is most pleasant from where it starts at the bridge, then parallels the Boyne to Circular Road. This is most pleasant and the very well maintained gardens to the houses facing the Boyne give this feeling of welcome to people coming to the town. This riverside works is a credit to all.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

There was no clear description of what works were to be undertaken by the Committee. This is unfortunate considering the town has both the Boyne and Blackwater rivers and the wonderful treed cover on the right bank of the river which could be unrivalled habitats for both flora and fauna. Some wonderful projects could be developed along sections of the Boyne facing the new riverside road. The Committee should contact ENFO to obtain some of the very fine publications they produce on wildlife conservation.

Litter Control:

As already mentioned under "The Built Environment" it was not a pleasant sight after market day. Litter that should have been "vacuumed-up" was blowing onto adjoining streets - a situation partially hidden by newly arriving cars - and the place should have been hosed down. There was also litter in the large shopping centre. Litter is a problem in Navan. This work is essentially Council housekeeping and not appropriate to school children so should not be included in their litter control programme.

Tidiness:

There are fine areas in Navan but they are undermined by a general lack of housekeeping in the places such as Fair Green and the Shopping Centre. The Council and the Committee would want to tackle the varying standards of tidiness in different areas of the town.

Residential Areas:

There are very attractive housing areas, both in and around Navan, and they are a credit to all. On the edge of town these gardens given an air of attention to detail and give a feeling of welcome. Similarly in some of the housing areas there are some excellently maintained gardens and open spaces. It is suggested that the Committee organise two Competitions, one for single gardens

throughout the town (which could include houses that have no front gardens but could use window boxes and floral hanging baskets), and the other for housing estates. Perhaps the Committee should consider the creation of mulch or composting banks in suitable locations for the collection of grass cuttings, leaves etc. This compost could then be used throughout the town.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

As already mentioned, the entrance to Navan on some roads is excellent, especially the Dublin road. On the Slane and Kells roads, improvements could be undertaken on the verges. If the cutting of wide verges, in places, is onerous, they could be reduced to a width of one and a half metres, which would be sufficient to cut. The remaining uncut grasses could be left as a contrast and possibly some wild flowers planted. The area could then be left to blend into the adjoining hedgerows and be an added and safe habitat for fauna.

General Impression:

Navan is a very vibrant town with very pleasant areas such as those around the County administrative buildings. There are also areas such as the Fair Green and around the major shopping centre that now need attention. The Adjudicator looks forward to improvements in these areas in the coming years.