

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Newtownforbes**

Ref: **275**

County: **Longford**

Mark: **207**

Category: **B**

Date: **05/07/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	36	34
The Built Environment	40	27	26
Landscaping	40	31	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16	14
Litter Control	40	22	20
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	23	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	30	28
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	207	196

Overall Developmental Approach:

Newtownforbes is welcome to the 2004 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your application together with additional information; this facilitated the adjudication process. The village is located on a national primary route and suffers all the disadvantages of heavy volumes of through traffic. Nonetheless, Newtownforbes is nicely presented and has much to offer both residents and visitors. Your amenity walks should be sign posted from the main street. Newtownforbes has grown substantially in the last few years due to residential development. The challenge for the committee will be to ensure that recreational amenity facilities keep pace and meet the needs of the growing population. It would be a good idea to submit a summary of your plan with each year's application. Well done on the cooperation you received from the local community and other groups and the support you receive from the various statutory bodies.

The Built Environment:

Your plans to replace the high stone wall at St. Paul's church with railings have been noted. The boundary wall at the school is badly weather-stained and needs to be rehabilitated as a matter of urgency. "Bohan's" premises is nicely painted, but the outsized advertisement hoarding on its gable wall ought to be removed not least because of its tatty appearance; plastic neon signs here should be removed also. The three dated beer signs on the "Castle Inn" are superfluous and visually poor. The overall standard under this heading is good. Well done!

Landscaping:

Young trees along the main street are maturing well and are nicely complemented by colourful flower displays. Neatly maintained grassed verges are a feature of approach roads and the landscaped area at the 40 mph speed limit sign on the Longford entrance was very much admired. Flower beds at entrances continue to impress; well done to the primary schoolchildren for their eco-garden and their window boxes. Attendance at the landscaping course orchestrated by "Longford Community Resources Limited" is commendable.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Reference has already been made to your amenity walks and thank you for identifying these on a map; the use of interpretative panels and signposting might now be considered. At some stage in the future you might consider developing access to the Camlin river and incorporating this into your lovely village. Some consideration might also be given to the development of a community park as this not only looks good but enhances community development also.

Litter Control:

Litter control was very good throughout the village and on approach roads, however some litter was noted at "Bells Post Office". Congratulations to the schoolchildren who are in stage three of acquiring green flag status. Some old litter was noted in the sprayed grass verge marking the entrance to the Gate Lodge. The litter bins looked quite well.

Tidiness:

Well done to those residents associations which take the responsibility for their own areas and a commendation to the FAS community employment workers also. We wish you success regarding the provision of recycling facilities. Keep up your community awareness programme through notes and local newspapers. Building materials were noted in the curtilage area of 'Clongish GFC'. If further developments are not planned for this site, these should be removed. The Gate Lodge looks vacant/derelict; it has some fine traditional features which hopefully will be retained upon refurbishment. Are there plans for this building? Weed growth was noted to the retaining wall of the railway bridge on the Ballinalee road. The derelict premises located opposite the Tudor style houses on the main street is unfortunate given its high profile location in the centre of the village; we wish you well in dealing with this problem.

Residential Areas:

Newtownforbes has been the scene of substantial residential growth over the past few years and this trend looks set to continue. We note your successful objection to a high density housing development and wish you well in your monitoring of planning permission applications and the future development of your lovely village. Congratulations to those property owners of the Tudor style houses on the Main Street who have painted their properties and we anticipate the painting of the remaining one; these houses are particularly attractive and worth highlighting, given their location and status as an important focal point. New housing developments have been handsomely executed and do not present a problem under this heading.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Your new illustrated welcome signs are a most attractive feature of Newtownforbes and, as noted above, wildlife interpretative panels of a similar design would be appropriate. While the Main Street is quite well surfaced, the wire scape is particularly bad and we wish you well in your efforts to have the service cables ducted at some stage in the future. A new stretch of footpath has been noted to the roadside at 'Clongish GFC'. Well done! The car-parking area here should now be lined and

landscaped. The pedestrian handrail at 'Eden House' junction ought to be refurbished and the railings and litter bin located across the road from 'Casey's Lounge' are in need of attention also.

General Impression:

The overall appearance of Newtownforbes is very good. The village has managed to maintain its attractiveness and character in the face of substantial redevelopment. Congratulations on the amenity walks and give some thought to the development of a community park and access to the Camlin river.