

# Tidy Towns Competition 2005

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Naas**

Ref: **727**

County: **Kildare**

Mark: **229**

Category: **F**

Date: **08/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	38	37
The Built Environment	40	34	34
Landscaping	40	34	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	25	25
Litter Control	40	24	26
Tidiness	20	13	13
Residential Areas	30	27	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	26	25
General Impression	10	8	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>227</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for the comprehensive information and detailed map of the town, surrounds and housing estates – all of this made for a very good understanding of developments at Naas. With the massive changes in Naas over the past years it is correct that the Tidy Towns Committee take an in depth look at their activities, planning and their place in the overall context of a much enlarged town. There is a great confidence in the deliberations - judging from the documentation, a vibrant, focused and active committee is emerging. The 30 projects listed for the future will help to bring Naas to a much higher status and the improvements will be welcome by all.

### The Built Environment:

There are a number of landmark buildings that add character to the town – among these the Town Hall, Court House, Court Hotel, Presbyterian Church buildings, Church of Ireland, Our Lady and St. David's church and the church of the Martyrs. The town centre complex makes an imposing statement on entry from the Dublin Road and the Osprey Hotel, Business campus; apartments, leisure centre and spa offer a new dimension to the built environment of the town. The enormous building development beside the Osprey hotel is impressive and the finished product will be interesting. The County Council offices, Garda station and the new buildings of the hospital all look well. The Barker and Jones premises make use of a very strategic position in the town. The development at Lawlor's will further define the town. There are a large number of very well tented premises through the streets, these well-painted and clean buildings add greatly to the streetscape.

The number of premises needing attention is diminishing - but because standards have risen these stand out all the more. Hopefully a solution will emerge for the building beside the library.

### **Landscaping:**

Naas is benefiting from the large number of trees that have been planted over the years and these are now maturing well. The tree planting is continuing very well and in most of the new estates there is excellent tree planting along roadsides and by the open spaces. The estates around the Alderwood area are very good in this regard. Tree planting to the front of the Garda station is good. There is an attractive small triangle of planting on the Blessington Road where it meets the road back around to Lawlors. The harbour area is nicely landscaped – some attention is needed here to the Rubus plant that tends to sprawl over the seating and other plants. The landscaping around the Osprey Hotel and associated buildings is very attractive with a wide range of all year round interest plants, paving and water feature. The Railway walk and lakeside area are attractive and make lovely strolling ground. The parkland behind the lake – leading to the Workhouse cemetery is well cared for - a very pleasant area where people can take a stroll towards the town from their houses so avoiding the road. The main street has a number of colourful plant features, which add a sparkle of summer colour to the main street. Some more tree planting would be welcome in the street. Along by and opposite the fire station there are landscaped areas that appear a little neglected at the moment. At the start of the Blessington road by Tesco an area to the foot of the wall is also neglected.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The lakes offer an interesting opportunity for wildlife appreciation and the swans appear very tame and used to people at this point. The harbour too, and the adjacent walkways offer pleasant strolling grounds and an opportunity to observe wildlife. The railway walk is another positive asset in this regard. In order that people may appreciate more fully the features of these natural environments it would be helpful to have interpretation signboards or publications. Schools could use these areas for studies also and the results of their studies made available. A programme designed to help people to know what to look for, where and when would be of great benefit.

### **Litter Control:**

The efforts outlined in the material submitted show a commitment to litter control. The recycle bins by Tesco and at the County Council offices appear well used. Litter was noted in some areas, particularly by the Harbour, by the roadside walls of the County Council offices and hospital, by the lake and particularly bad along the Newbridge Road. A concerted effort is needed to include all area so that the litter problem can be overcome. The main street was in fairly good condition as regards litter.

### **Tidiness:**

The main street has a tidy appearance with so many premises looking fresh and clean – similarly the town centre. The development work at Lawlors and the major works on approach from the Dublin side are causing much disruption at the moment. The derelict buildings by the library hopefully will be resolved. The Newbridge road area close to the town is a little untidy

### **Residential Areas:**

There is a vast range of residential housing now present in the Naas area – the small terraces of cottage style houses - by the side of Todd's Public house towards the harbour – the new apartments at Osprey- the individual houses along the main approach roads and the masses of housing estates. The housing estates are well cared for with very good tree plantings generally – good examples at Sundays Wells, Rathasker Heights Sli na Riogh, Elmwood, Thorn Brook, the Monread estates, Oak Field and Hazelmere. Care and attention to individual houses whether in estates or not is vital and home owners play a huge role in contributing to the overall appearance of the town by the care and

attention of their own house, garden, and road frontage.

### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

As stated above the disruptive effects of roadworks at the approach road from Dublin are very significant at present. When completed there will be plenty of opportunity for good roadside tree planting and landscaping of the roundabouts. The road surface at the early part of the Newbridge road leaving the town is very uneven, patchy and in need of attention. Very quickly on leaving the town on the Blessington and Ballymore Eustace roads a rural type of landscape is reached and it is important that this be managed well and treated retaining its natural character. The removal of overhead cables in the town hopefully will happen soon.

### **General Impression:**

The vast expansion and rise in population has had its effects on the infrastructure of the town and surrounds. The new approach of the tidy towns committee will be central to making important advancements in the appearance of the town – not only by their direct work but also by their influence and lobbying with public bodies and the business community.

### **Second Round Adjudication:**

Arriving from Dublin in mid-August, it was apparent that the conclusion of the roadworks at the town entrance was in sight and that from next year this approach to Naas will be very much improved – in fact, a worthy introduction to what has become a very vibrant large town. A great deal of developmental work was also seen on the approach from Newbridge, where it looked as if it would be longer before it will be satisfactorily completed. Town Park Centre has a cosmopolitan look; a peep behind the hoarding at Mrs Lawlor's suggests that this new building will also be a fine addition to the streetscape. Buildings and commercial outlets in the main street looked well cared for, but there are still too many mass-produced commercial signs to make this a really dignified and classy shopping street. The start of the Athy road (ie. after the Newbridge intersection) was, however, much more blighted by poor quality shop fascias and signage. One would have thought that by 2005 the unsightly poles and wires in the town centre would have been replaced by better designed lamp-standards, as has occurred in several other towns to great advantage. The new Civic Offices were still under wraps on second adjudication day: as far as could be ascertained this will be a most imaginative and innovative architectural addition to the town. The very extensive and disparate suburban roads and estates were well looked after; the only area where litter was particularly noticeable was in the estates north of the Newbridge road, and on the verges of the Newbridge road. The west bank of the canal basin was not nearly so well looked after as the side opposite, with dock, nettles and ragwort as well as litter. The impressively laid out Millenium Park was visited and several bright and inviting buildings seen. Naas has now entered the upper section of the competition in marking, hence the second adjudication accorded. Do take into account the detailed observations of the first adjudicator under the separate headings, and best wishes for your continued progress.