

# Tidy Towns Competition 2006

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Navan** Ref: **583**  
County: **Meath** Mark: **243**  
Category: **F** Date(s): **27/06/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	41
The Built Environment	50	35
Landscaping	50	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20
Litter Control	50	31
Waste Minimisation	20	3
Tidiness	30	16
Residential Areas	40	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>243</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

The adjudicator would like to welcome Navan to the 2006 Tidy Towns Competition. You seem to have a very progressive Tidy Towns Committee of ten people and you appear to be working with all the relevant agencies that can help you in your work. Your local publicity machine also is working well based on your Entry Form. Thank you for the 3 Year Tidy Towns Plan. This sets quite clear objectives for the town. It is however recommended that you detail what projects are to be undertaken each year in the period 2007 to 2009. You might also indicate the anticipated cost (if any) and the name of the supporting agencies for each project (if any). We would be interested to see a copy of the Riverside Master Plan.

### **The Built Environment:**

Work on the built environment appears to have made a lot of progress in the period 2005 / 2006. One of the key achievements must be the completion and opening of the Solstice Theatre building. This building makes a clear statement about the modern Navan and the vision of that town for the future. It sits well on its site and compliments the nearby more traditional Meath County Council offices building. The Regional Ambulance Centre is a beautiful stone building with appropriate lettering. Another new project the slipway is an added amenity for river users. The Spicers building near Spicers Bridge need to be repainted white and the three green tanks in the nearby yard painted green. The old converted building near the bridge – old mill – is an imposing structure on this approach to the town centre. It is so good to see that a new appropriate use has been found for this building that echoes part of Navan's history. The Town Hall is a beautifully proportioned stone building excellently landscaped. On Flower Hill the National School is a fine stone building with attractive red brick detailing. Work appeared to be in progress on the Athboy Road on the extension to an existing thatched cottage. The external wall finish on the extension looks interesting. It is encouraging to see a restrained approach to external signage adopted by McDonalds for the old Post Office building. In Trimgate Street and surrounding streets many stone faced properties added some character to the streetscape. It is

unfortunate that the facades of some of these properties have been reduced in visual appeal by poor ground floor retail frontages. Some good signage does exist and the Lilly Coogan premises at 48 Trimgate Street come to mind together with the Birmingham premises on Ludlow Street. This is a fine old stone building with surviving traditional shop-front features and interesting iron work. Good signage is also a feature of the Newgrange Hotel. The lack of street name signs still continues to be a difficulty in Navan and as recommended in last year's Report this issue needs to be addressed urgently. The adjudicator has nominated both the new Theatre building and the Meath County Council building for Awards.

### **Landscaping:**

You have been very active again this year in terms of landscaping and many areas in Navan show the results of your labour. Perhaps the landscaping in Railway Street stands out. The new substantial planter boxes attached to the railings around the Fair Green car park looked especially well, especially where the railing has been painted matt black. It is recommended that the rest of the railing be painted matt black also. The view of the Library from the Fair Green car park is less than inspiring as the Library frontage wall has become stained with grime and this ideally needs to be power-hosed or painted. The large high floral displays on the Main Street provide a great splash of colour and add to the colour generated by the various shop-fronts on the street. The GAA premises is well presented, as is the Garda Barracks where landscaping has helped to highlight these buildings. The hanging baskets along both sides of Spicers Bridge are very colourful and effective at a critical point at the entry to the town proper. The 300 baskets and flower boxes that you have provided certainly have made visual impact. The area at Pool Boy Bridge is really outstanding in landscape and public amenity terms and the unusual sculpture here adds to the scene. Indeed this part of Navan has a slightly continental feeling to it.

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

In many towns and villages this is an aspect of the Tidy Towns Competition where there can be significant potential for development. All towns and villages have the presence of wildlife to some degree. It is important that your Tidy Towns Committee would examine further the wildlife potential of Navan and the immediate area, and see what you can achieve in terms of making your area even more wildlife friendly.

If you have not already done so, the starting point is to have a habitat survey carried out of the wildlife in the Navan area. Suggested habitats to be considered include the following –

- Urban habitats – gardens, waste ground, walls, graveyards, hedges
- Wetland habitats – rivers, ponds, lakes, canals, reed marsh, bogs
- Woodland habitats – forests, hedgerows, plantations, parks
- Grassland habitats – roadside verges, parks, wet meadows, dry grasslands

The survey should produce a species list for each of the habitats relevant to your area. This need not be an expensive survey. Perhaps there is a knowledgeable person locally who might undertake this task for you. Basically the survey would identify the animals, plants, birds, fish that inhabit your area and their associated habitats. It should be remembered that to carry out the survey properly that it will probably take a year so that all habitats can be assessed at different time of the year.

Using the results of the wildlife survey your next step should be to draft a straight forward Plan for Navan to preserve the identified habitats in your area, and investigate the possibility of new ones. For example perhaps there is an old Pond in your area that is disused, but with a little work could be an important area for wildfowl.

It is most important to try and involve your local school children in this project, and in many Schools there is probably a teacher who may have an interest in this area who would be willing to get involved.

As part of the actions to be undertaken in your Wildlife Plan you might like to consider the provision of some weather proof display panels, illustrating and explaining the wildlife in your area. This has been done very successfully in many towns and villages in Ireland.

### **Litter Control:**

The active involvement of the schools in Navan in your anti-litter campaigns is strongly welcomed. Congratulations in your involvement in the Pride of Place and the Meath Anti Litter League programmes. In the town centre litter control was quite good on adjudication day. Some litter was noted near Spicers Bridge, on Flower Hill where the situation was quite bad, and opposite Statioil on the Kingscourt approach road on the green area. Much litter was noted at the seating areas by the railings on the Dublin road approach. The performance of Navan in the IBAL evaluations has been examined and noted.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

This is a new category in the Tidy Towns Competition introduced in 2006. The purpose of this new category is to encourage Tidy Towns Committees and the community that they support to get involved in projects that will reduce waste and encourage recycling. Marks can be gained by Navan for the promotion of best practice. This can include community guidance on methods of reducing waste, segregating litter during clean up events. You could also consider a partnership with local firms and businesses in Navan to encourage them to reduce unnecessary waste.

The Navan recycling Centre is obviously playing a key role in waste minimisation. Have you involved your schools in any waste reduction programmes?

### **Tidiness:**

The purchase of the gum cleaning machine was an expensive but necessary purchase as the problem of chewing gum seems to be afflicting many towns in Ireland. Generally Navan was quite tidy and the situation seems to have improved on the 2005 situation. Some damaged red traffic bollards were noted in the town centre and these need to be re-set at 90 degrees to the pavement. A few untidy areas were noted on secondary approach roads.

### **Residential Areas:**

Generally estates and individual houses in and around Navan are well presented and up to the standards observed in towns of similar size elsewhere. Some locations in Navan stand out and these include the good use of coordinated colours at O'Gorman Terrace. The row of old cottages in Railway Street echo earlier times in the history of Navan. Therefore it was most disappointing to find some inappropriate retail signage on some of these cottages. St. Mary's Park impressed with the mature trees and the excellent green area, though some weed growth was noted at the entrance area. In a town the size of Navan that has so many housing estates it is not possible in one paragraph to sum up all estates in the town in terms of overall presentation. However the following recommendations are offered by the adjudicator who suggests that the Tidy Towns Committee bring the points to the attention of all estates in Navan.

- Road boundary walls will probably need to be painted twice each year especially on busy roads.
- Gable ends walls though sometimes difficult to paint should be painted when the rest of the house is being painted.
- Timber fencing will require treatment at least twice per year.
- All estates should be encouraged to provide entrance name signs and directional signage within the estate.
- Green open space grass areas will need to be cut frequently if a quality presentation is to be achieved. Remember that grass will probably have to be cut back from the top of kerbing by hand. The provision of a few well chosen trees can often transform an open space.
- Areas to the back of estates can sometimes become dumping areas for cut grass and other materials.
- Simple landscaping at individual houses can often be very effective if the proper trees and shrubs are planted.
- By their nature estates can sometimes have litter control problems and this must be addressed by each individual estate in the town.

If you do not already run a Tidy estates Competition involving the estates in your town then now might be the time to consider doing so. It is likely that you will be able to find a local sponsor or sponsors who would be prepared to fund the prize fund. The prizes should ideally be in the form of vouchers for estate maintenance equipment or for landscaping.

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

New signage on the approach roads has been examined and looks quite smart and the design is good. At

Railway Street the new lighting adds to the overall impressive presentation here. On the Cavan approach road overgrown hedging was noted, together with weed growth. The appearance of the Dublin road has improved with the new landscaping but litter was a serious problem on adjudication day. The landscaped area at the large white sculpture looked a little brown or burnt out, but the planting here is colourful. At the 60 KPH signage on the Slane road the verges were quite good but otherwise the presentation was below standard. On the N2 Duleek road stone walls and good landscaping stand out but some untidy areas by the Railway Bridge were noted.

**General Impression:**

Overall Navan is impressive and your Committee is to be congratulated for the way in which you handle such a large area. The adjudicator wishes you well in 2007 with all your projects.