

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Naas** Ref: **382**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **264**
Category: **G** Date(s): **06/07/2007**
31/07/2007

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	39
The Built Environment	50	37
Landscaping	50	37
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30
Litter Control	50	28
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	264

Overall Development Approach:

Naas is welcome to the 2007 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission which included your excellent plan and support material all of which facilitated adjudication. Naas is a beautiful town with a long history and a built environment that goes back to the 12th century and boasts the best of 21st century architecture also. Thank you for the overview of the issues facing the Tidy Towns Committee, this document was insightful and well articulated.

The Built Environment:

The new building accommodating the county council offices are a fine example of 21st century architecture and has been considered for both the Architectural Award and the Sustainable Development Award. Your older buildings are fine for their period also and the adjudicator particularly admired the Thomas Fletcher building, this has also been considered for an award, but is in need of greater maintenance to its stallriser. The Barker & Jones bookshop looks well, particularly the impact it has on its streetscape with its internal lighting, encourage retailers to eliminate posters from window and doors, to use lattice see through type shutters together with internal lighting to enhance the street display. Your new cinema complex building was admired also and your town centre development is stylish with good window displays, we note the absence of shutters here. Both the road side boundary wall and curtilage area of the Hyundi centre has still not been brought to a standard one would expect for such an outlet. The Courthouse and Town Hall are splendid buildings and their flood lighting at night enhances the main thoroughfare of the town. A number of buildings have been painted since last year and look well particularly the Emporium Kula on the junction of the main street and the road leading to the harbour. Work in progress was noted to the façade of the premises beside the Evita shop front. The Indian Restaurant appears to have been recently painted also, well done. We wish you every success with the projects due for completion in 2007 and look forward to seeing these in next year's competition.

Landscaping:

Flower displays in containers were quite magnificent in terms of their colour and profusion, the eye was taken away from the container and focused entirely on the flower display, well done. The northern entrance to the town was presented to a mixed standard in terms of landscaping in that grass verges were being neatly maintained on one side of the road but not the other, however young trees appear to be establishing themselves well. We look forward to the industrial estate being landscaped sooner rather than later as it is quite an eyesore, perhaps a trip to see the Maynooth Business Campus would be beneficial for businesses in this estate. Other commercial premises such as Aldi are nicely landscaped also. Well done on the maintenance of the grassed open spaces/lakeside areas which were meticulous in their presentation.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Thank you for the report on the survey of wildlife, which has been undertaken for you. The next step now would be to install nature trails and information panels depicting wildlife to promote awareness amongst the community; it would also be a good idea to identify threats to wildlife so that this can be protected in the event of future development. Landscaping should be of native species where possible to support wildlife and generate greater diversity of wildlife habitats. Your canal walk is a wonderful introduction to the wildlife of the area. We look forward to the development of further walks within the environs of Naas.

Litter Control:

Litter control was excellent at the time of adjudication with very little litter to be seen anywhere and what there was consisted mainly of scraps of sweet wrappers etc. No doubt your four major cleanups since last year have been instrumental in your improvement in litter control. Congratulations also the improvement made in the IBAL League.

Waste Minimisation:

Your recycling points were neatly presented and well signposted, well done on your segregation of litter also during cleanups. It is good to note the proactive approach you have taken with businesses to minimise waste and your liaison with the schools, well done to those schools involved in the Green Flag awards. Perhaps a waste audit could be undertaken at some stage in the future with a view to devising strategies to minimise the amount of waste produced.

Tidiness:

Your work on the elimination of graffiti has not gone unnoticed and the same applies to fly posting. Your activities to date regarding the opening up of the cartilage of the Courthouse, the Town Hall and Popular Square and the elimination of wire scape at these sites is commendable and we anticipate seeing wonderful results in next year's competition. Well done also on your weed control programme. It was a pleasure to note the appropriate development of the corner site for Monread. Some of your derelict premises appear to have been improved also since last year.

Residential Areas:

Thank you for your submission regarding the problem with the residential estates and the proactive approach you are taking in relation to this. Most residential areas looked really well at the time of inspection and the new Primrose Gardens which was beautifully landscaped was very much admired, hopefully the trees and shrubs here will become well established and mature over the next couple of years. Naas has a fine mix of old and modern residential buildings including period dwellings, again most of them look well, however some boundary walls could be improved. The grass verges and green open space at St. Corbans are being maintained to a high standard.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Street furniture was admired this year particularly public seating, which was either new or beautifully refurbished; litterbins looked well also. Footpath and road surfaces were to a mixed standard but in the main thoroughfares they were quite good. Perhaps the roundabout marking the entrance to the industrial estate could be landscaped now as this also marks the entrance into the town. We look forward to the development of the island for recreational amenity and the accompanying works under this heading. Congratulations on the new western link outer ring road and the new Caragh Road. It is good to note roads that are undergoing improvements. Bridges are a nice feature of your built environment and the old stone bridges add great character to the area.

General Impression:

The overall impression of Naas is one of a town undergoing a transition which has fine new features together with wonderful natural amenities and older heritage buildings, the committee are to be congratulated for embracing new development while at the same time maintaining the essential characteristics of Naas.

Second Round Adjudication:

Naas - in ancient time Nás na Riogh (Place of Assemble of the Kings) is today Nás na Trees! Endowed by nature and enhanced by enlightened planning, the town has made excellent use of its natural attributes of river and water together with gentle, undulating hills to locate expansive housing and open spaces surrounding lakes and watercourses. But a profusion of trees are the over riding impression, their skilled setting and growing maturity adding colour, movement and an air of calm to the often, almost pastoral like, landscape that has been created. The restoration of the Harbour area - and the locating there of the Library is a real joy and brings welcome contact with wild life and birds - especially ducks and swans - for the many who were enjoying the sunshine during our visit.

The futuristic County Council Offices are an imposing statement of modern design and response to the present day requirements for sustainable buildings. It will no doubt generate many enthusiastic supporters and a few forceful opponents as it is a strong manifestation of a new order in design. For this observer the now abandoned church juxtaposition at its side jarred more than a little.

Other unsightly derelict building, while not numerous, are also visually significant due to their location - in front of the charming harbour and beside the town centre supermarket - for example. On the day of our visit, sadly litter was a real and disturbing reality in many locations unlike the more agreeable scene encountered on the earlier adjudication.