

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Newbridge** Ref: **369**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **268**
Category: **G** Date(s): **16/06/2007**
10/08/2007

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	44
The Built Environment	50	35
Landscaping	50	37
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30
Litter Control	50	25
Waste Minimisation	20	14
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	268

Overall Development Approach:

Newbridge is welcome to the 2007 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission, which includes a comprehensive plan of action for the Tidy Towns Committee, we wish you well in its implementation. Well done on your partnership approach with your local authority and on the interaction with both business interests and schools in the town. Thank you for your suggestions that all Tidy Towns groups adopt a Safety Statement, you will be pleased to note that the Tidy Towns Handbook is being updated.

The Built Environment:

Well done on your liaison with developers in an effort to upgrade the landscaping element of their properties. Your work on the issue of undeveloped and derelict sites to bring about improvements in these is noted as are your submissions to the planning authority regarding various building developments and the Draft Area Action Plan for the town centre. It is good to note your involvement on future developments for the town centre and your proactive approach in monitoring planning applications. The White Water Shopping Centre is a fine example of 21st century architecture of which no doubt the community is proud together with its civic space and has been considered for the Architectural Award and the Sustainable Development Award. The Liffey Bridge was seen for the first time by this adjudicator this year and was greatly admired. It is good to note that Penny's have received permission to demolish and rebuild their store as both this and the post office premises look quite dated. Encourage retailers to give some thought to the positioning of posters in windows and doors as their thoughtless positioning can ruin an otherwise good presentation. Retailers might also be encouraged to feature internal lighting at night together with open lattice security shutters if shutters are thought to be necessary as this brings life to the street when businesses are closed and enhances the streetscape. More could be achieved for the presentation of the Tougher petrol station and the Ballymany Shopping Centre. The Credit Union premises has also been considered for the Architectural Award.

Landscaping:

The northern entrance into Newbridge is magnificently presented with its neatly trimmed grass verges backed by mature well-maintained hedgerow, which in turn is backed by stands of mature trees. The southern entrance is less well presented and on adjudication day looked a little overgrown. Try to achieve a similar standard for grass banks along this entrance as has been achieved at the Ballymany Manor Estate, as the entrance here is quite stunning. Landscaping to the roadside of the Railway Station looks well, it is now time to landscape its car park and general curtilage area. The flowerbed at the Garda Station is beautiful. Well done on your Newbridge in Bloom initiative. Your 95 planted containers on the streets of the town were admired and a word of thanks to the sponsors who facilitated this initiative.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your Riverside Park is exceptional in terms of design and maintenance and was being thoroughly enjoyed at the time of adjudication, it has been considered for the Waterside Award. Well done on steps taken in the Liffeside Amenity Area to enhance wildlife and support a diversity of wildlife habitats. We note the provision of bird boxes, wildflower/grass meadow. Your path replacement and new seating installation together with the new security fencing is acknowledged. We wish you well with projects planned under this heading particularly the proposed urban forest. Do keep us up to date on this development. We are also interested in the proposed habitat survey of the town and its environment.

Litter Control:

Litter control was excellent on the day of adjudication, which given the amount of shoppers and how busy the town was is quite an achievement. Well done on your list of suggested sites for the installation of new litter bins and on your education programme to promote anti litter awareness. Your Litter Abatement Plan sounds interesting. Well done also on your participation in National Spring Clean. We wish you every success in acquiring a fulltime litter warden for Newbridge and in your proposed activities for the future. It was good to note the litter free status of the town park. Appreciation is extended to the school authorities and the students for their proactive approach in relation to litter.

Waste Minimisation:

Your request to have a Civic Amenity Site located in the town area is noted. Your promotion of recycling, waste minimisation and energy conservation on your web site is acknowledged also, as is your Small Change Programme. Hopefully the Chamber's Corporate and Social Responsibility project will bring about good practice. We wish you success in your projects planned under this heading. Your recycling banks were neatly presented during adjudication. Well done to those schools who are participating in the Green Flag Schools programme and congratulations to the five primary schools who have achieved Green Flag status. It is good to note that your segregate litter after cleanups for recycling. Everyone involved in waste minimisation is to be commended.

Tidiness:

Your efforts to have unsympathetic advertising signage removed is commendable and we note your activities regarding graffiti particularly in the park area. Your lobbying for an enhanced traffic management plan to be implemented in the town centre is appropriate. Well done also on the upgrading of street name signage. We look forward to the fruits of your work regarding the path at St. Patrick's Church of Ireland. It will take many years for the overhead wire scape to be ducted but this is a difficulty you have in common with many other communities. A number of sites need better enclosure to their roadside boundary.

Residential Areas:

As noted above, landscaping which marks the entrance to Ballymany Manor is impressive. The older town centre dwellings are full of character and are part of Newbridge's heritage, most are well presented. Beautifully maintained green areas to roadside boundary walls on the road to the railway station were admired. We note from your submission that there are 8,000 new homes in Newbridge, which is a lot for a relatively small town to assimilate over a short period of time, no doubt your regular contact with residents associations is effective in assimilating new residents into the Tidy Towns effort. Your Tree Purchase Scheme is an excellent idea and it is good to note that it is used to purchase mature native species for planting within estates.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Reference has already been made to your new bridge, which is a magnificent achievement, and enhances the townscape. Also noted above was the excellent presentation of the northern approach road in terms of landscaping and the suggestion for improvements to the southern entrance. The railway station is well

surfaced and neatly presented. Road signs might be provided. Well done on improvement works to roads and footpaths over the winter months 2005 to 2006 and again in 2007 and it is appreciated that the council redirects the proceeds of pay parking to improvement works around the town. On adjudication day, some stretches of kerb along the main street were broken. Of the side streets, Charlotte Street was the best presented in terms of being litter free, well surfaced and uncluttered; the greenery on buildings is a nice feature. In contrast, Robert Street looked quite scruffy whilst Limerick Lane and Henry Street were reasonably well presented. Street furniture including street lighting looked well in general. Well done on cycle lanes also.

General Impression:

There is a great vitality in the town of Newbridge and this coupled with the new developments such as the bridge and the White Water Centre makes Newbridge a town to enjoy under all circumstances.

Second Round Adjudication:

Major building and road works are in progress. Estates looked well in general but some of the grassed areas to the front are not well maintained. Kilbelin, a very large estate, grassed areas very extensive and well cut, Whitewater shopping centre is very impressive. The drab water tower in front could need to be better presented, given its now pivotal location. Litter remains a problem along the main street especially towards the south and while there are plenty of suitably located bins a number seemed to be already full to overflowing. Weeds on the eave level of We Fit exhaust jarred somewhat. The 1873 sign "Clockmakers to the War Department" caught the eye. The entrance and grounds of the Kadeen Hotel were an example of what can be achieved; it was excellent as was that of Bord na Mona. In general the approach from the north was more appealing especially the bridge area. The new bridge and areas was a special joy. Some of the signs on approach roads were obscured by low boughs and other vegetation. Some of the traffic bollards have been knocked over. Infill housing on Edward's street looked well.