

# Tidy Towns Competition 2008

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Navan** Ref: **583**  
County: **Meath** Mark: **251**  
Category: **E** Date(s): **02/07/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	40
The Built Environment	50	40
Landscaping	50	37
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	21
Litter Control	50	28
Waste Minimisation	20	7
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	28
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>251</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Congratulations to Navan Tidy Towns Committee for participating in the Tidy Towns Competition 2008. Further congratulations on the creatively compiled and colourful booklet which expresses your regard for your town as it describes the plans you have for Navan over the years 2007 to 2009. Thank you for the most useful map but especially my gratitude for numbering the places that had to be visited. On first appearance Navan is a daunting destination for the adjudicator so your assistance was much appreciated. It appears that you interact with the community, that you keep them informed as to your plans. Many of your objectives have been achieved. Your Three Year Plan is well crafted with definite and definable projects specified in each section. One would love to hear what agencies you will engage with in order to achieve your aims. How will the various and many projects be funded? In your submission one would also wish that you were more specific regarding your relationship with the various schools. The challenge of enhancing a developing town, though difficult, gives you an opportunity to make your mark on the town. Good luck with your various endeavours.

### **The Built Environment:**

The centre of Navan is an architectural delight. Congratulations to the Solstice Arts Centre on winning the Tidy Towns Architectural Award in 2007. There are other buildings in the town that would press that building hard for a similar award for instance the Credit Union building. And despite all the redevelopment the older buildings still add much character to Navan town centre. Navan Shopping Centre has that sassy modern feel. The Plaza brings the town smack bang into the New Millennium. The street lamps add further modern charm to the streetscape. Even the bin design is in tune with the surroundings. The funky seating invites one to come and rest in our new found delightful haven. The use of sculptural pieces is a most attractive feature of the town.

Flower hill appears as a satellite town of Navan and yet an integral part of the traditional town. Its main street is full of character if also scared by the passage of time. It appears as if this area is constantly renewing itself.

Every effort is made to add to its attraction with the hanging baskets. Inevitable dereliction is part of that character but not an attractive element.

The play area near Boreen Keel is a well used colourful amenity. The lights at Páirc Tailtean may be somewhat in your face but the wall into town is impressive. There is a yellow house, from an earlier generation, beautifully painted as it stands defiantly proclaiming its right to exist despite the upsurge in modernism all about. Beside the old cinema looks forlorn. Sometimes buildings attempt to have a foot in the modern era though belonging to an earlier design. A good example is the Loft. O Flaherty's is another front to catch the eye. Many of the shop fronts in Trimgate Street do their best to outstrip their modern counterparts around the Plaza. The Ryan Vine is an example.

The area around the bridges is a delight. The design of the bridges a heritage joy. This area is another high point of a visit.

One cannot leave the built environment of Navan without mentioning the Garden of Contemplation in St Aine School. What care. What imagination. How overwhelmingly simple is genius.

### **Landscaping:**

The landscaping in Navan is at times breathtaking as at the various roundabouts and at times sickeningly neglected. Landscaping has been used to great advantage and effect to soften corners in the modern build. The variety of methods used in landscaping is a tribute to the French influence. One is struck by the use of various different surfaces in the landscaped islands about. Now the surface is earth, then it is mulch and now it is pebbled.

The centre of town is decorously landscaped. Different levels of shrubbery suggest the designer is catering for the varying needs of God's creatures of the wildlife.

As a general rule the entrances to the more modern estates are a wonder of colour, most eye catching. M any terraces seem to decide themselves that they will contribute their colour as at Emmet Terrace. In many place imaginative use is made of baskets as for example the flower tubs that have been fitted to the railing all along the car park. It would be hurtful to litany the neglected areas as your committee can rattle those off too.

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

The potential for the development of wildlife amenities is immense. The river area is a sanctuary for so many creatures, birds and fish. Hopefully their interests are being catered for. Andy Brennan Park is a wonderful and much appreciated amenity in the middle of town and in a most peaceful spot. It appears from your submission that this is a section that you have not yet come to terms with.

### **Litter Control:**

Litter is a problem. It is to be witnessed all over. In an estate like Beechmount Vale it detracts from its surroundings. Graffiti is a perennial companion. 'An Ré Órga' is a fine building but it is spoiled by the litter and the dumping behind the lovely gate. There is need for urgent planned action.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

The Bring Bank at the Town Hall is well maintained. The presence of the Green Flag Status in a school augurs well for a place. The ideas the pupils at school encounter and the skills they develop when preparing for the green flag will be brought home to the generations at home and will help in developing composting, reusing, recycling and reducing mentalities. Some members of your group might study the recommendations in the booklet 'Race Against Waste'. It would stimulate waste minimisation projects. The recycling centre could not be located by the adjudicator but the effort to find it became a voyage of discovery.

### **Tidiness:**

The appearance of the centre of Navan is wonderful. Not a cable to be seen. But there are other areas that are not so lucky. One sympathises with your efforts because construction work is not conducive to neat and trimmed appearances. It is difficult to expend time and finance on roads verges that are constantly besieged by trucks.

Advertising is very prominent on some of the approach roads to Navan and this is a problem needing to be tackled. Some signs need a wash as in 'Leisure Link'.

### **Residential Areas:**

Navan is a wonderful fusion of old estates, old houses, newer residences and then the modern estates. These modern estates are beautifully landscaped at their entrances, the open spaces inside are well manicured and there is a neat and tidy appearance to the estate. Blackcastle Desmene is an example. But much of the charm of Navan is to be found in the terraces of houses that populate much of the central area of Navan. Terraces on Academy Street exude the joy that their years entitle them to. Boreen Keel is a delight with fine traditional terrace with landscaping and great parking to the front. Other estates such as Leighbrook are in a shocking state suffering from dilapidation, poor landscaping and very little maintenance.

And yet the area around St Brigid's Villas is beautiful and Claremount Estate also looks fine. There are many fine individual residences about. The B/B's certainly do their best to make themselves attractive and at the same time enhance their surroundings. Ma Dwyers and Meadow View are prime examples.

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

There are many approach roads to Navan, many of them have had major road works in recent years and some surgery is still ongoing. The maintenance of the walls, road verges and hedges along these roads varies quite considerably and in some cases is neglected entirely due to ongoing projects. Footpath standards also vary. Tree planting is sometimes of a high standard. Landscaped beds vary from great to badly neglected. Where roundabouts have been treated they are magical in their design, in their colour, in their variety. It seems that it is just not possible to work all fronts perfectly at the one time. Off the main streets one finds a major variance in standards of upkeep from one place to another. The transformation that has happened in Navan means that there are many poles about that are now redundant and need to be removed. The quality of road surface varies also from place to place. Graffiti and litter are a constant reminder of work that needs doing. Finger signposting is attractive and very useful. In fact it is difficult to get lost in Navan because the streets seem to weave their way back to a central, recognisable area. Preston Lane is an example of another fabulous lane that leads one neatly back into the centre. If all areas were of the standard of Canon Street then this would be a wonderful town. Other parts of town have very high standards of presentation. Then tatty shop signs can break the dream as is the case with too many signs around Market Square. Everards and Clonard are of course exceptions. The Town Hall is on a magnificent site and is gloriously landscaped.

### **General Impression:**

Navan has benefited greatly from the renewal of the town centre in recent years bringing a modern, vibrant atmosphere to its town centre. At the same time the town has benefited from the improved network of roads in the vicinity of the town. Traffic is still a problem, one feels. Possibly due to the investment in these projects other elements of town life seem to have been neglected. There is now need for attention to many of the suburban areas of the town. The new is wonderful. The old is problematic.