

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Puckane** Ref: **848**
County: **Tipperary(North)** Mark: **251**
Category: **B** Date(s): **18/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	36
The Built Environment	50	33
Landscaping	50	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	16
Litter Control	50	37
Waste Minimisation	20	11
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	36
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	251

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for submitting your entry form together with the very helpful and colourful map of the village. It is good to note that you have a committee of 6 with regular monthly meetings and bi-monthly clean up sessions. We appreciate the difficulties you have in motivating volunteers for the TidyTowns effort but it is worthwhile persevering and the good ties which exist with the local teachers and pupils should benefit the cause. The use of local press and the web to communicate with the community is a good start and perhaps regular newsletters could also be considered. Your engagement with CAVA, FAS and the North Tipperary County Council should have a very positive effect on the village because a lot can be achieved by everyone working together.

We note that you did not submit an annual plan with your entry this year. In order to make significant progress within the TidyTowns Competition, a plan based over 3 to 5 years would be advisable and we strongly recommend that you consider this option. It wouldn't need to be prepared by a professional, it can be prepared by your own committee but views should be sought from the local community. Any plan should take into account existing plans for the area such as a local authority's Local Area Plan. Ideally your plan should clearly explain what you are trying to achieve each year, the approach planned and indicative costs for each project, any supporting agencies and an indication of the lead partner.

The Built Environment:

The buildings in the village blend together to form a warm welcome to visitors. The Church and nearby village pump were well presented. Businesses were well maintained, particularly Kennedy's Bar and the Village Shop, and the car sales premises was very clean and tidy. The Grotto, with its attractive shrubs and neatly painted wall and railings, provided an impressive focal point in the centre. The school and its grounds were neatly presented, although the boundary wall and capping could be enhanced by a fresh coat of paint.

The tennis courts provide a great facility for the enjoyment of everyone and it is obvious that a lot of thought went into them – even supporters were considered by the provision of attractive planted containers and relaxing white benches (we noticed that a couple of the benches needed some minor repair work). It is a shame that people seem to be using the fence itself as an entrance rather than the gate provided, hopefully something can be done to remedy the problem.

It was a pity that you were unable to proceed with your plans for Knigh Cross last year but it is good to note that work is proceeding this year. The proposed people's park for the village is a very worthwhile project and we wish you well in progressing it.

Landscaping:

Landscaping on the approaches to the village and within the village itself was a credit to everyone involved. It was sad to note that even a little picturesque village like Puckane can occasionally suffer from vandalism. Congratulations on tackling the problem and replacing the shrubs on the road to the GAA grounds. Although it can be heartbreaking to see hard work destroyed, it is vital that the residents fight to retain pride in their place. The shrubbery and green area were very impressive during our visit, well done. The lavender bed planted along the driveway opposite the thatched cottage and grotto in the village centre was a lovely surprise.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It is good to note that a committee member has been specifically assigned responsibility for the wildlife amenities around the village. The adjustments you have made to your maintenance of grass verges and hedgerows indicates a serious commitment to the encouragement of wildlife, keep up the good work. The area opposite the Church of Ireland seems to be a very suitable location for your wildlife area. The proposed signage will encourage greater awareness of these areas.

Last year's report referred to a wildlife survey being conducted by the local children and if the survey results are available perhaps some of the information could be used for display panels in the designated wildlife areas.

Litter Control:

Great initiative shown in making your own litter bins to cut costs, well done we noticed a good distribution of bins around the village and they seemed to be coping well within their capacity. The increased frequency of clean up evenings and the fact that committee members were taking responsibility to control litter within their own approach areas were two very positive actions.

During our visit there was a small amount of litter near the recycling bank and next to the litter bin near the display map – in fact, there were also two chocolate bar papers pushed into the frame of the map, perhaps if the missing glass front was replaced this practice would stop. It was good to note that there were several bins near the tennis courts but, while the recycling bins were empty the bin for normal rubbish was full.

Waste Minimisation:

The location of the recycling bins, behind Kennedy's Bar and Village Shop, seems to be a good position as they are easily accessible for everyone and are being utilised.

The proposal to introduce composting in the School as part of the Green Flag project is to be applauded. Other useful actions which you might consider would include organising a waste awareness day and circulating waste minimisation brochures to residents in the area.

Tidiness:

The Puckane and Shannon's Lough Derg signage on the approach from Terryglass provide an attractive welcome but they have suffered from their proximity to vegetation and would benefit from a cleaning. Other signs around the village were clean and in good condition. The new road number signs erected by North Tipperary County Council were very clear and helpful. The proposed Slán signs will add a nice touch to the existing signage. Although it would be difficult to get lost in the village, it would be nice to see a sign indicating the excellent tennis courts. We noticed the auctioneers signs still erected on the cottage schemes but hopefully, they will not remain a feature for much longer.

Residential Areas:

There are some really attractive cottages and houses in the village, a blend of old and new giving Puckane a wide appeal. The individual thatched cottages in the main street and the two cottage schemes going towards Terryglass were particularly eye catching. Window boxes and hanging baskets, together with some lovely landscaped gardens and generally well maintained houses throughout the village are witness to the commitment of the residents in Puckane. The houses near the school were generally well cared for, although one or two walls might be improved by a coat of paint. The green area and trees in the estate were in good condition but sweeping of the kerbside would further enhance this nice estate. Signage for the residential estates should be an asset when completed.

Your initiative in bringing the TidyTowns message to all residents is to be commended and hopefully will pay dividends in the coming years.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The village is very lucky to have the services of a committed FAS team in helping to ensure that it is clean and tidy and it is important that their efforts are appreciated by all.

The approach from Terryglass, with its trees, stone planters, well maintained grass margins and enticing benches, extends a warm welcome to visitors. The Dromineer and Nenagh approach roads were also very well presented. The little tree lined road to the tennis courts was immaculately presented with its neat grass verges and promenade of trees down both sides.

General Impression:

From last year's report and comments in your entry form this year, it is obvious that your committee has been working very hard to overcome difficulties which have been encountered but it is important that you persevere. Unfortunately, other organisations do not necessarily work to your timescale or priorities and this can be frustrating but keep the pressure on and don't allow your plans to be derailed. Congratulations on continuing to improve your beautiful village.