

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Brannockstown** Ref: **358**  
County: **Kildare** Mark: **248**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **18/06/2009**

|                                | Maximum<br>Mark | Mark<br>Awarded 2009 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Overall Development Approach   | 50              | 30                   |
| The Built Environment          | 50              | 34                   |
| Landscaping                    | 50              | 32                   |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 50              | 20                   |
| Litter Control                 | 50              | 38                   |
| Waste Minimisation             | 20              | 6                    |
| Tidiness                       | 30              | 17                   |
| Residential Areas              | 40              | 28                   |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas  | 50              | 36                   |
| General Impression             | 10              | 7                    |
| <b>TOTAL MARK</b>              | <b>400</b>      | <b>248</b>           |

### Overall Development Approach:

Brannockstown is welcome to the 2009 TidyTowns Competition. Thank you for your submission including your annotated map which was very helpful on adjudication day. Brannockstown has a very active Committee and has had a very busy year with the development of the Brannockstown Village Design Statement which was completed in March 2009. We presume that as no village plan was submitted this year that your future works will be influenced by the actions and aims as outlined in the VDS. This is a valuable document for your village to use as a basis for future development and enhancement and we look forward to seeing your village evolve over the coming years, guided by the well thought out principles. However we would still advise you to develop your own annual plan with more targeted projects and aims which can be used in conjunction with the VDS. The consultation processes developed by your group, such as the Community Alert Committee, are to be commended and you seem to have a very effective means of communication with the wider community in your area. Well done on this as involving the community is key to the success of any TidyTowns group. The efforts of your FAS worker were much in evidence as the village was very well presented on adjudication day so well done and continued success with securing this help. The strong relationship between the school and your community is also noted and we hope this goes from strength to strength. Good luck in your Vintage Tractor Rally and all the events from fundraising walks to Christmas parties which are part of your village's agenda. These events can also be used as a basis to promote any projects you may have planned which need community support.

### The Built Environment:

Brannockstown is a lovely village set against a backdrop of mature deciduous trees and containing a number of period buildings including private residential units and public buildings. The historic development of the village around the entrance to the Harristown Estate has created a set piece of period estate planning which is a delight for the resident and visitor. The use of rubble walls both on the approach to the village and as

boundaries within the village is a particular feature. As ever the church and school were very well presented. The school notice board, legible from the footpath, is an excellent way to inform as to the activities being carried out in the school and wider community.

We will follow with interest your efforts to develop a village green/focal area as a centre point for your village. Try to ensure any native trees in the vicinity are retained as part of the scheme and protected during the works. The development of this area will give you an opportunity to rationalise the signage in the village but in the meantime the poles of the Ragusa Stud signs were in need of attention and should be repainted.

### **Landscaping:**

The various planters and beds around the village were a credit to your team and well done. Try to coordinate the planting scheme used within the village for a more cohesive effect. The planters at the entrance signs, along the Kilcullen Road and at the village pumps should all have a consistent theme with the same colour scheme or plant types. We note it is one of your planned projects to introduce a wider variety of flowers but think your seasonal planting scheme through carefully as too many varieties can spoil the overall effect.

At the time of adjudication not all the wooden planters along the Kilcullen Road seemed to be planted but perhaps these were to be filled later in the summer. The square planters at the pump opposite the school were showing signs of wear and should be removed, repaired or perhaps replaced with appropriate specimen shrubs to provide a year round setting for the pump. Generally the shrub beds along the Kilcullen road were very well kept with only limited weed growth evident.

The planting of trees and shrubs in the new residential areas is commended, however try to ensure that all planting is appropriate to your villages setting. A Eucalyptus tree planted in the Moorhill Wood development is not an appropriate long term tree either for visual or habitat value. Also some dead shrubs at the entrance area to the Moorhill estate need to be removed.

The private gardens within the village were very well maintained so well done to your residents.

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

Congratulations on the successful outcome of your campaign to secure right of way at Carnalway Bridge and the bridge and its environs were tidy on adjudication day with the grass verges trimmed and tidy. We note that you have plans to undertake improvement works in this area and we look forward to these works in next years adjudication.

You should use the landscape character maps, prepared as part of the Village Design Statement, as the basis for a habitat study of the village. This can be a clear inventory of the various habitat types present around your village: - pond/river side habitats, native and planted woodlands, rubble walls, domestic gardens etc. This simple study can inform how habitats can be enhanced with appropriate planting and management regimes and will be a useful baseline study to have. As you improve areas through planting etc. you can assess how the habitats in your village are fairing and how successful your measures at protection and enhancement are.

The beautiful rubble stone walls are a particular feature of your village and an important habitat in themselves, and would be an interesting study subject.

### **Litter Control:**

The village was litter free on the day of adjudication so well done to all concerned. The litter awareness schemes run within the school and highlighted within the Community Committee newsletter are obviously paying dividends. Keep up the good work. Do you segregate the litter collected during your litter patrols?

Well done on your school in obtaining their first green flag in 2008. The flag was proudly flying in the school yard, and we look forward to hearing of future achievements in this scheme.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

Well done on your efforts to date in this category with the efforts of the schools recycling scheme. We note that the location of recycling bins is an aim of the VDS, keep us informed as to the outcome of this. As part of your aims to develop a project to encourage waste minimisation have you considered concentrating on an issue such as promoting composting? Local Authorities run seminars from time to time and this could be attended by some of your committee who could then encourage local residents to engage in this practice at home? Kildare County council provides composting bins and perhaps an audit could be carried out to see how

many residents currently compost.

### **Tidiness:**

In general the village is tidy and well presented. The resurfacing of the main street was a success and the road surfaces were generally good. The footpath at the entrance to the Church was in poor condition and in need of repair.

The boundary walls and hedges within the village were very well kept and create a neat appearance as viewed from the street. The railing atop the curved corner boundary wall at Beech Lawn was in need of repainting. Perhaps a darker colour may be appropriate here? A dark green or red, as used successfully on other railings in the village might work well. The light grey gates to the entrance of the commercial yard along the Main Road could also perhaps be repainted in a more suitable dark green or red. Perhaps a suggested colour palette for boundaries within the village could be developed as a guide for residents?

The rear boundary treatment at the Lodge at the entrance to Harristown Estate was poor and detracted from the setting of this beautiful lodge. The use of temporary fencing along with severely pruned non native conifers was untidy and inappropriate. Perhaps a native hedge could be established inside the boundary wall or a more suitable timber fence installed to tidy up the views into the rear garden of the lodge? The red containers in the premises beside the Eircom station were a bit of an eyesore when viewed from the road

### **Residential Areas:**

The residential areas through out the village were very well presented and all your residents are to be commended. Good luck to the residents of the Moorhill Wood area on the formation of their residents committee. They might consider planting climbing shrubs to some of the walls along their green area to soften the impact of the walls as viewed from the internal roads.

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

The 50k sign on the approach to the village from the Dunlavin Road is obscured somewhat by vegetation as is the community alert sign outside of the village. Ensure all road signs are clean and clearly legible.

As part of the village's future aims we note that one of the projects in the VDS is to provide a network of paths to provide safe routes from residential areas to the school and other points of interest. Good luck with this. Well done on your school for the development of the green walking bus initiative which is a great way to reduce the numbers of cars at the school at busy times.

There were a couple of broken down sections of wall along the R142 Naas Road which should be repaired. The timber gate opposite the entrance to the Sallymount Stud was admired and traditional field gates such as this should be encouraged especially on approach roads. A new section of timber post and rail fencing was noted on the Dunlavin road and this should be planted with a traditional hedge to continue the hedgerow boundary in this area.

### **General Impression:**

Brannockstown is a delightful village with an historic core and an overall tidy and attractive appearance. We wish you luck with the development of future plans based on the excellent work carried out as part of the Village Design Statement process. This is a document that has the potential to guide you and the local authority, in order to enhance your village in a sensitive, appropriate and sustainable way. We look forward to following your progress over the coming years.