

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Monasterevin** Ref: **379**  
County: **Kildare** Mark: **202**  
Category: **D** Date(s): **19/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	29
The Built Environment	50	22
Landscaping	50	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30
Litter Control	50	21
Waste Minimisation	20	4
Tidiness	30	10
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	18
General Impression	10	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>202</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Monasterevin is welcome to the 2009 TidyTowns Competition. Thank you for your submission although a number of the sections had not been completed. Your hand drawn map was useful but perhaps next year you could supply an annotated OS map to highlight features you want to bring to our attention. This can then be used each year as a basis for your submission. No plan was included with the submission. We would encourage your group to prepare a three to five year plan with both short term and long term tasks identified. This need not be professionally prepared but should set out clear aims and goals for your area. It will be a very useful tool to help focus your group's efforts and allow you to reach achievable goals in realistic time frames. You have a small committee with a limited number of meetings but well done on all your efforts to date. Perhaps you could look to increase your membership somewhat. Apart from sharing workloads, new members bring their own ideas and insights to an organisation. As there are a number of new housing areas being established around your town perhaps you could consider organising an outreach day to introduce new residents to the committee, this could be done in conjunction with one of your committee meetings.

### **The Built Environment:**

The castellated gates to Moone Abbey are a dramatic feature at the entry to your town from the Dublin direction. The white gates are looking a little tired and perhaps they can be painted to keep the area looking smart. The foreground of the new development at Moone Abbey Court detracted somewhat from the setting of the gate. We hope that the area in front of the new boundary wall here will be landscaped appropriately. The stone cladding to the Nags Head looks dated and due to its location on a corner site, it is a prominent feature at the end of the Dublin Road. The abandoned mill and associated buildings on Dublin Street are a real problem area for you as they present a poor image on such an important thoroughfare through the town. Perhaps as an interim measure the fascia boards on the unused units could be painted to present a better street frontage?

The use of climbers at Mooney's pub together with appropriate signage was great to see and the Fire station again was well presented. Overall the fine Georgian Buildings on Main Street created a lovely set piece with Monasterevin House a fine centrepiece for the street, and well maintained. It is a shame so many of the buildings here are in poor repair and unused. Try to ensure owners paint the hoarding in closed up windows and keep the doors clean and painted. The Credit Union building was nicely done although the gate of the adjoining rear yard could be improved and the footpath at the entrance to the yard resurfaced. All the churches in the town were well presented, well done to all concerned. We wish you luck with the proposal to erect street names as none were noted on adjudication day.

### **Landscaping:**

This section of your submission was not completed so we can only judge this category on the results of the adjudication day. Please try to fill in this section of the entry form in subsequent year's submissions so we can see what activities you have focused on during the year and where your future works will be concentrated. Monasterevin is blessed with an enviable landscape setting including the river, the canal and a number of mature stands of trees. All of which create unique opportunities for you.

The Riverside park was looking well and is a lovely space. The cottage feature needs some attention as a number of roof tiles were in need of repair. The walkway along the canal was well maintained with a narrow mown verge alongside the path which allowed canal bank vegetation to flourish including yellow flag iris. There was evidence of ivy control on the bridge over the Barrow which allowed the stone work on the parapet to be seen. The railing over the bridge was in a poor condition and it should be cleaned and painted. A dark green colour may be appropriate to match the adjacent ironwork on the aqueduct.

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

Monasterevin has a number of rich habitats within its confines including the fine stands of mature trees and the wetland habitats of the river and canal. The mowing regimen along the canal walk was a good way to keep the area tidy but also allow the canal bank vegetation to thrive. It wasn't clear if the plots of land between the Main Street and the River Barrow were publicly accessible or in private ownership. While some plots were beautifully maintained others seem to have been neglected. Perhaps the owner of the un-maintained plots could be approached to allow the lands to be developed as habitat or nature areas. These could perhaps be used by the local St Paul's School as a study area and their value enhanced with bird boxes or native planting.

### **Litter Control:**

We note your concerns at the location of the recycling centre on the Main Street and wish you well in your efforts to resolve this problem area with Kildare Co Co. On adjudication day the area was relatively clean but some rubbish was pushed between the bins and the wall. Generally Monasterevin was clear of litter on adjudication day although some litter was seen on the stone bridge approaching the lifting bridge from Main Street.

Good luck in your efforts to acquire new bins and replace damaged bins in the town. It was noted that on Main Street alone there were 4 different styles of bin! A consistent approach to street furniture would improve the appearance of the street. Does your committee take part in any litter patrols or in the An Taisce National Spring Clean, Ireland's largest and most popular anti-litter initiative?

### **Waste Minimisation:**

As again there was no information in this category in your submission it is difficult to know how you are tackling this issue. Are your schools involved in the Green Flag scheme? This is a great programme to drive home the issues of sustainability and waste minimisation to the younger members of the community. Are any of your local businesses involved in the Repak scheme which aims to facilitate and grow packaging recycling? These are all initiatives which may already be happening in Monasterevin which you can include as part of future submissions.

### **Tidiness:**

The paths and grass areas along the canal were well looked after but the lifting bridge at Moores bridge need to be restored and repaired. The interpretative sign was clean and in good repair but one major issue here is the vandalism of life buoys in the holders. Perhaps signage such as 'A stolen ringbuoy – a stolen life', as used in other communities, could be attached to the poles of the life buoys. This is an issue that needs attention. The benches along Main Street and around the Gerard Manly Hopkins Statue need to be painted.

### **Residential Areas:**

The Bell Harbour development was beautifully presented and the flowering planters to the Jennifer's Travels barge moored in the harbour were a nice touch. Rose terrace was a lovely development with beautifully maintained front area. We congratulate the residents of Tougher Wood for a delightfully presented area which shows an evident pride in their street. Indeed on adjudication day a number of residents were out tending to both their gardens and the planted verges. Abbeygate on the Dublin road was well maintained but would benefit from an entrance sign. The Distillery Court development was maturing nicely however there was a lot of litter in the communal bin area. The footbridges over the stream here were nicely done. The more established residential area at Cow Pasture was looking well though the pump and bench could be repainted. Are there any established residents committees set up in the town who could be approached to help newer areas set up their own residents groups or to contribute to the Tidy Towns Committee?

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

The stone wall on the approach to the town from the Dublin Road is a delight and along with the mature trees within the ground of the Abbey creates a lovely setting. The grass verges and trees on this approach were all well maintained. Further out the Dublin Road, before the Abbey gates, there were a number of dead and dying trees on the road verge. These should be replanted as they will create gaps in the eventual tree lined avenue effect here as the remaining trees mature. Generally road signs within the town were well maintained but look out for overhanging vegetation affecting views. Some of the school warning signs on Drogheda Street, near the St Johns School No 2, were not clear. The road surfaces at Canal Harbour and Drogheda Street were poor and uneven.

#### **General Impression:**

Monastervin is a fine town with an architectural and natural setting that is the envy of many. We wish you well in the maintenance and enhancement of all the fine elements which together give your town such character. We would encourage you to seek the excellent advice which is available to you from your local authority on many issues – be it conservation, heritage, environment or litter control. Good luck in all your efforts for the coming year.