

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Narraghmore** Ref: **304**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **236**
Category: **B** Date(s): **18/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	29
The Built Environment	50	27
Landscaping	50	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20
Litter Control	50	37
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	31
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	32
General Impression	10	6
TOTAL MARK	400	236

Overall Development Approach:

Narraghmore is welcome to the 2009 Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission although not many of your planned projects were outlined which has lost you some marks in this category. Your hand drawn map was very 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. You have a small committee with a limited number of meetings but well done on all your efforts to date. You note the difficulties in encouraging the wider community to get involved with your activities. Perhaps you could consider organising an outreach day to introduce new residents to the committee and the established community. Are there any established residents committees set up in the village who could be approached to help newer areas set up their own residents groups? You mention your support from Kildare County Council but have you approached any local business for additional support or investigated sources of funding for local projects such as the Leader programme? We wish you well in your aim to secure the input of a Fas worker for your village. Have you considered approaching other agencies for support? The successful Tidy Towns Committees are those that have succeeded in harnessing the support and skills of a number of different agencies such as the Leader Programme, local GAA, the CLAR programme (if you are in a designated area), Urban and Village Renewal Grant Scheme.

The Built Environment:

Molly O'Looneys bar and Kates Flower shop at the centre of the village are again reasonably well presented. Perhaps Kates Flowers could be encouraged to display some flowers outside the shop, in addition to the planted tubs, to enliven the shop front. The post office is a traditional building and was well presented. The sign for the Venus School of Health and Beauty was nicely done but perhaps the fascia it is attached to could be painted in the short term if there is no tenant in the downstairs unit. Good luck with the kerbing works being done at the moment. We hope they will be completed soon and the grass verge areas reinstated to a

high standard once works are completed. We would encourage all properties in the village centre to establish proper boundaries. A planted hedge or simple post and rail timber fence to the gravel area in front of the house in the village centre would do much to improve the setting of this lovely house.

Landscaping:

As you say in your report the road verges and tree planting will need to be assessed once the road works have been completed. We note that a number of the trees on the approach to the village from the east are suffering due to weed competition and the verges should be maintained to at least the speed limit signs, indicating the extent of the villages.. This will also give the trees a better chance at successfully establishing. The mature tree at the new traffic island should be monitored over the coming years for signs of stress as a result of the current road works. Signs to look out for would be the dying back of branches and early autumn colouring and premature leaf drop. The entrance boulder signs to the village were somewhat obscured by grass verges. Perhaps they would be more visible if placed on low mounds.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Narraghmores location in the middle of rolling countryside means there are lots of possibilities to enhance the habitat value of the village. Where new planting is being introduced to the village try to ensure the emphasis is on native planting. For example the hedge to the boundary with Lipstown Manor is establishing well but its habitat value could have been improved by increasing the number of native species in its make up. Any new developments with road frontages should be encouraged to plant native species. The tree and hedgerows around your village are massive, and often undervalued, reserves for local wildlife. Perhaps an audit could be done on the length of hedgerows left in the village. This can be used as a baseline to ensure no new developments impact on this network of natural wildlife corridors

Litter Control:

There was some litter noted in the road gutters and the bin on the road opposite the post office was full. There were old estate agents signs on the verge opposite the entrance to Oak Park. The estate agents should be called upon to remove old signs. Although you say that new bins are to be purchased for the village you do not say if there are any litter patrols at present or proposed. Establishing a regular litter patrol is the most effective way of addressing litter. You should identify Committee members who can take responsibility for particular areas and who can commit to doing small-scale pick ups a few time a week – perhaps while walking the dog or while out for an evening walk.

Waste Minimisation:

You state that you have installed a composter and that it is being used for grass cutting. Well done on this. Have you considered promoting composting to the wider community? 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:

While the road works are in progress it is difficult to assess this category and we hope by next years adjudication the works will be complete and all areas reinstated. There were a number of areas where there was weed growth along kerbs and the weeds growing around the pump feature in the centre of the village should be removed. A number of wheelie bins were placed outside the new house facing the village centre. Can these be moved to rear areas as they were unsightly in such a prominent location? It is difficult to keep derelict sites tidy while they are awaiting redevelopment but the hoarding to the rear of the pub and shop is beginning to look aged and could do with repainting. The ornamental three lamp light near the pump is also in need of repainting.

Residential Areas:

Generally residential properties in the village are well presented with a number of fine houses in the centre of the village. The entrance sign and approach to Oak Park was well maintained. Grass was being cut in the open space at Oak Park on the day of adjudication. Would it be possible to develop a varied mowing regime in this space, with the side slopes being cut less frequently, in order to develop wild flower banks with its increased habitat value? It was good to see native trees planted in residential open spaces as these will provide the long term backdrop for the village. The cottage on Wood Road, just past the speed limit sign, was presented well with a splash of colour from the hanging baskets.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Grass verges were kept well on all approach roads apart from where the road works were being completed. Try to encourage a consistent approach to street tree planting as a number of types of trees have been used

along the roadside. If new trees are to be planted maybe use a species that has been successfully established elsewhere in the village for consistency. The Birch tree planting looks particularly well. Some of the old style lamps were lit during the day. These should be turned off to avoid wasting energy.

General Impression:

Once the current road works are complete the village should benefit from a better road and path network. The issue of dealing with empty commercial units and the upkeep of potential development sites will need care and attention in the future year. In order to keep these elements in check we would again recommend that you produce a simple three year plan to allow you to identify potential projects and problems and act upon them.

We wish you luck with engaging the newer residents and hope they can be encouraged to bring new ideas and manpower to your group. Well done to all involved in your work to date and we wish you every good luck in moving forward.