

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Emly** Ref: **641**  
County: **Tipperary(South)** Mark: **305**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **12/06/2009**  
**24/07/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	43
The Built Environment	50	39
Landscaping	50	40
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	35
Litter Control	50	40
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	22
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	39
General Impression	10	9
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>305</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Congratulations to the Emly TidyTowns Committee for participating in the TidyTowns Competition 2009. Thank you for your comprehensive submission and for your most helpful, though simple map. You included a large amount of supplementary material. This adjudicator would ask you to be more discerning in the extra material you include. Much of it is of greater relevance to your committee, to the progression of your work and may be a significant record of work done by you, but not necessarily of significant relevance to the adjudicator. It is clear from your submission that the TidyTowns movement has much support in Emly. The visit strengthens this belief. Your submission states that, 'most of the people of Emly give a hand in one way or another,' and that is obvious. You appear to have established strong, worthwhile links with various agencies and have the support of local business. An admirable feature of the Emly approach to TidyTowns is your encouragement to the younger generation to be involved at the planning stage. Having two school children involved on the committee is praiseworthy. The enthusiasm of your submission is translated onto the streets; in other words, there is a healthy, balanced combination of talk and action.

### **The Built Environment:**

The usage of many buildings in Emly has changed dramatically with the evolution of Irish village life. Were it not for the care of your community, many stone buildings such as the creamery or Duhig House or the barracks could now be in decay; not so in Emly. Conservation and preservation of these buildings illustrates your pride in Emly's past. Many of the buildings on the Main Street could now be tatty and forlorn because their traditional enterprises are no more but the coats of fresh paint ensure that the traditional village street-scape is preserved, enhanced and attractive. The village is surrounded by the farming community. Farming enterprise visits the heart of the village but integrates naturally with village life and does not clash with the priorities of the TidyTowns committee. What might elsewhere be an unsightly shed, in Emly compliments the appearance of its more urban surroundings. Farm gates are not overlooked but are brightly

painted. The striking co-ordinated colours of Main Street contribute to the character of this village architecture; the colours bring the street to life. The landscaping supports this colour scheme and the lamps add a modern funkiness. Even a corrugated roof, when painted with a green or red, can bring character to the Street; old does not mean derelict. An old shed is dressed up to give it dignity in old age and A house that was once home to previous generations still proclaims its standing in the folk memory of village life through imaginative decoration. The greens are more striking as we move up the street. The parish church from 1810 is respected and somewhere else a wall is landscaped to soften its effect. The main street is full of interest with buildings of varying proportions representing the different eras of building in the village but all graceful in their decoration and somehow complimenting one another's appearance. The appearance of the street buildings needs very little embellishment so the controlled use of hanging baskets and window boxes is commendable. Let their heritage proclaim those buildings. The area in the vicinity of the Church is possibly the highlight of many highlights. Maybe finding the wildlife area beside the Church was as spiritual an experience as the visit indoors; although that barking dog at the end of the garden must frighten away the bravest of God's little creatures in the garden! Emly honours its past. In this case your emigrants, incredibly individually listed, are remembered. Your dead are respected in their well maintained resting place. The information board on Emly is worthwhile and interesting.

A continuing challenge for you will be the maintenance of the present high standard of presentation of buildings. Wherever a building is in need of painting, its appearance has a negative effect on the buildings around it but one feels confident that you will successfully meet such a challenge. Your wish that the appearance of a building on the street will change shortly illustrates the co-operation you enjoy in your community and your awareness of the 'sore thumb' factor. An eye could also be kept on the design of shop signage which might be deemed somewhat out of character with the traditional village ambience which you so successfully promote. One looks forward to your heritage trail, the concept of which suggests your interest in the past of Emly and your description suggests an informed interest in the many heritage structures about - an exciting prospect!

### **Landscaping:**

Emly is set on a lush and richly landscaped stage. One is constantly reminded of the green backdrop to the village and every effort is made to bring that landscaping richness into the heart of the village. Every opportunity to brighten up the appearance of the village through manmade landscaping is also grasped. Not only is your committee conscious of summer bedding, but also the tree planting, which has been ongoing, is equally spectacular. The support of businesses in creating a landscaped aura is most impressive. Residences brighten up their fronts all over town and on the approach roads. Shrubs, tubs and window boxes abound. There are many examples of fine landscaping throughout the town and begonia and roses beckon the summer to shine on them! Bare walls and block walls are well treated throughout, as creepers flourish and hide their starkness. The wall at the GAA grounds could be featureless but it is tastefully landscaped and camouflaged. This adjudicator enjoyed the treatment of the first pump encountered, only to discover that these fountains would become a theme by the end of the visit. A disused site can become an eyesore if not treated but not in Emly; it becomes an open air museum honouring the farming background and heritage of the village, the railings making free viewing possible. Railings and gates are a feature of the village and all are beautifully painted. The red and black on the railings at St. Ailbhe's Drive compliment the surrounding colour scheme and the corners of the Church car park are gently softened by a variety of landscaping ploys. Seats abound, affording an opportunity to enjoy the results of the green fingers all about and hinting at the passer-by to come, linger and enjoy the fruits of our labours. And linger one should, in the Four Seasons Park or in the Timpeallacht Fhiadhúla. Time and again, themes that are indigenous to the area and that are of significance to Emly are used in your landscaping philosophy: creamery cans become flower tubs, fountains abound. One wonders why the heron seems to be the bird of choice for some sculptural centre pieces?

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

Your committee is pro-active in the wildlife sector and deserves credit for the survey work, information boards and the parks at the Church. Those are the biggest mushrooms the adjudicator has seen! They grow so healthily because their surroundings supply the nutrients. As the adjudicator was about to examine closer, the dog intervened and disrupted the reverie! This garden is truly what it claims to be and then some. The four seasons are represented. The sculpture, the heron, the gravel, the information boards combine to create an aesthetic and informative experience. The wildlife survey is one of the highlights of the trip to Emly; it illustrates the importance of this research for any village or town. Many of the recommendations are already in practice by you, for instance, the rotting logs in the wildlife area. The survey stresses the importance of planting to meet the needs of wildlife. Describe the measures you take in this regard to next year's adjudicator. The survey also stresses the futility of building inappropriately designed bird boxes. One now looks forward to the resultant actions by you based on this survey and also to the results of your carbon footprint study. The use of ár dteanga in wildlife matters seems most appropriate.

### **Litter Control:**

Your efforts at cleaning up all litter make this adjudicator weary by even reading about them. Well done! All the work is paying off; there is a little litter. There was some litter in the vicinity of the Public Health Centre but it feels almost churlish to mention any such blemish! The emphasis in the litter section is not just on collecting and organising clean-ups; though these are important, creating awareness of litter reduction is equally important. As a next step in your fight against litter make reduction your key ambition, as your submission suggests you plan to do.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

The use of leftover paint is a smart waste minimisation move; one feels that there could be a lot of half cans about. Well done on the energy saving project. Your engagement with the school is noted in the collection of batteries and mobile phones. The Bring Bank is a joy to visit. Great to come across a group who bring some humour to such a serious topic as waste minimisation with your tin man. This guy should spark the imagination of the younger folk amongst you. These measures illustrate how innovative the thinking is among your committee. Your resolve to reduce, reuse, recycle and to compost shows that you understand this section fully.

### **Tidiness:**

The approach roads are for the most part very well maintained. Initially, the adjudicator got the wrong impression of the town because of the direction taken to Emly. But soon the true character of the town and the pristine appearance of the approach roads asserted themselves after this initial disappointment. Clean signs are the result of a diligent community response to inevitable grime. The lamps on main street contribute to the tidy aspect. The absence of cables is testament to your engagement with the ESB and other agencies. Traffic seems to flow calmly through without stress. Well maintained footpaths contribute to the tidy appearance. The appearance of gates and farm buildings also contribute to the tidiness of the village.

### **Residential Areas:**

The vast majority of the residents buy into the effort to create a beautiful Emly. The landscaping that fronts many of the houses brings colour and vibrancy to their surroundings. St Ailbhe's Drive is a joy, affording a colourful, welcoming introduction to Emly. The name stone and sculpture, Céide Naomh Ailbhe, is a delight. A lovely terrace up the street has reared a number of generations and still stands proudly. The houses of different ages add to the charm of the street. Forge Close also exudes pride of place; the dash finish on the boundary wall is a special treat. The estate at Radharc Gailtí fully supports the TidyTowns commitment through beautiful presentation. Other estates will hopefully come on board and already this adjudicator can see that progress is being made through your determination to assist new residents, with no family connection to Emly, to integrate fully into Emly life. The siting of the sculpture to commemorate fifty years of TidyTowns in a new estate will help create a consciousness of TidyTowns among the new residents.

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

The presentation of the approach roads sends out a strong welcoming vibe to the traveller. One gets the impression that there is a cared for town on the way, a great start to a visit for the traveller and a symbol of pride of place to the resident. Margins are regularly cared for. Traditional stone walls are attractively maintained and landscaping brightens up the way along the road. For instance, on the Knocklong approach road the grotto is well maintained and looks very well. From Killeely, beds of landscaping greet the visitor. The area around Callenan's pub is a special delight. Arrival on one of the approach roads does not live up to the usual standard, however and the stone memorial is partially hidden. On leaving the main thoroughfare, this adjudicator was not disappointed; the area around Radharc Tíre is beautiful. The area at the back of Halla Naomh Ailbhe is as carefully treated as if it were on main street. A small incident of graffiti is a disappointment to all who strive to make Emly as beautiful as it is; hopefully it is a once off.

### **General Impression:**

Emly has been transformed over the years. It has become a destination worth a visit. But visitor be warned, for you will be ambushed by the colour and may be inclined to linger longer than you had intended! The pride of the inhabitants is expressed in the every corner of the village. Pride is the overwhelming emotion one senses and that pride leaps at this adjudicator from the contents of your submission, even if the adjudicator would prefer slightly less extraneous material next year. Were it not for that pride, imagine the state of many of the buildings on main street and, consequently, the appearance of the village. That pride enables the village community and the farming community to create the essential Emly experience of 2009 and to overcome the

challenges that Emly faces and continue putting their best foot forward. Go méadófar bhur stór.

### **Second Round Adjudication:**

I read over the adjudication report compiled on the 12th of June 2009 and I agree with the remarks about the extra supporting material that you have submitted. Undoubtedly, you have put a great effort into the preparation of the entry and this is acknowledged. The map is very well put together and makes it easy for the adjudicators to find their way around the town. I admired the notice board for the heritage and the impressive sketches of various locations. The traditional water pump is beautiful with the water flowing into a fine old stone trough, but I would like to see that pump painted a softer colour of black or dark green, but I must point out that this is a preference and not a criticism. The presentation of the area around the pump is great, with wonderful shrubs. The petrol pump outside the Central Garage is nicely painted, but maybe it has reached the end of its usefulness and could be discarded. There are a number of other notable features, not least the lovely Grotto, and fine mature trees. The derelict building at Radarc Gailti is very well camouflaged and looks quite attractive, when it could be a blemish in the area; I liked the way that it is painted and Galtee View House written on it - well done.

I travelled up to the church and this is a beautiful and most impressive location where unexpected delights are revealed as one strolls around. I read with interest that the Cathedral of Emly was situated in the nearby cemetery. The Emigrant Memorial is very interesting, containing great history. The Four Seasons Park and the stone erected by the Tidy Towns Committee in 2000 are special. The church and grounds are maintained in great condition, as is the nearby graveyard with the wonderful path all around it.

I enjoyed the garden bird details in the little recessed area, with the fine garden seat. The grassy banks are well manicured and here and there we find some good traditional stone walls especially at the bridge on the Knocklong road.

The recycling centre nestles well in the recess by the old pump and the feature made of various cans is interesting and imaginative. The selection of traditional farm machinery is a great exhibition and I was really impressed with the way that these items have been preserved and look as good as new behind the fine railing. Further down the road towards Tipperary, we come across the old Creamery, which has its own unique character.

It was delightful to see that Green Flag outside the school and congratulations to all concerned for attaining this status. The private residences and business houses are combined with you to present wonderful displays of colour of houses and floral arrangements, where good verge and hedge trimming, at the appropriate time of year, make the town a place of considerable interest. I walked around Emly in the "footprints" of an imaginative and enthusiastic people, where energy and leadership leave evidence of workmanship of a high quality. The first adjudicator has given a comprehensive report under the different headings and I am pleased to confirm these findings. Congratulations for a great effort agus, gan dabht, tá Baile Beag Imleach go gleoirt.