

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Newcastle** Ref: **644**
County: **Tipperary(South)** Mark: **263**
Category: **B** Date(s): **07/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	35
The Built Environment	50	35
Landscaping	50	37
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	23
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	20
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	34
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	263

Overall Development Approach:

Congratulations to the Newcastle and Ballymacarbry Community Employment Project for participating in the Tidy Towns Competition 2009. Thank you for your submission and for your map. One senses your frustration at the apparent lack of support for your endeavours. The important point is that there are some people willing to give time voluntarily, so do not give up hope. You seem to have a cushy relationship with South Tipperary County Council and Fás, and long may these relationships last. One would like to hear more detail on how you communicate with the local community and with the national school. Your motive for involvement, 'if only to see the place looking well' is healthy and most praiseworthy. Do not lose heart. Newcastle is a beautiful experience, much of it due to your diligence and interest.

The Built Environment:

Newcastle is a thriving village in which the buildings and premises of traditional businesses and culture co-exist with modern everyday living. Hence the two cemeteries and their respective churches gel side by side with the signs of a farming community. The corrugated roofed garage and the tiny filling station echo an earlier era, but thrive in the present. The sale sign for Portland cement proclaims the past in this antique corner of the village. The petrol pumps, outside the now irrelevant creamery, are tastefully landscaped to remove an eyesore that was once an important part of Newcastle life. The parish pump is maintained reverently as a mark of respect to the contribution it has made to previous generations. The new buildings across from the church bring the village into the new millennium. This area gives a vibrancy to the street. The traffic is a consequence of the importance of the village to the local community. The extension to the school is another healthy sign of village progress. The Naíonra and Community Centre are beautifully maintained signs of a strong village life. The housing estates will fill the extension. Nugent's is a beautiful building, but has the smoking ban taken its toll on such an important part of village life? The 'Stone Outside Dan Murphy's Door' at Nugent's was gleaming in the summer sun. And everywhere one wonders at the use of ár dteanga. There are

Gaeltacht villages that would be put to shame by Newcastle. All of this activity happens on a bend in the road. The river must have been an integral part of village life. It is honoured with the Glenside Walk and bridge, which give a unity to the village. A wonderful experience.

Landscaping:

There is much evidence of the labours of previous generations of Tidy Towns Committees and, to the credit of this generation, that work is well maintained. An exception would be the picnic tables down by the river. If they do not have a value, it might be better to remove them. The picnic table at the bridge bids welcome to town. The bed raised with sleepers and dressed with clematis and bedding plants to hide the petrol pumps is a charm. The birches on the right into town soften the streetscape. It is a pity that the baskets at the Portland cement building are left unused. Throughout the village, there is evidence of the colour that thoughtful landscaping brings to a village.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Well done on the work done at Banard Cross. And what a pity about the wild duck. Last year's adjudicator mentioned a wildlife survey of the town. This is a section in which you could make a substantial progress. Google 'biodiversity' and see what is involved. There may be people in your community who have an informed interest in wildlife and who would be willing to assist you with this section of the competition. When planning your landscaping projects, keep in mind the welfare of birds and bees.

Litter Control:

Your efforts to eliminate litter are quite successful. There was litter in two estates and it was a pity. Apart from what is most likely old graffiti, there was no sign of the dreaded malaise about the village. It is a step forward that you engage with the school regarding the National Spring Clean. If you have not examined ways of eliminating litter then you might consider the following: We must collect the litter. Better if we can educate not to drop it.

Waste Minimisation:

The clothing bank at the old creamery is centrally located, but also discretely sited. So also is the Bring Bank in the car park. The timber signs at the Community Centre and at the bridge side of town are a fine example of use of sustainable materials. It could benefit your committee to study the booklet 'Race Against Waste'. Such a study would stimulate new waste elimination projects for you. Engage with the school regarding achieving Green Flag Status.

Tidiness:

Overall, there is a fabulous sense of pride throughout the village. People may not want to formally get involved with your committee, but there is evidence of a very proud community in the way the village is presented. Small things bring about an untidy feel. The old green pillar at the creamery would light up with a coat of paint. Kerbside weeds in some estates give an impression of neglect. Despite the fine car park, which is central to many village activities and the many designated parking spaces, there seems to be a 'park it anywhere and run' attitude among many people, causing discomfort to others who park properly.

Residential Areas:

Many of the individual houses adorn the streetscape with their summer colour. The name stone at the entrance to the estates helps define each estate. The Gaeilge is an added bonus. The landscaping at the entrance to Deora Dé is beautiful, while the landscaping at the entrance to Ardán Liam Úi Loinsigh needs weeding. Littering in two estates gave an untidy, uneasy feel to these areas. But the overall impression is of a community that is proud of its place.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

One is welcomed to Newcastle, no matter what approach one takes. The landscaping at the village name sign brings a smile to that welcome. Now it is summer colour. One expects that spring and autumn colour peek through too in their time. You mention the wall flowers in your submission. On one side of the road there is the natural hedging. On the opposite side, there are beautiful walls, a grand contrast that is most likely accidental. The approach road over the bridge is also most welcoming. Open spaces are well maintained throughout the village. There is a sense of clutter in some areas, which in the case of Newcastle is a bonus as it adds colour to the area around the hardware store and to the filling station area.

General Impression:

In your submission, you detail some of the steps you have taken to enhance the village. These are your achievements. Set out other attainable goals. You may be reluctant to take on the wildlife section. Examine it. There is much scope in this area for you. Newcastle is a charming experience.