

Tidy Towns Competition 2011

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Nurney** Ref: **43**
County: **Carlow** Mark: **262**
Category: **A** Date(s): **08/07/2011**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2010	Mark Awarded 2011
Overall Development Approach	50	0	40
The Built Environment	50	0	33
Landscaping	50	0	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	0	22
Litter Control	50	0	39
Waste Minimisation	20	0	8
Tidiness	30	0	19
Residential Areas	40	0	31
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	0	31
General Impression	10	0	7
TOTAL MARK	400	0	262

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the detailed application and sketch map which was useful to this adjudicator as I had only been through Nurney Carlow on just one occasion previously. You are welcomed back to the competition after absence of a year. I would suggest that you formalise your meetings structure and look at the possibility of putting together a new 3 year plan now that the 2006- 2010 has run its course. It's important to re-visit the original plan to see what was achieved during that period and take up from where it left off.

Relationships between Carlow County Council, local organisations and Our Lady's National School seem to be good. I would ask the committee to engage with the planning and landscape departments of Carlow County Council to help you devise a new plan, prior to finalising that plan you should consult with other local organisations to seek their input. The methods of communicating the Tidy Towns message to the community are good maybe you might consider adding one of the social networking alternatives like face book or twitter as well.

The Built Environment:

The built environment of Nurney is quite attractive, road surfaces are good, footpaths are well maintained and some have been upgraded and while there is quite a lot of wires criss crossing the street they do not seem to be as obstructive as in other centres.

The Village is very compact and most of the properties in the core area are well maintained and nicely painted nearly all in some shade of white or off white. Two very fine newly built houses as one approached the junction of the Newtown Road were admired for the quality of workmanship and the fact that they are in keeping with the rest of the village architecture. On the Newtown Road itself there are a number of very well presented private dwellings and these complement the existing stock of buildings in the village proper. The old pump house which seemed to be the subject has been removed and that area has been re seeded. There are not many commercial properties in the village but the Nurney Inn was in good condition, St John's Church of

Ireland is a very impressive architectural structure that is maintained well. Our Lady's School has just been through some refurbishment and looked very well on the day. Dereliction does not have the same effect on Nurney as it has in other centres because of its size, that said the one main problematic area does stand out from the rest. Overall the standard was quite good.

Landscaping:

The basics in this category have been done well and the existing arrangements looked good on the day. The arrangement at the pump on the Newtown Road exit was nice and attractive but the pump itself needs a coat of paint. Further out the young trees are maturing and were staked properly and that green area was nicely cut and tidy. A fairly impressive residence across the road had a very well designed and presented garden with appropriate hedging, the name escapes me, inside the impressive stone wall. Trees form a key part of any village or town landscape and one felt that the Main Street from the Newtown end to the Tullow Road junction was a little bare and exposed and could benefit from a tree planting scheme. I would suggest that the Committee consult with the landscaping and planning departments of the local council prior to any 3 year plan to ascertain if there was a possibility of a tree planting programme for the village in the county landscape plan. Well done to those owners of houses on the main street for putting colourful half tubs in front of their properties. The standard was good but the village has more unrealised potential in this category.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

This is a category that centres can pick up additional marks in as well as contributing to the promotion and preservation of wildlife.

Every town and village has some form of wildlife habitat and Nurney being a rural village has a myriad, the key is to have these identified and the forms of wildlife recorded and then put into a format by way of survey or information panel for the benefit of both locals and visitors alike. Getting the local scouts and primary school children involved in a wildlife survey is a very positive move and you should identify a local wildlife enthusiast that will give his or her time to assist you. Given that you have a good relationship with Carlow County Council it goes without saying that you get the Wildlife Ranger or equivalent to help you as well. Funding could be through local sponsorship or from Carlow County Partnership.

Litter Control:

Like most centres in the county you have entered the Carlow Anti Litter League and this can only be to your advantage as it will enable you the committee to concur with other areas on ways to stamp out litter in communities. The involvement of the local school is key to any programme such as anti litter as it will give the children an opportunity to play their part by devising poster competitions or having junior litter patrol picks on a regular basis. The Committee is succeeding in getting the message of anti litter across to the local population as on adjudication day the village was, with the exception of one little spot on the outskirts, litter free. Well done on this achievement and do include a litter control section in your overall 3 year plan.

Waste Minimisation:

There are many mini projects in this category that would be suitable for a small village like Nurney to get involved in that would be contributory to waste reduction in the parish and that would gain you extra marks in the competition. Contacting the environmental officer of the Local Council was the first step in this process and the results of this interaction should be formulated into a simple waste reduction action plan for Nurney. It is important that the school, if not already done, become involved in the Green Schools programme as it will give these children the foundations of good practice. The leaflet drop on the reduction of food waste is part of a county wide programme and well done for being involved in this. Keep up the good work in this category.

Tidiness:

Participation in the An Taisce clean up was worthwhile as it identified areas of possible litter traps and other forms of untidiness that may have otherwise gone unnoticed. The overall standard of tidiness was good with a few exceptions. The seating area at entrance to Hillview needs to be weeded and one appreciates that it is hard to control weeds when they can come up overnight in certain weather conditions, there's a broken kerb in this vicinity also. Weeds were evident at kerbside outside the problematic White House at junction on Tullow Road exit. The building across from the Nurney Inn looks a little untidy and maybe the owner could be approached to make it somewhat respectable. On the plus side all signs were well maintained, clean and visible and pointing in the right direction! –re positioning signs in the wrong direction seems to be a national pastime in some parts of the country, in Carlow that's not the case. Boundary walls, back yards and one or two farmyards were in very good condition so the relatively high mark that Nurney got in this category in 2009 stays intact.

Residential Areas:

First off congratulations are due to the owner of the old house with railing in the core area of the village for undertaking this restoration project on the house which will ensure that it retains its original features. We have

seen too many old traditional buildings being raised to the ground and replaced by what was called "mixed developments", thankfully we will not see too many of these in the foreseeable future. Hillview Estate was very tidy with residents taking pride in their homesteads as they were presented very well, The green area has been enhanced by the introduction of a picnic leisure area but the Estate is not readily identifiable and needs a nice stone name sign in keeping with the surroundings, the fencing at the shrub bed needs to be treated with wood preservative. Mention has to be made of the excellent individual homesteads that one observes in this very pleasant village.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach roads are very acceptable with good road surfaces and verges cut back in accordance with recommendations for wildlife conservation. The entrance from Tullow is enhanced by well trimmed green verge with young but maturing trees on one side and nice planting arrangement at the housing estate on the other side. Entrance from Newtown is a little narrow but there are some every fine private residences to be seen on the way and the verges are kept in a manner that is conducive to the preservation of wildlife Overall the standard was very good.

General Impression:

Nurney was welcomed back to the 2011 competition after a year's absence and let's hope that the village makes further progress in the years ahead. The proposed plan should be in place for next year and this will give you the incentive to go onwards and upwards. Keep up the good work.