

# Tidy Towns Competition 2012

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Fenagh** Ref: **1440**  
County: **Carlow** Mark: **241**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **16/06/2012**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2011</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2012</b>
Overall Development Approach	50	29	29
The Built Environment	50	33	33
Landscaping	50	36	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	16	16
Litter Control	50	33	33
Tidiness	30	19	19
Waste Minimisation	20	8	9
Residential Areas	40	29	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30	30
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>241</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

Fenagh is very welcome to the 2012 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you once again for submitting a concise entry form and your enclosed sketch plan was most helpful. If there are any particular projects you would like to draw to the adjudicator's attention perhaps you could mark them up on the plan for next year's submission. Your overall approach to the competition is good and it is obvious that the committee has dedicated members who receive voluntary support to keep up the high level of care witnessed on adjudication day. The Committees work with the Local Authority and numerous local agencies is to be commended. Furthermore you are engaging with the local school and local business, people at the heart of the community who can help make a difference. Good luck in your plans to develop a village web site as many other centres have found this a very useful tool to communicate with the local community. The steam rally is an obvious focal point in your community's year. You have not included a village action plan with this year's submission. This is a tool which can help you gain a clear picture of what you want to achieve, how you are going to approach each project and identify possible supporting agencies. To gain marks in this section a plan should be prepared for 3-5 year duration. This need not be professionally prepared but can be a simple list of your aims and objectives and a clear timeline. Consider working on this over the next year as this will help focus your activities and also gain you additional marks in this category.

### The Built Environment:

This was the adjudicators first visit to the village and the line of granite cottages create a lovely scene on the approach to the village core. We note that they have been confirmed as being part of a protected structure. The use of granite as a feature material for your village was noted and the estate and village name stones were admired. We note a playground is part of your plans for the village. Have you located a site for this yet? As part of your village plan you should develop a simple village layout outlining possible locations, considering access routes both vehicular and pedestrian and of course land ownership. This plan need not be

complicated but can rather indicate zones for various projects within the village including your play area, possible wildlife zones, future tree planting areas or proposed avenues. It will work with your village action plan to help focus your works. Look to the Tidy Towns handbook for guidance. The church and lovely stone boundary wall was again very well maintained and the works to the frontage here have improved its setting. The crèche at Woodglade is obviously a busy spot but could perhaps a timber or planted screen be erected to hide the bins and gas container from the roadside view?

### **Landscaping:**

Well done in your strategy to plant perennials rather than rely solely on annuals for summer colour. A much more sustainable approach. Also consider putting some focus on long term structure planting of trees where you can and replace any that fail in the next season. We wish the school children well with their proposed tree audit. Look to the native trees already present in the local environment to give guidance on your choice of trees for future planting projects. We note you plan to develop an amenity river walk. Again plot this on your village plan and as an aspiration, it can be put up on your proposed village website to gain support for your works. A number of planters around the village were empty on adjudication day but we are sure they were to be filled. Try to locate planters only in areas where planting could otherwise not take place in the ground. Could a native hedge be planted to the inside of the concrete post and rail fence adjoining the farmland at the Borris and Bagenalstown junction? This could be done in stages as it has a long frontage.

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

You mention a proposal to make bird boxes, we look forward to seeing progress on this. To promote this topic in the community have you considered getting an expert from Birdwatch Ireland or Bat Ireland to lead a nature walk in the village? These can be a low impact way of getting local people involved and aware of the wildlife present in the surrounding landscape. Do you take part in national tree week? Another nationally promoted event which you could use to promote your tree planting works. Well done in the work done to establish the wildlife area in the GAA grounds. Do consider doing a simple wildlife survey of the village to help you progress and gain marks in this category.

### **Litter Control:**

On adjudication day we found very little litter in the village or along the roadside so well done at maintaining the standards here. To gain marks here we would urge you to carry out a litter audit and note how often bins needs

### **Tidiness:**

As you note in your submission there may be works required to the car parks to spruce them up a little. The white fence to the car park opposite the Hunters Rest Pub could be painted a darker tone to make it less visually obtrusive and would be a simple step to improve the area. The hedge to the church car park needs to be trimmed before the beech hedge here develops into trees! Fill in any gaps with more beech or perhaps native holly or hawthorn to improve its habitat value. Is there any demand for bike racks to be provided in the car parks to encourage bike trips?

### **Waste Minimisation:**

We wish the local students all the best as they set out to gain their first green flag. Well done in also participating in the sister Green Home programme. This follows on from the lessons learnt at school by the children, to bring new ways of thinking about the use of resources in the home. You have put in place simple initiatives such as rainwater harvesting, moving away from resource hungry annual planting to planting perennials and promoting home composting which has helped you gain marks in this category. Continue on with this practical approach to addressing this category. Does the village take part in earth hour or bike to school week? These are nationally supported events that you can join in with locally. Or for example could the school children be encouraged to avoid using cling film or tin foil for their school lunches and use refillable containers instead?

### **Residential Areas:**

As ever the residential properties in the village were presented to a high standard so well done to all your residents. In common with many villages you have a number of unfinished estates which can be difficult to address. The advertising hoarding at Riverfield Court is looking very tired. Could agreement be reached to remove this sign as they were only ever meant to be temporary structures? Trees were beginning to mature nicely in the Woodglade development but ensure all tree ties are removed. Could perhaps a margin of grass to the edge of the original boundary hedge at the inner open space be allowed to grow to create a meadow edge here and also reduce the burden of grass cutting? The white walls of the small structure here could also perhaps be softened with climbing plants? The standing stone feature at Ashgrove was also admired and the open spaces here very well maintained though dead trees should be removed and replaced.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Well done on the appropriate maintenance of the verges on the approaches to the village. The temporary fencing to the development site at Granite Court detracted somewhat from the overall streetscape and we hope you can work with the owner here to come to an agreement for an interim measure to improve its appearance. This can be a short term measure until development commences again but perhaps a simple timber fence could be erected here, to the front of the security fencing, with a muted stain? Chose a dark tone of stain that can be used consistently throughout the village for all timber elements fence, signs etc. A repeated colour scheme can unite various types of street furniture and help hide more unattractive elements. Talk to your Area Engineer to ensure the roundabout markings by the Church are kept refreshed.

**General Impression:**

Fenagh has a lovely rural charm and we look forward to seeing some of your planned projects materialise in future years submissions. All involved with this year's entry are warmly thanked and congratulated for their efforts and wished well in 2013.