

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Nurney** Ref: **43**
County: **Carlow** Mark: **264**
Category: **A** Date(s): **06/07/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	40	40
The Built Environment	50	33	33
Landscaping	50	32	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	22	22
Litter Control	50	39	40
Tidiness	30	19	20
Waste Minimisation	20	8	8
Residential Areas	40	31	31
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31	31
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	400	262	264

Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator would like to welcome Nurney to the 2012 TidyTowns Competition. Thank you for the completed entry form and enclosed 3 year plan covering 2006-2010. The plan is in effect the groups work programme and it should reflect the objectives and capabilities of the group. We understand that you hope to review your plan in the coming year in order to formulate a new plan to guide your village for the next 3 to 5 years. Focus on the categories in which you feel you can achieve results and in time you can then address other areas to advance in the competition. One of the first things we would suggest is to do a skills audit in the community. You may find that residents or their relatives may have skills which can help you as a committee in terms of planning or in works on the ground. Look to the experiences of other TidyTowns committees on your doorstep who can give you advice on how to advance and how to make use of the advice and support of the Local Authority and other agencies. Tap into all the skills available to you. As ever there is a wealth of information in the TidyTown handbook which we always advise committees to refer to for practical support and guidance. Given the size of your community you have a good size committee showing a real commitment to the competition. Your effort and enthusiasm are to be congratulated.

The Built Environment:

This was the adjudicator's first visit to your lovely village. The historic homes within the village core were complemented by a number of newer dwellings which have taken their lead from the form and materials already present within the village. The stone clad cottages beside the entrance to St Johns Church were especially sympathetic to their setting and well detailed in such a sensitive site. The Church itself is such a landmark for you with its beautiful stone spire and the old stone outbuildings opposite the entrance, with their green painted openings add to its setting. Ensure the gates and boards here are kept painted and well maintained. The Nurney Inn was again well presented with a nice neat facade. Well done to all involved in the upkeep of the school as the building and its boundaries were looking very well. The main gate could perhaps

enjoy a new coat of paint.

Landscaping:

Landscape beds in the village were well maintained on adjudication day and complemented by colourful tubs on the approach from Bagnelstown. We note from your submission that the old lime trees here were pruned this year and it is good to see an emphasis on ongoing maintenance of your landscape areas. We would also advise that the low sucker growth on the old lime trees opposite the entrance to St Johns Church would also be trimmed back. This ensures the long term health of the tree by diverting growth back to the crown but will also bring more of the lovely warm stone, old outbuilding and walls here back into view. The new trees planted along the road opposite Hill View on the Tullow Road are maturing nicely. Remove tree ties here before they damage the tree trunks, remove ties also at the birch trees by the village pump. Have you considered doing a tree planting strategy for the village as part of your next village plan? This should take into account the types of mature species already present in the village which can help inform future tree choices. Also be aware of the positioning of trees so that they help frame key views in the village rather than obstruct them. Note the key views to the church spire and of course the sweeping views from the school road. Take part in National Tree Week with the Tree Council of Ireland or organise a Nurney Tree Plantathon where communities are challenged to plant a target number of trees on a designated local site over a fixed time period. Again this can all help promote your work in the local community.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

There is a wealth of information and plans for this category contained in your wildlife plan of work 2006-2010. When reviewing your plan and developing your new one, look to the advice contained in this document and see how you can progress in this category. Have you considered doing a basic wildlife survey? This helps you gain a better understanding of the approaches to habitat management that you can take, from village gardens to hedgerows to woodlands. In many cases a do nothing scenario may be best but in other areas a more proactive approach can be taken. Have you considered adding insect hotels to complement your bird boxes in the school? This can be as simple as putting a pile of logs beside a wall to provide nooks and crannies for insect cover. We hope the wildlife garden course the school staff plans to attend will help you develop a scheme for a school wildlife garden. Try to ensure that the plants you plant have maximum value for wildlife. Consider plants with berries and nectar and ones that flower during term times so the children get maximum value from them - spring flowering hawthorn or winter holly berries are a good start. This is certainly a category you should be gaining marks in.

Litter Control:

Well done on the efforts to ensure regular litter patrols. The village was free from litter on adjudication day. Try to encourage residents to keep their bins away from public view where possible, and ensure litter bins in the town are given a good scrub regularly. Your involvement with the school is to be applauded as getting the anti-litter message across to the younger generation is certainly the way forward. For next years submission why not include the winning poster or some poetry from the schools competition to give us a flavour of the children's attitude to litter in the community. Well done to all involved in the schools proactive approach.

Tidiness:

Once again, generally, the village was kept neat and tidy. You note the issues you have with empty premises and good luck with keeping on top of this. The sign at the recycling centre will need to be washed fairly regularly as signs with overhanging vegetation tend to get algal growth on them that needs a regular wash to remove.

Waste Minimisation:

Again this is a category which we feel you can gain marks in by looking beyond recycling. The key principle in this category is to demonstrate ways in which communities prevent the accumulation of waste in the first place. Have you considered carrying out a waste audit to see how much waste is generated by the community and how you can target specific actions to reduce this accumulation? The issue of composting material arising from your landscape works can be addressed here. Can you set up a compost bin where best practice can be demonstrated and the resulting organic material can be used to enrich the planting beds or given to residents for their gardens?

Residential Areas:

All residential areas from the neat hill terraces on the Newtown Road to the individual properties to the margins of the village were beautifully presented, so keep up the good work here. The timber fence to the front of Hill View looks as if it may be nearing the end of its useful life. Consider planting a native hedge here to provide a longer term solution to this boundary and create a useful habitat as well. Use some evergreen content such as holly to provide a year round screen.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Verge and speed limit signs on all approaches were presented well. We note that the stone Name Stones were to be power washed but felt some, such as on the Newtown approach needs an additional clean. We also wondered about the children crossing sign near Hill View. These generally indicate a school but were duplicated at the approach to the actual school. Could these perhaps be removed to reduce the road side signage clutter? Discuss with your Area Engineer.

General Impression:

You have a lovely village with a strong sense of community and strong links with your school, which is evident in your submission and the works on the ground. As set out in the report you have the possibility of gaining marks in a number of categories and so advancing in the competition. All involved with this year's entry are warmly thanked and we wish you well for your plans to review your village plan for 2013.