

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Newcastle** Ref: **644**
County: **Tipperary(South)** Mark: **278**
Category: **B** Date(s): **17/06/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	36	37
The Built Environment	50	36	36
Landscaping	50	40	40
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	24	25
Litter Control	50	36	37
Tidiness	30	19	20
Waste Minimisation	20	10	10
Residential Areas	40	29	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	36	36
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	400	274	278

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the National Tidy Towns Competition 2012. Your committee of 22 members are to be complimented on your efforts particularly this year because of the wet spring and summer. It is noted that you have the support in your local committees, public authorities. Many thanks for attaching a copy of the three year plan (2012-2014), map and other information. It is encouraging to note that you have representations from each housing estate on your committee.

The Built Environment:

The Church and cemetery was well cared for and there were nice flowers in boxes on both sides of the door. We admired the hanging baskets on poles and the walls and railings were painted. Fine hornbeam trees are growing in the footpath outside. The houses and shops opposite were well painted, neat and tidy. The car park also looked well with its good surface and landscaped surround. The bridge over the stream to the small riverside park with its picnic tables was well done. The Community Centre and the Naionra had nice trees and the absence of litter. The old creamery building looked derelict. Are there any plans for its re-development? The school was in very good condition, it is well painted and there are good quality hanging baskets on the pole outside. The playground looked well. Newcastle cemetery was not on your map but we found it and were very impressed with the use of Cotoneasters against the walls. The car park was in good condition. Mullough Abbey was also visited and the maintenance was noted. It is suggested that the evergreen trees planted in the enclosure be removed as they are not appropriate for this location. We failed to locate the holy well despite driving some distance down a pot-holed road. A road sign would help.

Landscaping:

Newcastle has an interesting natural environment and it is further enhanced by your interventions of tree and

shrub planting. The fine stand of hornbeam trees at the Church looked very well as did the birch trees in the grass verge at the Community Centre. In deciding upon locations for planting shrubs or floral displays please consider placing these in association with signage. By that means the signs are enhanced and fewer obstacles remain for grass maintenance. Such an opportunity exists on the Clogheen Road junction. In choosing species try to avoid those with purple foliage as they can look out of place in a rural community as is the case with the purple Berberis planted near Barnard Cross. The guideline for the use of plant containers is to use them in situations where planting directly into the ground is not possible as in the case of hanging baskets and window boxes which in Newcastle look very well, especially at the Church and the school. In other cases plant containers should be limited and this will help to reduce maintenance tasks.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The River Suir had a good flow and the water looked clean. The stone wall sides added to the scene. It is great that there is access and an opportunity to sit and enjoy the environment. We look forward to seeing your wildflower garden at Pairc Ard next year and wish you success with the wetland area. These facilities and your rural environment provide opportunities especially for school children to learn about nature and to identify wildflowers.

Litter Control:

Your litter management efforts are effective as we observed very little litter in the community. The spring clean backed up by the strong anti-litter policy and the support of FAS workers is making an impact. Full marks to the GAA club for their action in collecting disused metal.

Tidiness:

In general, Newcastle is a very tidy community and few improvements are required. There were some weeds in front of the house on the left as the town is approached from the Knocklofty Road and the gate needs painting. The "Slan Abhaile" sign was impressive but some weeds in that vicinity reduces the impact.

Waste Minimisation:

The bring banks were clean and tidy and the signs looked well. Do you know how much energy and water saving/conservation is achieved annually and how much materials are recycled. We note that you are in the process of completing a compost demonstration site and wish you well with that venture.

Residential Areas:

Deora Dé housing estate was very good, it is well planted and we suggest you remove the dead tree and some tree stakes that are no longer required. Nearby Graig Mhuire estate also looked well but the road is in need of resurfacing. Gleann Beag estate had a fine entrance, the timber fence looked well and the grass was well maintained. On the Ballymacarbry Road, the back of the village name sign needs painting. Fairly extensive improvement works were done at Barnard Cross. However, the Yield sign needs painting and the area in its vicinity needs to be tidied. The finger post signs need to be cleaned and a dead tree removed. Your plans to erect bi-lingual information signs are important and we wish you well in this venture.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

We noted your nice welcome sign, rose beds and birch trees with well maintained grass and the absence of litter. However, the brown finger post sign for Knockmealdown was falling down. The white town sign is partly hidden by vegetation. It would be a good idea to remove the Cordyline. The attractive stone wall is a feature as are the old ruins of the Norman Castle and the Church yard and are well maintained. The stone walls and bridge on Knocklofty Road looked lovely. A low concrete wall on the right needs to be improved. The picnic area at the bend on this road is clean with some weeds in the beds. Where can picnickers park if they wish to use this facility? Your efforts to mask the concrete wall at this location with plants are noted. Perhaps you should also use Cotoneasters which are successful at the cemetery walls. We admired your novel idea of putting the road name on the back of the sign. Also, your townland signs are very impressive.

General Impression:

Newcastle has a number of important features and your community is making good progress in their enhancement. Best wishes for your future plans and we look forward to your application in 2013.