

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Edgeworthstown** Ref: **714**
County: **Longford** Mark: **224**
Category: **C** Date(s): **16/06/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	31	32
The Built Environment	50	28	28
Landscaping	50	32	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	28	28
Litter Control	50	28	28
Tidiness	30	16	18
Waste Minimisation	20	7	8
Residential Areas	40	19	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25	25
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	400	220	224

Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator welcomes Edgeworthstown TidyTowns to the 2012 Supervalu National TidyTowns Competition and thanks you for your entry and supporting documentation. We are pleased to note that you have 14 committed volunteers directly involved in your committee and that you are retaining good community support year upon year. We hope the community in Edgeworthstown can continue to show such good voluntary endeavour and that anyone thinking of helping your cause will do so over the next few years, to help you further advance in this competition. Thank you for your professional TidyTowns 2012 plan which is quite detailed. With regards to communicating with your community, you are doing well and using a number of different mediums. Bear in mind the adjudicator's comment from last year and save your cutting of press and communication materials. We viewed your Edgeworthstown TidyTowns website with great interest. This is an informative site and we were pleased that your great work with the schools has been highlighted amongst your other work projects. Regularly meeting with the school co-ordinator and having teachers on the TidyTowns committee should allow you to continue to interact with the younger generation in the town. As you recognise there are many benefits of a community working together towards a common goal of improving the place they live and perhaps work, including social development and community interaction. We are delighted that your efforts are getting positive feedback from the locals.

The Built Environment:

On adjudication day it was apparent that a great deal of effort had gone into making many business premises in the town presentable – well done to all involved. While some premises are extremely well presented, others could be improved. One area that this adjudicator thought could be improved in the Main Street is in the presentation of the roofs of buildings. When considering the presentation of your streetscape, always look above the ground floor of buildings/premises to the upper floors and to the roofs. Cleaning the moss off the roofs of premises would enhance many premises. Examples noted on adjudication day included the Mostrim

Inn, Tully Pharmacy, O'Gormans and the Sportsman Inn. These premises are all well presented but the presentation is let down due to their roofs. The clean grey hoarding around the derelict sites on the Main Street and Pound Street was noted. It was heartening to see a proprietor busy sweeping outside J&M Gift Stores. Quinns Supply Stores is a nicely presented building and was admired; perhaps the owner could get the grass removed from the guttering to really set this building off. The new fire station and its wind turbine was noted. Furthermore, C&D Foods and the Paul and Vincent have tidy entrances. There is a building across from the Green on the old Longford Road beside the entrance to Shannon Park which is really quite an eyesore - we wonder have you been in liaison with the Council in relation to this site? St. Marys Church enjoys a prominent position in the town and looked well on adjudication day as did St. John's Church of Ireland. Our Ladies Manor nursing home was noted for its nicely landscaped area, however the exterior railings and wall topping is becoming somewhat grubby. The Porterhouse is an important heritage building and prominent along Main Street, that the adjudicator thought could be enhanced and conserved to a better standard. We note that you have applied to the local authority to carry out repairs on this building – well done for taking this step.

Landscaping:

The good quality presentation of the business premises has been noted in this report already but to reiterate, many businesses had hanging baskets and planters outside their shops which really enhanced the presentation, well done to all involved, as many if not all hanging baskets were colourful and in full bloom. The adjudicator wonders if you are using peat free compost? The appropriate selection and siting of trees is relevant in this category and we are pleased to note that you have planted an area of ground at St. Elizabeths Centre with native species. Perhaps the landscaping in and around the Green could be to a higher standard. The adjudicator noted that work was on-going to the tennis court in this area which detracted from the overall appearance of the Green on adjudication day. Landscaping on the bypass roundabouts is of a high standard and the bypass is looking well good. The Maria Edgeworthstown sculpture was admired on the bypass.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

We noted the bird nesting boxes in the Green near the children's play area. We are also pleased to note that you are aware of the knotweed stands in your area and that you have initiated a spraying programme. In relation to this please bear in mind that Japanese knotweed is not an easy plant to control; the extensive underground rhizome system sustains the plant even when top growth is removed. The aim of any control programme should be to target the rhizomes. The adjudicator has seen previous control success which has required at least three herbicide applications per year for a duration of three years. Consult the Invasive Species Ireland website or your local County Council. We wish you well with this. We note that you have had a wildlife survey carried out as this was mentioned in your 2012 plan and also in last year's adjudication report. It is important that you provide this data every year as the adjudicator is unaware of your previous recent work unless you submit it with your application each year. Promotion of the local wildlife and natural amenities is important in this category and you should consider developing interpretative boards for certain places in the town to create greater awareness.

Litter Control:

Some small amounts of litter were noted at the GAA Park and outside the Porterhouse on adjudication day. Apart from that already mentioned, litter control in the town was good.

Tidiness:

Highlight to property owners that care and attention of buildings should extend to removing moss on roofs and grass from guttering and chimneys were safety permits. We noted signs at the traffic lights on the old Longford Road are in need of cleaning as they are quite green. We noted a derelict house on the Ballinlee Road. Some footpaths would benefit from power-washing to remove moss and give them a general clean up.

Waste Minimisation:

We noted the green flag at St Marys National School – well done to all involved in this initiative. We suggest that perhaps you work with the school on a waste minimisation related project for next year. A suggestion – for your Spring Clean, encourage parents of children to get involved by organising an event for the children while your Spring Clean is in action. While the adults and parents pick litter the children could be making a mural from reusing materials. Acquiring the container to harvest rainwater to use in your planting schemes complies with the ethos of this category. Furthermore promotion of best practice is important in this category so use your website to your advantage in this category by providing householders with hints and tips to reduce the amount of waste they generate. We note your waste audit of Quinn's Supply Stores and their response. We recognise your efforts this year in trying to tackle this category.

Residential Areas:

Weeding along the footpaths and improvements to the green areas in Shannon Park would be beneficial here.

We wonder if there is a Residents Association here? We visited Auburn Park, Clover Well and Bracklin Park - we noted that the latter did not appear to have a name place erected. These all had their green areas recently cut and were well presented – well done to those concerned here. Goldsmith Meadow and Pairc na hAbhainn are satisfactory but the adjudicator feels that these could be improved with a small effort from the local residents. For example, the grass along the wall at Pairc na hAbhainn should be strimmed and the wall appears to have never been completed here. Furthermore, we noted a broken tree here which should be erected as it appears to be alive. The presentation of Kilbride Park is very good with a combination of trees, colourful flower boxes and planters. Continue to work with the Residents Associations where they exist.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Footpaths in some areas of the town need to be improved, in particular we noted a poor stretch along the grey hoarding on Main Street and sections on Pound Street. We note that you plan to correct the lopsided bus sign, please also liaise with Bus Eireann in relation to getting a new sign for the other side of the road. Directional signs on the approach from the Ballinalee Road would benefit from washing. Landscaping at the Goldsmith roundabout was admired, albeit someone must have driven straight through the roundabout recent to our visit as fresh tyre tracks were in the grass – however please be assured we have not penalised you for someone elses poor driving skills!

General Impression:

You have scope for improvement particularly in the waste minimisation and residential areas categories. Perhaps approach key residents in estates and encourage the formation of more residents associations for estates where they do not already exist. It is important individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for their areas and the presentation outside their gardens; the importance of well-kept individual front gardens and communal open spaces cannot be overstressed as a contributor to the area; as noted elsewhere in this report, Kilbride Park is the exemplar to follow. In summary we are pleased to see that Edgeworthstown Tidy Towns group are making steady improvements in the competition and we hope that you can be pleased with your efforts this year. Continue to keep up the great work and we hope your success to date will encourage more residents to get their hands dirty for Edgeworthstown!