

Tidy Towns Competition 2013

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Edgeworthstown** Ref: **714**
County: **Longford** Mark: **231**
Category: **C** Date(s): **24/06/2013**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2012	Mark Awarded 2013
Overall Development Approach	50	32	34
The Built Environment	50	28	29
Landscaping	50	32	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	28	29
Litter Control	50	28	29
Sustainable Waste And Resource Management	20	8	9
Tidiness	30	18	18
Residential Areas	40	19	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25	26
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	400	224	231

Overall Development Approach:

Edgeworthstown is most welcome to the 2013 Tidy Towns competition. Many thanks for your completed entry form, hand drawn maps and additional information including three-year plan, wildlife plan and photographs. It is great to read that you have entered the final year of your three-year plan with almost all your action items completed. This is excellent. You will need to soon start thinking about the next three-year period and preparing a new plan. Make sure you take time to review your progress to date. Perhaps it can afford to be more ambitious, or perhaps some items were more challenging than you had expected and in these circumstances it is worthwhile analysing how things could be done differently to ensure a better outcome. You benefit from a large committee but seven meetings seems to be too few, most centres of this size would convene at least monthly. You are engaging with local support agencies and business groups. Always be thinking about how the circle of stakeholders could be widened. How do you assess the success of your communications strategy? It is excellent that you have a teacher in your committee. How many schools are there in Edgeworthstown? Have you active liaison with all of them? Do ensure to list them all and detail their involvement in the green flag program. Your maps are very good but please do only use one as multiple copies can cause confusion. They are clear however and marked clearly where projects have been undertaken. The use of photographs is encouraged but do limit the number you use and try to ensure they are of a sufficient standard to convey the message you are trying to communicate.

The Built Environment:

Well done for undertaking a variety of important projects under this heading. It can be a difficult area in which to be proactive due to time and financial constraints. Do be aware of the architectural features that make Edgeworthstown unique and ensure they are protected. Your heritage map and trail are important for highlighting why the town is special. How do you use these to engage with local people? Are there guided walks available? Do you hold any events as part of heritage week in August? The railway station is a small but significant heritage feature, as well as being important in its own right for public transport. This area is very well-kept and perhaps Iaranród Éireann could be persuaded to paint the attractive iron bridge which is sadly looking neglected. Otherwise however it was very clean. The role of new build commercial units on the Longford Road look well with attractive stone frontages. The library on Church Street would benefit from a coat of paint. St John's national school 1886 is superb and further enhanced by colourful displays of flowers. St John's Church is a fantastic feature in pristine condition. The well-designed interpretive plaque was read with interest. Along Main Street

some premises really stand out such as Ulster bank, the Goldsmith Inn and Gorman's Lodge. The large gap in the town centre is unfortunate. Conefrey's bar is a real attraction.

Landscaping:

While displays of summer planting were admired in a number of locations landscaping seems to be absent along the main thoroughfare. Here the committee should be thinking about trees that would create impacts and provide year-round benefits. Tubs outside Supervalu work well in this location. Does the town have any public park or similar communal space? Nor does seem to have a playground, surely a standard fixture in any Irish town these days. The landscaping at the nursing home is excellent but the white railings on the street side would benefit greatly if washed.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your wildlife plan was admired and it is wonderful that you have a local expert who can guide you in these matters. Now that you know what you have how can you engage local people in awareness of the natural heritage? Once you have the infrastructure in place (nature trails, information signs etc) how you utilise them? Try to develop projects with local schools according to their abilities. You could hold wildlife talks/walks or incorporate these into a walking festival (if you have one).

Litter Control:

This is a major issue for any town and one that can make or break its image, regardless of the other qualities your town may have. Well done on participating in the national spring clean and it's incredible that you collected a massive 1 1/2 t of rubbish. Hopefully this figure will be smaller next year. You also have a range of litter patrols, do your volunteers wear Tidy Towns high viz vests when doing these? You need to think also about preventing the accumulation of litter to begin with. This can be achieved through education and on-the-spot fines. Don't be afraid to use either liberally. Litter control was not bad on adjudication day with most places generally free of litter. Schoolchildren were observed littering so perhaps some attention could be focused on awareness raising in this area. The bring bank at Costcutters meanwhile was in a very bad state with all kinds of debris strewn around.

Sustainable Waste And Resource Management:

Your projects to encourage composting and reduce energy usage by replacing sodium lamps are both perfect examples of how to proceed in this category. In the town of this size there is ample scope to be creative here. Work with businesses to see what waste streams they are generating, is there anything that would be a resource for someone else? Those participating in the green flag program have already been addressing these issues so there is a lot you could learn from them. Do list the schools and their achievements here. In fact there is so much that could be done under this heading that you may need to appoint a resource management officer from your committee to solely look at this area.

Tidiness:

You are addressing the difficult areas of alien invasive species and graffiti. These tasks are important and most worthwhile. A number of issues were noted during the walkabout. Street signage outside Girasole's restaurant is dirty and damaged. Have you approached Electric Ireland to try to get overhead cables put underground? Bins are of variable quality, they should be cleaned or removed altogether. Road surfacing along Main Street is good and parking is well marked out. Footpaths are well built and clearly separated from the road. Road markings are not always very distinct for example the pedestrian crossing at the Cavan road. Signage is within control in the main commercial area but guidelines for some would be of benefit to shop owners.

Residential Areas:

Unfinished estates have been a problem across Ireland for years now but much has been done by local authorities and NAMA to address them. One area on the Dublin Road seems to be well lived in but metal railings, lamp post with no lamps and unkept common areas lend an air of neglect. Goldsmith Meadow and the neighbouring River Park estate are both spic-and-span. The massive scale of the Japanese knotweed problem is apparent in this area. Kilbride Park is a lovely estate with very eye-catching landscaping. An empty pole at the entrance should be removed. The numerous tall trees at Divine Crescent are great feature here.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The Mullingar approach creates a strong impression of the town. Even for those merely using the bypass. The verges are well trimmed and signage is sensibly controlled. The statue to Maria Edgeworth was admired and is a distinctive attraction. The road from Longford from the bypass is also to a high standard. A great display of roses and other shrubbery was admired on the junction here near Texaco.

General Impression:

Edgeworthstown has great historical significance and you can use this to your advantage in promoting yourselves. You have achieved much to date and your organised structure will ensure that you continue to build on this success. Best of luck and keep up the good work!

