

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Newmarket** Ref: **658**
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **284**
Category: **C** Date(s): **06/07/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	40	41
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	39	39
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	40	41
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	36	36
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	12	13
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	52	53
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	28	28
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	32	33
TOTAL MARK	450	279	284

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Welcome Newmarket to the 2017 Tidy Towns competition – your eighth in a row – it is great to hear how you think Newmarket's participation is helping to bring your community together. Thank you for your map and photographs. May I suggest that in future you use a printed/photocopied road map as your base map as your adjudicator ended up spending a good deal of time trying to find highlighted spots marked on the hand-drawn map that were a bit more complicated to find on the ground! It is great to hear that you receive support from local traders – make sure to reach out and get the help, support and advice available to Tidy Towns groups from the many community support organisations in Co. Cork. Also as pointed out by last year's adjudicator if you can draw up a simple three year plan it is a great help to hard-working committees in focussing their efforts and making the most of the people-power and funds available.

Built Environment and Streetscape / An Timpeallacht Thógtha agus Sráid-dreacha:

Newmarket is a beautifully situated town – its hilly nature with parts perched high on the hills and other parts nestled in the glen in between is very charming. The new Heritage Centre is an exciting project making the most of the beautiful former Church of Ireland church and its commanding position in the town – we look forward to visiting it in the future. The old graveyard around it is another beautiful, peaceful space in the middle of your bustling town – might there be room in the plans for this space for a wildflower area? Very little management would be needed and if a few grass paths were mown through it together with a few benches, the peaceful space together with the resulting flowers, butterflies and birds could be enjoyed by many in the years to come. The old gate and stile entrance to the graveyard on Main St are vernacular architectural gems but easily missed due to their being blocked by parked cars – this is a beautiful area that should be visible and accessible to Newmarket's residents and visitors. Can a request be made to Cork Co. Co. to leave the space in front of the gate as a no-parking area? This will likely become a more pertinent issue when the Heritage Centre is opened. A more pressing issue in relation to this parking bay area is that several of the cars were blocking the footpath here forcing any passing buggies or wheelchairs onto the road. The Greengrocer's shop and attached house on Church St were beautifully presented with lovely window boxes and a traditional painting scheme making the most of the beautiful sash windows and stonework of the house. Also on Church St the Garda station looked very well with a great garden at its front. The work on the footpath in Scarteen St is great to see and many of the business premises on this street and New St were busy and looking well cared for on the adjudication day. There was a fair on in the Westend Park during the visit so this part of town was busy with a good atmosphere on adjudication day.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Your community garden is a beautiful little oasis in the middle of town – very discreet – it was nearly missed! The

planting scheme is lovely and the grey and purple paintwork works very well with the green foliage. Again you have lots of pollinator-friendly herbaceous perennial plants which is great to see. Make sure to get your free copy of the wonderfully inspiring and helpful All-Ireland Pollinator Plan from the National Biodiversity Data Centre (www.biodiversityireland.ie). Their community version of the Plan has lots of helpful hints and advice for Tidy Towns groups. The garden must have been magical at Christmas during Santa's visit – it looks great in the photo – well done on this terrific community effort. Newmarket G.A.A. club grounds were tidy and well-looked after although weedkiller has been too liberally used here and had drifted well up onto the grass leaving a lot of ugly, dead grass patches. Herbicide plays an important role in the management of noxious weeds such as Japanese knotweed but it is not necessary in the case of kerbsides or under trees – hoeing can be done where weed growth is very noticeable but otherwise remember an ugly brown mark will draw the eye's attention whereas green along the edge of a lawn is to be expected! Clonfert Cemetery had also been sprayed with herbicide on a windy day as far more area than just kerb edges were brown with dead vegetation. Also the base of the boundary hedge had been sprayed and cleared of plants – this is not good practice as it will cause soil run-off from the hedge-bank eventually destabilising the hedge – plant roots are necessary to hold the soil together! We are aware that this isn't work carried out by Tidy Towns groups but perhaps you could advise the people concerned – the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan explains why herbicide use in these situations is not a good idea and gives advice on other methods.

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fíadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádurtha:

A visit was made to the Trinity Well during adjudication – it is a most beautiful, serene spot on the edge of town. The grass path encircling the well together with lovely, lush hedgerows and trees makes this a lovely relaxing and inspiring spot to inspire prayer and respite from busy lives. This is rich little spot for watching nature too with plenty of wildflowers and hedges for pollinating insects and birds – together with a lovely wet habitat dominated by Flag irises all adding to the biodiversity. This area would make a good spot for a possible future project where local school children could survey for plants, birds and butterflies and make an interesting noticeboard of their findings – nature has traditionally played a large part in Irish spirituality and the two come together at the Trinity Well. The Biodiversity Garden on Main St was visited and it is maturing very nicely. Its shrubs have reached substantial sizes now. This garden is in a lovely spot beside the old graveyard and it benefits from the backdrop of the mature trees there. It could be enhanced by adding a few more flowering herbaceous perennials thus adding a splash of colour and attracting in the all-important pollinators. This doesn't have to cost anything if you take cuttings from some of the plants you have in your Community garden or if some green-fingered Newmarket gardeners might donate cuttings from some of the lovely gardens seen around the town!

Sustainable Waste and Resource Management / Bainistiú Acmhainní agus Dramhaíola Inbhuanaithe:

It is good to see you are continuing your annual Electric Ireland collection. A window display is a good idea as the re-use, recycle and indeed avoiding waste in the first place concepts are ones we need to become second nature to us in our daily lives in Ireland. The use of water butts is great and makes so much sense for Tidy Towns groups. Continue to liaise with the town's schools and local youth groups on new projects as there's plenty of scope for you to gain marks in this section over the coming years.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Newmarket looked very tidy and litter free on adjudication day which was extra impressive as there was a fair on that day. It is clear that you have an active and hardworking band of volunteers in your town with a good system for keeping litter at bay – well done to everyone.

Residential Streets & Housing Areas / Sráideanna Cónaithe & Ceantair Tithíochta:

Your community's organisation and planning for maintaining all the residential areas of Newmarket is impressive – it is wonderful to hear how you work together for the benefit of all. All around the town, the various housing estates and individual houses looked to be well maintained with many lovely private gardens noted. The flowerbed at Castlecourt filled with pollinator-friendly herbaceous perennials was great to see - these plants are good for biodiversity and far less work than annual plants.

Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes / Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna & Lánaí:

The signs on all the approach roads looked clean and very well maintained. The completed Round Wall and integrated bus shelter were admired – could more of a feature be made of this unusual style wall in the future given its prominent position at the entrance to Newmarket town? Some local imaginations might come up with ideas! The new Hypericum hedge was in full bloom along the Clonfert Rd on visit day – it was lovely and bright and cheerful.

Concluding Remarks:

Newmarket is a most picturesquely-situated town with a great heritage and clearly a great community spirit. Continue on with your great work enhancing the quality of life for all who live in and visit Newmarket and we look forward to returning in the future to see the results of your future projects to come!