

# Tidy Towns Competition 2012

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Birdhill** Ref: **587**  
County: **Tipperary(North)** Mark: **310**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **05/06/2012**  
**28/07/2012**

|                                | <b>Maximum<br/>Mark</b> | <b>Mark<br/>Awarded<br/>2011</b> | <b>Mark<br/>Awarded<br/>2012</b> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Overall Development Approach   | 50                      | 46                               | 46                               |
| The Built Environment          | 50                      | 38                               | 38                               |
| Landscaping                    | 50                      | 43                               | 44                               |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 50                      | 34                               | 35                               |
| Litter Control                 | 50                      | 38                               | 38                               |
| Tidiness                       | 30                      | 21                               | 22                               |
| Waste Minimisation             | 20                      | 14                               | 15                               |
| Residential Areas              | 40                      | 27                               | 27                               |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas  | 50                      | 37                               | 37                               |
| General Impression             | 10                      | 8                                | 8                                |
| <b>TOTAL MARK</b>              | <b>400</b>              | <b>306</b>                       | <b>310</b>                       |

### Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the superb entry that you have submitted with all aspects of your activities so well documented and supported with wonderful photographs. Your mission statement for Birdhill could scarcely be better and I am delighted to list out your aims and reflect on them;

The general improvement, enrichment and development of the environment.

The development of community spirit and pride.

The promotion of an atmosphere of good neighbourliness.

The encouragement of greater interaction among local people.

Enhancement of the appearance and ecology of Birdhill and surroundings.

The development of whatever facilities are deemed necessary to cater for young and old.

This is a wonderful approach to the competition.

The high standard of last year's entry is again repeated this year, and the spreading around of the work-load ensures proper attention is given to all matters under your control.

I note you hold ten meetings per year. You are working well with the agencies and bodies that are glad to support your efforts. I note in particular your continuing communication with North Tipperary County Council.

There are excellent communications with the local people as outlined in your entry, and this ensures the smooth running of your activities. It is very interesting to find that people from abroad are able to see what is going on in Birdhill through your website.

Great to see your excellent relations with the schools. I note the green school's committee have prepared a newsletter on water, and the involvement of An Taisce Water Co-ordinator Sean Hartigan with the school is an excellent development.

Yes you have a long and very successful record with the National Tidy Towns Competition which is recorded in some areas in the village, and recognised nationally. There are some very interesting events taking place in Birdhill that cater for all ages and interests.

Excellent.

### **The Built Environment:**

The built environment of Birdhill looked wonderful and all buildings have their own particular charm as if in competition with each other for first prize in a separate competition. I always admire that beautiful Catholic Church as I pass by, and it was a treat to stop and enjoy the peaceful surroundings. Everything to do with the church is very well looked after with the priceless cut-stone structure of the church standing out, well done to all who are responsible for its upkeep. The school on the Newport road was nicely presented ensuring a very good environment for the children. Birdhill creamery building is a reminder of a bygone day and great to find it kept in such good condition and retaining its original identity. The car park and entrance to the railway station are very well presented – neat and tidy for a busy place. I loved the traditional stone wall and stone bridge near the railway station. The traditional water pump on the Ballinahinch road is a great historical feature, and well done for the work done there.

Slí Na Coille is a welcome addition to the amenities of the area linking the railway station to the centre of the village. I admired the village rock on the approach from Nenagh.

### **Landscaping:**

Great splashes of colour are everywhere in Birdhill with a variety of wonderful trees, shrubs, flowers and grassed areas. I liked the way that the hay is let grow at the Nenagh road roundabout with the grass only cut on the outside near the road. I noted the way that the grass on the embankments here was correctly left where it fell to avoid pollution. It is interesting to find such assistance from the local people with the preparation of the bulbs and general upkeep. You are careful to have year-round effect with the landscaping. There is a great freshness evident with the landscaping in the centre of the village where lovely scents are enjoyed. Wildflowers on some roadsides, like the ones on the Newport road, stand proudly and remind us that they too have a role to play. I saw the enhancement for the flower bed at Bourke's Cross. Your attention to detail in Slí na Coille will greatly enhance this area with the new material planted.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The Birdhill Nesting Box is now seen far and wide and is an exciting new initiative. I collected a brochure on my way to the Pollagh Trail a total walking distance of 4.4 km. I did not walk to the end, but I did go far enough to get an understanding of the local fauna and flora so well described in the brochure and on the notice boards. Again many wildflowers and plants remind us of their beauty and importance, with lots of cow parsley standing proudly. The park in the village is carefully presented and maintained to protect and promote the wildlife. I loved the creepy crawly structure and the pond. A stroll in this park which nestles so peacefully is a great experience. The new Slí na Coille adds further to the fine nature trails of Birdhill.

### **Litter Control:**

I saw the work done at the recycling centre, well done, it looked very clean and tidy. The spring clean up is now a popular activity in many parts of the country and you are giving it plenty attention with each road responsible for its clean up activity, and the involvement of the children fosters a great understanding of the better ways to protect the local environment. I admired the "spokes" man at the school.

### **Tidiness:**

Birdhill certainly was tidy and it's no wonder going on your records of attention to this category as outlined in your submission – weeding sweeping, gathering litter and cigarette butts etc. All the walls fences, gates and ditches are in great condition. You have a positive approach to advertising material and election posters. It is noticeable that you are washing all the road signage and public notice boards, as they looked fresh and crisp.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

The provision of the allotment this year is a worthwhile local facility. This will reduce the amount of packaging that comes with vegetables. Locals are put off on a solid starting route with the assistance of the expert organic gardener. I note you participated in the "Energy Neighbourhoods" project. You provide interesting data, as follows;

Your energy use has decreased by 16% over the past year.

Birdhill residents increased their use of energy savings options by 20%

The time between boiler maintenance decreased by 17%

Coal usage reduced by 67%, peat burning by 93% and briquette burning by 67%

Oil and gas consumption were reduced by 26% with other initiatives on transport, domestic waste and a concentrating on composting and the purchase of organic food.

I note you have many other priorities in this category notable the creation of the leaf composter and green

schools.

**Residential Areas:**

There is a distinct sense of pride of place and home to be experienced in Birdhill with impressive displays of flowers, shrubs trees and lawns plus distinctive boundary walls and fences. Many of the houses were freshly painted and decorated.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

The one thing that I found outstanding in Birdhill this year was the lack of the intense flow of traffic that was always a feature of this village. I well remember the dangers of crossing the main road. All the road signage was clear and distinct. The shrubs and flower beds make it an enjoyable experience to drive through the town. All the road surfaces are in good condition. Safety is created with the new link to the railway station.

**General Impression:**

Your mission statement in the Overall Development Approach section says it all. Having carefully studied your activities and experienced your work on the ground first hand I heartily applaud your committee and the people of Birdhill.

**Second Round Adjudication:**

Birdhill was presented to its usual high standard again this year from first inspection through to second adjudication. The village centre looked quite magnificent with its colourful flower displays in full bloom: a good balance has been achieved between the formality of roadside landscaping and the development and maintenance of your natural amenities such as woodland areas and the Pollaghs Trail. It is a wonderful achievement to have a formal community park on one side of the road and access to a natural woodland walk on the other side together with further natural amenities within walking distance. The detailing of these walks with distances included is very helpful and the site chosen for the roadside interpretive panel is good. The associated brochures should be made available in all business premises, your adjudicator looked for these unsuccessfully in one premises and was delighted to find them at the access to the Pollaghs Trail. The plan for the installation of literary signs in the Sli Na Coille amenity is eagerly anticipated. Well done also on the water pump at Carrigeen and every success on providing potable water. The frustration of not being in a position to develop the Birdhill roundabout for visual amenity is appreciated and hopefully this will be resolved in time. It is good to note that the community is well on the way to preventing waste at source, look for as many ways as possible to continue in this endeavour; congratulations on the 16% reduction in Birdhill's energy usage. There was great excitement in Birdhill during the second visit as the Community Family Fun Day was in full swing.