

# Tidy Towns Competition 2007

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Newport** Ref: **567**  
County: **Mayo** Mark: **216**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **27/06/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	36
The Built Environment	50	33
Landscaping	50	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20
Litter Control	50	23
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	13
Residential Areas	40	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	27
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>216</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Newport is welcome to the 2007 Tidy Towns competition and thank you for the comprehensive submission completed in electronic format with equally excellent maps indicating where different works have been carried out and those that are planned for the future.

The submission, which was expertly compiled, succeeded in encompassing all aspect of your Committee's activities and interaction with various statutory bodies, relevant agencies and most importantly local community organisations and business people.

One senses that your overall committee of 8 is held in high esteem by the people of Newport.

By the same token it is very encouraging to see such commitment and unity of purpose on the part of the wider community in the town.

It was this adjudicator's first visit to Newport in five years and the changes that have occurred in that intervening period have been quite staggering.

As with most towns and villages in Ireland at present the level of building work being undertaken is quite substantial but the basic fabric of what is a very pleasant town nestled on the north east of Clew Bay.

### **The Built Environment:**

A beautiful feature of the town is its seven arch viaduct, built in 1892 to carry the Westport to Achill railway line where on can look down on the Black Oak or is it the Newport river? as it meanders along.

The arch has now been wonderfully restored, and looks especially impressive at night, when floodlit. The pictorial records in your submission show how the paving work was done in painstaking fashion by top class tradesmen.

Newport also has a number of other very fine buildings and one of these is St Patrick's Catholic Church, built in 1914 in the Irish Romanesque Style and occupying a most commanding position in the town. The church

and grounds are very well maintained and credit is due to the persons that have been entrusted with this responsibility.

The bridge railing on Barrack Hill leading up to the Church is in need of painting.

Other public buildings such as the National School on Glenhest Road and the recently restored Health Centre are tidy and well presented.

Both the Father Manus mural and De Bille House offer the visitor an insight to the past history of the town although one felt that there should have additional information available.

It was noted that historical tours of the town take place in the evening time during July and August.

The Granary building looked pleasant with hanging baskets and the Burrishoole GAA club which is one of the hubs of the community deserve credit for the manner in which it has maintained its grounds.

The level of work undertaken under general development in the town in the last year has been very impressive. It would not be possible to give a detailed brief on all in this summation but the work done on the playground near town Park, and at the nearby railway embankment was visited and noted. The aforementioned Canon Killeen Park to give it its proper title afforded one the opportunity to take time out and relax on what was one of the better "summer" evenings of 07. It was noted that there are plans to do additional improvement works to this excellent town amenity.

One noted that there is a proposal to create a dedicated development plan for the Quay this would help regenerate the whole immediate area.

The following Commercial premises appealed to this adjudicator Kelly's Kitchen, Chamber's Pub, The Newport Hotel and newly refurbished Brannens Pub.

These premises were complemented by some impressive town houses viewed in the core area of the town as well as a number of B&Bs in the outskirts.

Road surfaces and footpaths were acceptable and improved access to outlying areas of the town was noted.

Derelict premises are not as numerous as was the case some years back, the town has moved on and improved its image and the number of said buildings is on the decrease.

### **Landscaping:**

The trees lining the main street are expertly sited and have matured well and complement the existing streetscape.

These are well protected and are in a healthy state and give credence to the statement that trees are the most important plant in an urban landscape.

The species of tree selected have been ideal for this type of urban setting so well done to the landscaping section of the local authority for good foresight.

The town has a nice combination of flowers in planters and hanging baskets filled with colourful annuals seen in different locations.

Compliments to both the business people and indeed private residents for making the effort to add colour and lord knows it was a hard job given the "summer" weather that has prevailed this year.

The Park and the Playground were well served in a landscape context and the basics such as grass cutting and maintenance of verges was first class.

The boat at Meddlicott Street, never found the origin of this name, was freshly re planted and looked a very nice feature very in keeping with the town's maritime link.

The presentation of planters on the Castlebar Road was simple in design but very effective

Rose beds near the bring bank were well tended to and the roses were healthy and colourful.

Keep improving on the excellent work done to date.

It is hoped that landscaping will play a big part in the plans for the development of the Quay area.

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

The Quay road represents potential for some form of distinctive wildlife project as part of the proposed development of the area. Consultation with the urban planning section of the Mayo County Council is advised before pressing ahead with any preliminary information.

The committee should build on the excellent initiatives that have been undertaken in this category to date such as bird nesting boxes at the Viaduct embankment and the initial work that has been done on the woodland project.

Suggest that you consider fauna and flora information boards in other appropriate areas as well as those planned for the woodland area

The Quay Road loop walk offers a most scenic short walking route so close to the town centre and I cannot recall if it is part of the greater Burrishoole Loop walks as outlined in the excellent information board Newport is lucky by virtue of location to have access to a number of areas where both wildlife and marine life prosper.

The Committee is doing its part to develop and exploit the potential in this category and one should not forget how important it is to have the school involved as it gives children a greater awareness of the importance of wild life preservation and helps them to develop their own ideas.

### **Litter Control:**

There were some small amounts of litter in the core of the town and on the bridge but lack of litter were generally good on the day of adjudication. It was good to see the school retain the Green Flag and continued encouragement from teachers and committee members will help children to understand the importance for good litter control and how it can be of help to the environment.

Organised litter picks and the Green Warriors at the local national school are examples of simple ideas that can make a difference in improving and maintaining low litter levels in a town or village.

The regular picks and shore cleansing are paying off and overall the town had a good standard of litter control. Bins were placed in appropriate parts of the town and the committee are well aware where potential black spots exist and have undertaken to monitor these on a regular basis.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

All involved in helping to achieve the Green Flag for the School are to be commended and it is hoped that in the future it will not alone retain its present status but go on to achieve a higher rating.

Overall it is felt that there is the town could benefit more if additional projects under this category could be undertaken.

The Race Against Waste is taking on a greater significance in the need to protect and enhance ones local environment.

The committee should consult the excellent booklet "How to win the race against Waste" and also the up to date website of the of the Race Against Waste campaign.

There are many ideas that a progressive committee such as yours could take on board and convey to both the business and residential communities in Newport.

### **Tidiness:**

Newport is similar to many other villages and towns in Ireland at the moment as it is seeing the effects of "progress" a multitude of housing developments and individual house building.

This activity leads to messy site areas, slowness in completion of additional work such as landscaping, boundary fencing when the actual developments are complete.

There is very little that any committee can do in these circumstances except encourage full completion

The removal of wiring in the core area of the town is welcomed and that with the traffic management programme should help to alleviate any cluttered look

Plastic signage on the Black Oak Inn is a detractor from the tidiness of the surrounding area.

The Light Poles on the viaduct side of the bridge should be fixed to be consistent with those on the opposite side.

Something needs to be done with the petrol pumps on Main Street as they are very much out of sink with the rest of the buildings in the town, it is noted that plans are in place to remove these and it is hoped that these will acted upon sooner rather than later.

Some weeding required on footpaths on Cahill side of the village (Georges Street) and after the Newport sign and on the footpath outside the school.

Overall the standard was quite good with the few usual exceptions that one finds everywhere as stated earlier all one can do is encourage owners to come into line with everybody else.

Shops and other commercial premises should be encouraged to minimise the amount of fly posting which is becoming a national past time.

### **Residential Areas:**

Most residence off the core area of the town was well maintained and presented.

The residents of Barrack Hill deserve mention for the standard of general maintenance as well as the colourful hanging baskets that they provided.

Rossmore Estate was fresh and tidy looking on adjudication day with the shrubs at the entrance adding to the overall appearance of the Genets Road.

Bay view Drive looked very neat and the immediate surrounds were presented in an acceptable manner.

As in all towns there are those who don embrace campaigns such as Tidy towns but it is important that the committee keep encouraging these people to come on board and that by doing so they are contributing to the betterment of Newport.

### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

The surface of approach roads was very acceptable but unfortunately the condition of link roads with in the town was rather patchy – patchy being the operative word!

It is incumbent on Mayo County Council to put Newport, because of its location and its increase visitor

numbers, to the forefront from a resurfacing programme for next year.

The general presentation of approach roads was quite good with basic works such as verges trimmed, maintenance of signs and protection of trees all done to an accepted standard.

**General Impression:**

Newport is a very attractive town occupying both a commanding and picturesque location on the river and near Clew Bay.

This combination together with some unique built environment landmarks (Viaduct, Church and Main Street) offers significant potential for Newport to become an even more attractive town.

The Committee is working towards improving the status of the town in the combination and indeed with no little degree of success

Appreciate the fact that additional marks can be gained in categories such as Waste Minimisation and Wildlife and Natural Amenities by undertaking some additional works pre next years competition.

It was nice to re visit Newport after a number of years and see the positive changes that have taken place.