

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Newport** Ref: **567**
County: **Mayo** Mark: **254**
Category: **B** Date(s): **20/06/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	37	38
The Built Environment	50	36	36
Landscaping	50	32	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	28	29
Litter Control	50	28	31
Tidiness	30	17	17
Waste Minimisation	20	11	11
Residential Areas	40	22	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	29	30
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	400	247	254

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the TidyTowns competition 2012 and thank you for the very well laid out application form. We also read with interest the Newport Community Action Plan devised by the Mayo Communities Futures Steering Group. It is most revealing to see what the community collectively feel Newport will be in 10 years time. Working together to this blueprint will help to ensure many of the aspirations achieve tangible reality. Your 8 committee members supported by substantial number of volunteers have achieved a great deal over the past number of years. This has lead inevitable and progressively to the TidyTowns committee being viewed with growing recognition and appreciation. This will in turn enhance your capacity to play a real part in the progression of Newport over the coming years. Undoubtedly one of the problems you will be faced with is the significant number of homes seeking occupiers and a number of business premises seeking appropriate present day gainful use. The Greenway activity is likely to play an increasing part in that same future. The fine houses in Chapel Street were admired as was Newport House whose grounds were beautifully set out.

The Built Environment:

The Holy Family National School was very well presented and the changes to the Tourist Information Office improved matters greatly. The Health Centre looked well and we did admire the improvements that have been effected to the Parochial Hall by the 'meitheal' approach to this significant task. The Catholic Church and its grounds were very well presented while the much smaller oratory linked with the late Cannon Killeen was greatly admired. The 7 arched bridge is indeed a splendid sight especially when viewed from the other river bridge. The former church now St. Mary's School caught the eye as did Lavelle Bourke premises. The historic house of Dutch origin is an interesting element of local folk history and architecture. The Grainne Uaile pub was very well presented and the twin shop fronts of Newport Mayo Pharmacy and Addendum were greatly

admired. The small scale Blue Bicycle Tea Room looked well. The large scale Newport Hotel might on its next repainting select a brighter colour scheme.

Coping with dereliction, sadly an all too necessary skill, has been well developed in Newport and put to good use. The good news of the approval of the long planned extension of the national school is most encouraging and its completion will be awaited with interest.

Landscaping:

Although in general ground planting is preferred, the 4 sizable timber planters on Upper Castlebar Road are a distinct addition in their area. The progressive reduction in wirescape and the fine lamp standards look well. Our Lady's Grotto in the church grounds was very well presented. We admired the boats used as giant flowerbeds and their locations were appropriate in each case. The nautical theme was continued with the very fine anchor. We did not notice any panel nearby giving the relevance and history of this fine piece of navel archaeology. Next year is the centenary of Charlie McGee's births; are there any plans to mark this significant date in handballing history?

The Riverside Park and Children's Play Area was very well presented and is a delightful addition to the local facilities. The Burrishoole GAA grounds were very well presented and the building itself freshly painted. The colourful overall presentation of the Garden Centre on Castlebar Road was admired. The additional planting both on the approach roads and within the town itself were greatly admired. These were particularly effective at Meddlcott Street. The sponsored aubrietia in the planters on Main Street and Mulranny Road add a desirable splash of colour in these areas. Your ambitious plans for the N59 and elsewhere will make a sizeable impact and one hopes that it will find favour with the relative authorities.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

No doubt the river is a significant resource in your overall presentation. We greatly admired the many waterfalls on the river's approach to the town. The additional signage drawing attention to the extent of birdlife along the 'Loop Walk' was noted. The Greenway Bicycle Route is certainly working well and many visitors were noted enjoying the new facility. The Butterfly Garden is an interesting experiment and we will be interested in its progression as it gets bedded in. The new bicycle racks on Meddlcott Street were greatly admired and being widely used on the day of adjudication. The Organic Vegetable Garden in the school is a project with multi benefits and its progress will be watched with interest.

Litter Control:

Well done on your success in the Anti-Litter League. We admired the many signs throughout the town reminding people that Newport is now a 'Litter Free Zone'. The success of your Good Friday Clean-up clearly has had a positive ripple effect while the weekly tidy ups also play their part. The cigarette butt buckets is a very positive initiative. Drawing attention to the actual dangers occasioned by dog fouling is very necessary and hopefully beneficial. Your mascot 'Zinx' has taken to its role in this regard.

Tidiness:

The success in repainted buildings between uses has enhanced the area considerable. We admired the painting done to the tree bases also along Main Street. A lamp standard at Knockmoyle Road has been knocked off the vertical and needs attention. The very tired sign for the development at Craobh Bán is surely counterproductive at this stage and should be removed. The old van E739 GAA at the Handball Alley seems to be abandoned. If so a more appropriate final resting place should be organised for it before next year's events.

Waste Minimisation:

While all of the actions you are undertaking under the general heading of recycling are commendable, the primary trust under this category is first and foremost about the prevention of waste. This involves the community and individual householders in effect changing their mindset relative to their use of increasing scarce resources. Water, energy and power generally are increasingly costly and scarce commodities. At individual householder level and at community level an analysis of the usage of these items will almost certainly affect a considerable reduction, to the financial benefit of the individual householder and the collective benefit to the environment. An effective method to achieve these objectives is by staging an information evening at which these and relative issues can be discussed and examined. Explore this option with the Environmental Department of Mayo County Council.

Residential Areas:

A centre the size of Newport can only advance in the TidyTowns competition when there is a number of estate or street residential associations or committees to take responsibility for the appearance of their immediate location. The enhanced presentation of Acres Grove certainly makes the point and all credit to those involved.

Individual house on Knockmoyle Road (R317), the Ballina Road and especially the Castlebar Road were admired. In many estates and locations several houses are awaiting occupiers. This is particularly noticeable in Quay Street and the estate at the top of Barrack's Hill where the sizable apartment block has not yet been commissioned. We admired the houses on Chapel Street dating in some cases to the 1840's. The house on Bayview Drive looked very colourful with interesting sculptural items. The communal grassed areas here were well presented. In Craobh Bán a number of houses await occupiers; weeds were noted outside the Kerbs which detracted somewhat from an overall good impression.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The new 'Failte Newport' signs are colourful and eye catching. The major works in progress on road realignment and expansion on the Westport Road will take some time to complete. The Greenway entrance signage was admired and is a big improvement on the visibility of this new facility. It would be useful to undertake a survey of all road signs with particular regard to their visibility due to encroaching vegetation and check them and their supporting poles for cleanliness. Within the town the improved lighting of pathways and parking at Melcombe Road have lifted this area considerable.

General Impression:

Undoubtable the major road works in progress will come at a temporary cost in appearance but hopefully that will soon be behind you. The river and its environs offer a wide canvas on which to project the particular and agreeable features of this centre. The two bridges themselves are almost a symbol for the town and the manner in which the playground and amenity areas have been developed strengthens considerable their impact.

Your overall score in the competition continues to rise reflecting an increase in participation in all aspects of the competition. To all involved in this year's success our best thanks for a job well done.