

# Tidy Towns Competition 2010

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Newcastle** Ref: **1037**  
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **250**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **08/07/2010**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2009</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2010</b>
Overall Development Approach	50	0	27
The Built Environment	50	0	30
Landscaping	50	0	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	0	25
Litter Control	50	0	36
Waste Minimisation	20	0	10
Tidiness	30	0	16
Residential Areas	40	0	32
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	0	34
General Impression	10	0	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>250</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

Newcastle is warmly welcomed as a new entry to the TidyTowns competition. Being a subcommittee of the residence associations you have ready access to all parts of the community. You have made an excellent start in indentifying urgent projects to be undertaken and priorities to be established. It is recommended that you spend some of the winter period coming examining your village and identifying specific project and objectives to achieve over the next three years. This process will form the bases of your three year programme. Such a written statement is beneficial in three ways; firstly it concentrates you own minds on priorities, secondly it helps secure a wider engagement of the community at large who will be invited to participate in the drafting of the village TidyTowns plan, in this way the wider public will be entitled to and well assume a degree of ownership of what is proposed; thirdly a written plan is extremely useful in discussions with other agencies such as the local authorities whose funding, cooperation and involvement you will be seeking. Newcastle has a predominance of dormer style dwelling most of which are marked with colourful and well tented gardens; a variation was the small scale cottages. Sadly one of the latter seems to have been abandoned. The new build at Rockingham Courtyard was admired as was the splendid dry fill stone wall featured on the road to Moat Field. The length and scale of the newly build stone wall on the road to the Church of Ireland impressed greatly. The splendid bronze door panels inspired by various psalms are a most unusual and greatly admired embellishment to this small early 19th Century building.

### The Built Environment:

Watchtower House was most impressive as was its extensive grounds. The Newcastle Community Centre housing both the play group and country markets was well presented. The small scale Holy Spirit Oratory reflected well on the attention it is receiving. The tiny railway house by the sea was delightfully painted and presented in gleaming white. Newcastle Garage was neat and orderly as was the splendid house beside it. The small scale little cottage opposite the school in Church Lane will soon need attention if it is to be restored

to gainful occupation. The whimsical 1757 house mount stone in front was a delight. The school and grounds were presented in an exemplary fashion.

### **Landscaping:**

Very fine grassed areas and wide verges are a feature of the village. Particularly admired were the splendid very large bolders in this location. The Playground and to a lesser extent the Tennis Court were very well presented. The Oak Blossom planted in 1989 continues to thrive. The GAA Club grounds were well painted in yellow and blue. The little pump at the commencement of Church Lane was delightfully well presented. The collective impact of several individual private gardens is of significant and beneficial impact to the overall presentation of Newcastle. The decision to screen the Waste Water Treatment Plant was welcomed and the beech hedgerows will represent a distinct improvement.

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

The extensive school grounds certainly contain an area that might be set aside for the establishment of a wildlife habitat. An awareness of and an appreciation for birdlife and wildlife can be a life long enriching element of education. Discuss the options with a local knowledgeable birdlife enthusiast or consult the Environment Officer attached to Wicklow County Council for ideas as to how best to proceed. A survey of other potential birdlife habitats throughout the village would be an excellent exercise to generate interest in the concept. The scrub area to promote bio-diversity close to the Oratory is a worthwhile development and its progress will be watched with interest.

### **Litter Control:**

The accumulative effect of your April Spring Clean and the work evening in May has clearly had a beneficial impact on the mindset of Newcastle. Litter was of a very small and manageable level on the day of adjudication.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

This section of the competition is very much about encouraging a change of mindset in respect of waste minimisation. The three part solution is seen as firstly and foremost to reduce usage as much as possible, secondly where ever feasible to reuse items and materials and thirdly and finally to recycle items that cannot be dealt with under one or two. We welcomed the use of solar energy for the school ahead warning signs thus saving on generated electricity. The Recycling facility located at the Community Centre was noted.

### **Tidiness:**

Many items impact for good or ill on the marks allocated under this category. The two petrol pumps which seem to be out of service could with advantage be removed. Minor outbreaks of graffiti were noted along the Sea Road. In general weeds have been kept under control and the verges and hedgerows appropriately but not excessively cut back. The cutting of vegetation at the side of the river can prove a mixed blessing. Birdlife necessary depends on a suitable food chain and experience has suggested that natural vegetation close to rivers creates the ideal circumstances where such a food chain can thrive.

### **Residential Areas:**

The impact of individual householder and their splendid gardens can not be over stated. There are some splendid examples, notable on the Dublin Road. The Hunters Leap development consists of a number of dormer bungalows each with their splendid, individual gardens. The central grassed area of this development which was extensive was very well presented. Castlememor is a fine estate on Sea Road. Racefield Estate featured a very fine gateway with large individual house. Some examples of weeds outside the curbs detracted somewhat. The large communal grassed areas offers scope for additional development. The Sea Court Housing development featured very desirable houses but here weeds had been permitted to grow outside the pavement which detracted somewhat from the overall impression.

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

The approach roads to Newcastle are pleasant and are marked with suitable planting and well tended verges. A number of road signs and speed limit indicator needed simple to be washed. The Sea Road leading to the beach has a delightful sense of enclosure due to the trees which in places almost joined overhead.

### **General Impression:**

Newcastle has made an excellent commencement in the Tidy Towns programme. In common with every village and town it has a series of difficulties and obstacle to overcome on its journey. Please spend time and give thought to the development of a three year programme outlining the steps you intend to take. You have

made an excellent start and to the committee as such and the wider Newcastle Resident Associations please except our best thanks for the good work you have undertaken and our best wishes for your ongoing success.