

## Tipperary Star 03-02-2006

### **Nenagh awarded coveted European energy award**

NENAGH has become one of the first town's in the country to be awarded the coveted silver medal in the European Energy Awards Programme.

The European Energy Awards Programme is a certification and quality management system for towns and cities that are making a contribution to a sustainable future by using energy efficiently and increasing the use of renewable energies.

Nenagh and Macroom were the first towns in Ireland to apply for certification under the programme in 2004. This programme has successfully been implemented in Germany, Austria and Switzerland over a number of years and they have now been joined by Ireland, Spain, Lithuania, Italy and Slovakia.

Welcoming the news Mayor of Nenagh, Tony Sheary said he was delighted to learn that Nenagh had succeeded in attaining the silver medal.

"I am very pleased, and indeed proud, as Mayor of Nenagh to announce that our town, together with the town of Macroom, Co. Cork have jointly become the first two towns in Ireland to have achieved silver medal status under the European Energy Awards Programme. It is a great honour that Nenagh is one of the first two towns in Ireland to be officially recognised as making a significant contribution to a sustainable future," he said.

"I was present on November 8th last for the entire four hour audit of the town's application for certification. I would like to formally recognise the huge amount of work that went into achieving this recognition from many members of our own staff and some of the County Council also. The European Auditor, Gabi Zink-Ehlert performed a very thorough audit of our application over that four hour period and I want to compliment the Town Manager, Paddy Heffernan who acted as Energy Team Leader on the day. I also want to thank our Town Clerk, Jacqueline McGrath, who did the lions' share of the preparatory work and was ably assisted by our Town Engineer, Michael Woulfe, planner Fergus Wright and Emma Mooney for the Tipperary Energy Agency who provided tremendous support. I also must mention Andrew Sheppard of SWS Environment and Energy Services, the regional co-ordinator for Ireland who acted as consultant to the group," Mayor Sheary added.

"It is generally not recognised that so much is done by so many people in the interests of promoting our town through entry in programmes such as this. The achievement of the Silver Award will undoubtedly highlight Nenagh as an energy conscious community and may well play a part in attracting visitors and indeed future industrialists to the town. Many different matters had an influence on how we fared in this programme.

"Works done in recent years to increase mobility around the town for pedestrians through the dishing of footpaths and provision of tactile paving to assist the visually impaired were very beneficial. Also our decision to maximize our use of renewable energy for electricity needs and the introduction of solar powered parking machines was also viewed favourably. Obviously, our involvement, alongside the County Council, as promoters of the Tipperary Energy Agency and our decision to relocate the Civic Offices, which are state of the art in terms of energy conservation, also played a significant part in our achievement.

"Having established Nenagh as an Energy Conscious town and community we must now build on this and operate for the future with a close eye on the sustainability of development in the town. I am aware that we as a council are actively looking at our Leisure Centre with a view to converting to renewable energy and I look forward to the outcome of that study. I would encourage all the community and developers in particular to be proactive when it comes to the design and management of all buildings in the town and to cultivate a new awareness of the need to conserve energy in the interests of future generations.

"Once again may I compliment everyone involved for their fin achievement and assure them of my support in the future when they pursue the next level, namely the Gold Award. There will be a formal presentation of the award to the town at a later date and I look forward to receiving that award on behalf of the town," Mayor Sheary concluded.

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