

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Belmont**

Ref: **643**

County: **Offaly**

Mark: **195**

Category: **B**

Date: **04/07/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	28	27
The Built Environment	40	27	27
Landscaping	40	28	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	14	14
Litter Control	40	31	31
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	23	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25	25
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	195	192

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for the completed entry form, but the absence of a map made it hard for the adjudicator to identify areas within a village that is very spread out. It is a few years back since this adjudicator visited Belmont and then there were concerns about lack of interest in the competition so the disbandment of the committee may have been a follow on to that. I wish the Development Association well with its endeavours and also with the local action plan which was submitted with entry form. I hope that you can harness local goodwill towards Tidy Towns as your village has such a lovely setting that it could do very well in the competition.

The Built Environment:

Some very well presented premises both commercial and private were to be viewed on adjudication day. Bert Kellys PO shop front was in keeping with the village identity and Cahills shop and pub was well also well presented. Larry's Old Time Village is still a major attraction and it has some new exhibits on view since a few years back. As was the case a few years back, there are a few problematic areas in terms of derelict premises that are unsightly and create an untidy appearance. I hope that the Committee can exhort the owners of these buildings to make some effort from now on to make their premises more respectable, even if they are derelict.

The church and adjoining hall in High Street were in very good condition but the school needs to undergo some refurbishment; school management should be made aware of this independent observation.

Landscaping:

The planting arrangements to be seen around the village were very well maintained. The Samaritan traveller features some attractive bog oak sculptures complemented by nice planting arrangements. There were a number of individual gardens that had attractive border displays and well cared for lawns. Larrys Old Time Village also brightens up the "Belmont" end of the Village. The Development Association should make approaches to the County Horticultural Department to seek advice on how to devise planting arrangements that would be suitable for a village the size of Belmont.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Development Association should harness the enthusiasm of the schoolchildren. I think it would be worthwhile if a little school project was initiated under this category. It would give these schoolchildren a sense of pride in place. There are a number of green areas and hedgerows in the area that are natural habitats for various species of wildlife.

Litter Control:

The village was virtually litter free on the day, which shows that people are litter conscious and more so in small areas such as Belmont where even the minutest quantity can stand out. Good to see the upgrading of bins by the recycling company.

Tidiness:

The village was quite tidy, with a couple of major exceptions, such the yard at Yeats Steel erectors as was another back area which had used cars. It would be a good achievement if these owners could improve their premises by competition time next year. No unseemly fly posting or weed overgrowth to report.

Residential Areas:

The village of Belmont is small but spread out and there are no devised housing developments bar the small housing estate which was in good condition except for a few boundary walls that needed painting. Most home owners keep properties in an acceptable manner. Unfortunately, there are always a few non-conformists and these stand out even more in a village the size of Belmont. I would hope the Development Association can be instrumental in getting people to keep properties in an acceptable manner. It was heartening to see some civic minded people, not alone cleaning their own properties, but also tidying up communal areas on adjudication day.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

It has been well flagged that road surfaces are not the best in and around Belmont. There was evidence that some road surfacing has taken place but they were still rough in places. The Cloghan/Shannon Harbour road was well presented with verges cut back and some nice homesteads to viewed as on enters. The Ferbane entrance was quite impressive with well maintained green areas and shrub beds as a back drop.

General Impression:

Belmont is a place that would appeal to people as a haven of tranquility where one could relax and not get too bothered by the hustle and bustle of present day life. The village will make progress in the competition if the attitude to the Competition is positive among the local community. Hopefully the Development Association can bring this about. Keep up the good work.

