

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballisodare**

Ref: **380**

County: **Sligo**

Mark: **211**

Category: **B**

Date: **12/06/2003**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2003 | Mark Awarded 2002 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Overall Developmental Approach | 50 | 41 | 40 |
| The Built Environment | 40 | 27 | 27 |
| Landscaping | 40 | 29 | 28 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 30 | 20 | 20 |
| Litter Control | 40 | 29 | 25 |
| Tidiness | 20 | 11 | 12 |
| Residential Areas | 30 | 22 | 22 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 40 | 25 | 25 |
| General Impression | 10 | 7 | 7 |
| TOTAL MARK | 300 | 211 | 206 |

Overall Developmental Approach:

Congratulations to this community on becoming the first to be accorded a Village Design Statement. This splendidly produced document is of immense interest and will certainly provide first class guidelines as to future developments. In the coming years additional marking in the above category will usefully follow upon the committee's response to the initiatives outlined in the Statement. (It is not clear from your 5-Year Development Plan at which year you now stand - presumably at least the second? Incidentally, the Salley Gardens should not be entered under 'The Built Environment', which has to do with individual buildings and streetscape - more properly it should be considered under 'Wild Life and Natural Amenities'.)

The Built Environment:

The picturesque Church of Ireland church, in its well-tended churchyard with superb old yews, sets the tone for the traditional streetscape. The once-fine mill buildings certainly pose a dilemma: whether they should be demolished or whether a suitable new use - such as apartments - can be found for them is something which requires much consideration and a sensitive resolution. The same could be said of the handsome derelict limestone Railway Station shed with its unusual circular window openings. The Roman Catholic church is well presented in its commanding situation. The schools are well kept. The prominently positioned Dun Maeve was in need of freshening up with paint on adjudication day; it is a pity there is not much signage here, and also in the main street generally. The handball alley was very sprucely painted.

Landscaping:

The new planting on the station road will improve this hitherto drab corner immeasurably as the shrubs mature. The black plastic sheeting should be concealed or removed. Plenty of colourful tubs and window boxes were most favourably noted. The grotto is really excellent, as always. The pleasantly landscaped grounds of St Mary's College impressed.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It would be good to see more use being made of the superb riverside in both directions from the bridge. Clearly much innovation will spring from the recommendations in the Village Design Statement. The nesting boxes and new nesting sites for swans mentioned in your Plan for this year were not seen, but it is surely of their nature that they should be suitably concealed. The most interesting initiative, the Salley Gardens, was not open for inspection and anyway can not be judged until completed; the three fine salleys outside the development will presumably be incorporated in it, and further salleys planted inside.

Litter Control:

There was an appreciable improvement on last year. Apart from a few pieces of litter here and there, the only spot where it was more noticeable was across the road from St Mary's College. (It would take a student not more than five minutes to keep this spot clear - not, of course, as a punishment, but as a civic duty.) Perhaps a new litter bin here would help.

Tidiness:

Unightly openings off the Sligo road, and broken walls on the Collooney road and on the station road, were unfortunately eye catching. Rusty corrugated iron roofs were all too visible from the new shrubbery on the station road, on an undeveloped site between the station and the by-pass, and at the quarry entrance. Some of these may be outside the village area proper, but they do create a poor initial impression on arrival in the village from those directions. The proliferation of commercial signage was mentioned above. Kerbside weed was seen on the Collooney road and in some housing areas mentioned below.

Residential Areas:

Much of the suburban development of Ballisodare has little relation to the village. Very close consultation should take place between the Tidy Towns Committee and the developers of further estates, as well as with the County Planning Office. Of the outer estates, individual homes are in almost all cases very well kept. Cloondara impressed for its good landscaping (where completed). Bushy Park was admired for its background of mature timber. Woodbrook contains many pleasant private gardens, but the backs of some houses on the Ballina road are not well maintained and some grassed spaces between these houses and Woodbrook had an unkempt appearance on adjudication day. There was a great deal of kerbside weed in some portions of Stella Maris and Silver Hill: this is an instance of where a only few minutes work on the part of each householder two or three times a year would make an immeasurable difference, would contribute to the sense of civic pride, and would incidentally gain additional marks under this heading.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Surfaces and paving are generally good. Poles and wires continue to give an untidy look to the village centre: the Local Authority should be addressed on this issue. A wall and unfinished piece of roadway at St John's School need attention. Fine new stone walls were seen along the Ballina road at the new estates. The new railway bridge impresses, but the owners of the site on its east side should be approached about a clearing-up exercise.

General Impression:

The problems engendered by the enlargement of the village and the consequent increase in population are clearly being addressed by this enterprising Committee. The excellent Village Design Statement provides much food for thought and, one hopes, action.