

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballinasloe**

Ref: **248**

County: **Galway**

Mark: **222**

Category: **E**

Date: **19/06/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	37	36
The Built Environment	40	32	31
Landscaping	40	37	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	23	23
Litter Control	40	18	17
Tidiness	20	11	12
Residential Areas	30	27	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	29	28
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	222	218

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for your very comprehensive application form for this year's Tidy Towns. The detailed map and photographs were very helpful. Some excellent projects have been undertaken in Ballinasloe, and it is good to see your plans for the next few years. The Tidy Towns committee obviously works very closely with agencies and members of the community, as well as local schools.

The Built Environment:

The centre of Ballinasloe is well presented. The sculpture in the centre of the town was very attractive, and the surrounding railing and paving were very well maintained. Most of the business premises looked well, and many had made an effort to brighten the appearance of the town centre with hanging baskets. Premises such as Tohers, Donnelly's Flowers, Egans Pub, An Tain and the Pillar House looked well. St. Michael's Church, the Civic Offices and The Bank of Ireland also looked very smart. The Train Station was very clean and tidy, with well painted railings and window frames, and attractive hanging baskets. The Co-op building needs to be repainted and the gates and gate posts need to be replaced or repaired and repainted. The new Leisure Centre is an attractive building and the playground behind it is a very welcome addition to the town. The redevelopment of the toilets at Society Street are a very good project and respect the existing built heritage of the town.

Landscaping:

There are areas of excellent landscaping in Ballinasloe. The park at Sli na hAbhann looked wonderful with colourful flowers, roses, shrubs. The Famine Remembrance Park was also very well kept. The landscaping in the grounds of Dubarry really caught the eye, and it was good to see shrubs and trees at business premises such as Lidl and Tesco, and the entrance to the IDA estate. The new Leisure Centre has made excellent use of the trees at the front of the site, however the shrub beds in the car park needed attention. The Marina is well kept and the sculpture looked very well along with the green areas opposite Tesco with mature trees & shrubs and well cut grass. The Fairgreen looked well with trees, flowers and well cut grass, but could benefit from the planting of some shrubs for year round effect. There was also some excellent landscaping at the new Creagh junction with shrubs and trees, which really make a feature of the new junction. There were attractive flowers at the back of Haydens Hotel, and at the junction of the ring road and Pollboy road.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The marina is a wonderful amenity - perhaps some interpretative signage could be added which gives further information on the flora and fauna in the vicinity. Your plan to develop a walk from the Marina to Pollboy bog and onwards is very commendable and should promote enjoyment of wildlife and natural amenities. It is also good to see that your plan takes account of wildlife by using local manure and encouraging insect life.

Litter Control:

Overall, the litter was well controlled but there were some exceptions. There was litter present at the junction of the Shannonbridge road and the Dublin road, on Pollboy road and at the top of St. Michaels Square. None of the litter bins in these areas were full so the problem appears to be one of litter awareness. Public areas such as the Marina and Sli na hAbhainn Park were litter free - well done on this. The grounds of the new Leisure centre had a number of new litter bins and both the carpark and children's playground were litter free. I would suggest additional litter bins for Pollboy road and Lidl car park, and the litter bins on Society Street could do with being repainted.

Paint litter bins on Society Street, but very little litter present.

Tidiness:

Areas outside business premises were generally neat and tidy. However, there is a major problem with tidiness at all recycling points which is a pity as the town is making great progress with recycling projects. There was general litter (bags, boxes etc) left at the recycling centres at the Co-Op/Mart, Sli na hAbhainn, Tesco and Society Street recycling centres. Public areas were generally tidy and well presented, although the picnic benches at St. Michaels Square and Sli na hAbhainn could be repainted. There were also mounds of sand and bollards between the car park and the Fairgreen, although I presume these are temporary.

Residential Areas:

Residential houses in Ballinasloe were kept to a good standard, and there were some very attractive individual houses in St. Michael's Place, Meadowbrook and on the entrance roads to Ballinasloe. Some estates were very well presented and the entrances to estates such as The Pines, Hymany Park, Bachelors Walk and St. Josephs Place looked well. However, some housing estates had significant litter despite the presence of litter bins and signs. Individual houses on the Portumna and Atheny roads were very well presented.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads into Ballinasloe are well presented, particularly the Dublin, Galway and

Shannonbridge entrances which are well looked after with flowers, shrubs, trees and cut grass verges. The new car park in Society Street is very well finished and the new pedestrian crossing is a worthwhile initiative. Both the car park and the footpath at the bridge could be resurfaced. The Pollboy road looked very well with good road surfaces, footpaths and a very attractive stone wall. At the junction of the Athenry road and the road to the railway station, a picnic bench needs repairing and repainting. However, there is a well kept litter bin and some planting at this junction. As mentioned earlier, St. Michael's Square looked very well on the day of adjudication.

General Impression:

I enjoyed my visit to Ballinasloe and was particularly impressed by the development and maintenance of public areas such as Sli na hAbhann, the Famine Memorial Park, and the Marina. Ballinasloe has wonderful natural amenities and great plans for developing the town to its full potential.