

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballina-Mayo**

Ref: **527**

County: **Mayo**

Mark: **194**

Category: **E**

Date: **26/06/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	37	36
The Built Environment	40	24	24
Landscaping	40	31	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	23	22
Litter Control	40	18	18
Tidiness	20	9	10
Residential Areas	30	19	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	27	26
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	194	190

Overall Developmental Approach:

Welcome to the 2004 Tidy Towns Competition. The adjudicator found the visit to Ballina most interesting. Ballina is a busy, active, alive town. It is a town of contrasts as the narrow streets give way as you approach the River Moy to the open expanse of the wide River Moy. The adjudicator would like to thank you for the excellent map, book of photographs and the Action Plan document. You are extremely well focused on your key objectives for the town and you are making excellent progress. The 2001 - 2006 Plan is most useful. When next revising this document you might consider identifying your annual targets. In this way everyone will be clear on the work programme for any given year. The generous sponsorship of Coca Cola is noted. You are working closely with all the appropriate agencies and that is the way to make future progress. The River is the dominating feature of Ballina with it's fine stone bridges, weir and many attractive trees.

The Built Environment:

The work planned at the Tennis Courts of rewiring and resurfacing is noted. Your notes indicate that FAS are involved in the clean up of the Augustinian Abbey but on adjudication day it was rather overgrown. The problem of derelict buildings remains and the tackling of this problem is usually a slow and tedious process. Costcutters Supermarket on the Killala road has excellent lettering. This shows once again that signage does not have to be out of keeping with a building to be effective. Good lettering/signage was also noted at The Bard - a simple yet very effective frontage. The long stone building in Pearse Street beside Pawn Office Lane is a fine building in cut limestone. However

the overall visual effect is reduced by projecting and inappropriate plastic signs. Perhaps there could be a meeting of minds with the occupiers of this fine building to improve the overall appearance. Coordination is what is required here. The Coleman's building in Tolan Street is a prominent building on a corner but it does need urgent repainting. In the Tesco car park the building with the Archer's sign needs to be plastered and painted and the corrugated iron roof also needs to be painted. It is very prominent and seen probably by most people that use this car park facility.

Landscaping:

Fine landscaping was noted in many locations around the town. Along the river bank the project to install railings to open up river views has been very effective. The provision of new seating at various locations has also been examined. Improvements to the river walk were examined and this is a fine amenity for Ballina. The project to develop wheel chair access to the river area at Morrison Terrace is strongly welcomed. Landscaping at Cathedral Road looks really well.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Bishop's Field project is excellent and well done on taking this initiative and starting tree planting here. Have you considered having a Survey carried out of the flora and fauna in the town area? The results of such a Survey would help your Committee to focus on planting that will encourage wildlife to the area. A logical step following the Survey would be to provide display plaques illustrating the local flora and fauna. The Sli Humbert walking route signs are detailed and attractively displayed in various locations. The Town Park area on both sides of the river was excellently presented and the grass neatly trimmed and the tables/seating freshly painted.

Litter Control:

Litter control in the town centre on the day of adjudication was quite good and you obviously have an excellent litter strategy that you implement. Some litter was however noted on approach roads such as the Bunnyconlon approach to Ballina. The provision of new litter bins is welcomed. Litter was also noted on the Bunree road.

Tidiness:

The tidiness aspect of the town gave cause for concern in a number of areas. An untidy fenced site was noted on the Balla approach road on the left just before the area with the monument. A very large untidy open space on the Castlebar approach needs attention, perhaps screening pending development. Quite a number of advertising signs were noted on the N.59 Sligo road and one must ask if their presence there is essential for commercial reasons. Perhaps there could be some coordination here. A number of inappropriate plastic shop front signs do not fit into the modern progressive town of Ballina. Traditional or modern hand painted signs would be much more effective in commercial terms for the premises concerned. The display of retail goods on the pavement must be discouraged as should the display of "A" advertising signs. These can cause problems for people in wheel chairs and for the visually impaired. The Bottle Bank at the Tesco car park is well positioned and just a little litter was noted in that area of the car park.

Residential Areas:

The Tidy Estate Competition is an excellent way of getting local residents involved in your overall programme. Many of the estates both new and older are excellently presented. However in some older estates the road boundary walls need to be painted again. On the Bunree Road attractive older cottages were noted. Good landscaping in terms of planting, shrubs and trees are a feature of many estates and many private properties were quite colourful. Well done to all the residents involved!

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The presentation of approach roads was in general uneven. On the Killala Road the verges were uncut on the left and the wire fencing by the 40 MPH sign looks quite untidy. On the Swinford/Castlebar approach verge presentation was good with attractive trees here; nice trees are also a feature of the Sligo/Enniscrone Road. On the Bunnyconlon road fine trees and stone walls are a strong feature, and some good landscaping was noted in the area of the 40 MPH signs. Likewise the Crossmolina approach looked well with good landscaping at the entrance to Gurteens.

General Impression:

Ballina is a very impressive town with many interesting features. Congratulations to all who are working to make Ballina an even better place.