

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballyboy**

Ref: **226**

County: **Offaly**

Mark: **218**

Category: **A**

Date: **03/06/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	30	30
The Built Environment	40	30	30
Landscaping	40	30	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	18
Litter Control	40	35	37
Tidiness	20	14	13
Residential Areas	30	23	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	31	31
General Impression	10	7	8
TOTAL MARK	300	218	218

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for your submission, illustrated sketch map, details of work on hand and plans or the future. There is an air of community endeavour about the village and many of the past developments are now coming to fruition. However, some of previous years developments are in need of improved maintenance and upgrading. Your adjacency to the Sliabh Felim area is important for Ballyboy and you are well positioned to benefit from the increased emphasis on this attractive area. Your challenge now is to intensify activity and bring the community with you in progressing further.

The Built Environment:

You have some very fine buildings and it is good to witness one of the few remaining thatched pubs in the area. This building is important to the rural ethos of the village and is well maintained. The church is well presented and most premises in the village looked well. However, one house on the approach road has abandoned cars that should be removed. This is an important location and very visible from the roadside. You should consider a painting blitz for the village centre. Some high colour would enhance and blend in well with the natural surrounds of the area.

Landscaping:

You have worked hard on landscaping in recent years. The picnic area is well presented but some of the inscriptions now need cleaning and upgrading. The chronology of Ballyboy is interesting and an attraction in itself. Happily you have a good number of mature trees in the village area, many planted over a century ago. You should now plant for the next generation, ensuring that you plant species appropriate to the environs.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

You are endowed with many natural features conducive to the promotion of wildlife. You should involve the school children and organise a local project aimed at giving people a greater understanding of wildlife. In particular, you should identify the prevalent local species and list them with a view to having them highlighted in a display board at a later stage.

Litter Control:

Litter control throughout is good and there were no obvious problems in this regard. This is very much a community requirement and you can be well pleased with your performance. Litter bins were adequate in numbers and obviously being put to good use.

Tidiness:

There are pockets of dereliction in many areas of the village. This problem will only be solved over a period of time and with the cooperation of the owners. New developments should be finished to a high standard with appropriate landscaping. A village like Ballyboy needs to protect the rural ethos of the area and new developments should acknowledge the importance of the traditions and character of the village. Approach roads were in need of grass cutting: only one approach had its grass cut.

Residential Areas:

Houses in the area were well presented and some have excellent gardens illustrating good individual effort. Weed growth should be sprayed in May and the village core should at all times be free of weed growth.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road surface is good throughout. Farm gates should be painted a strong colour. If the owners won't paint them you should seek permission and paint them yourselves. Some farm gates have interesting iron features and make an attractive spectacle when well presented. This might often extend to round or square stone pillars that reflect skilled artisanship of a former age. The bilingual information signs throughout the village are commendable. The area near the forge is very untidy and should be improved for next year. The work on stone walls is quite effective. However, stone walls on their own can often be cold in appearance, so you need to soften this by tree planting inside the wall if space permits or in some cases by developing a grassed area between the wall and the roadside.

General Impression:

It was an enjoyable experience to visit Ballyboy on a sunny June day. Much of the work outlined in your submission for this year was not complete on adjudication day and this will now have to wait for marking benefit until next year. In planning for the future you need to ensure that past developments are well maintained and new projects should not be tackled at the cost of neglecting previous works. Well done on your efforts.

