

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballymurphy**

Ref: **527**

County: **Carlow**

Mark: **218**

Category: **A**

Date: **12/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	35	35
The Built Environment	40	25	25
Landscaping	40	32	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	16
Litter Control	40	35	35
Tidiness	20	18	18
Residential Areas	30	21	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	26	26
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	218	213

Overall Developmental Approach:

Ballymurphy Community Group has a large committee for a village of its size and appears to be fortunate enough to have support from the LEADER Programme and Carlow County Council. Many thanks for your map which was most useful on adjudication day. You certainly had a busy year - the clearance of the right of way to the Blackstairs Mountains, for the benefit of hill walkers, is to be highly commended. The new lamp standards by the bridge were noted and admired and your work in regard to the sheep dip at the Community Centre is to be commended. Although in your submission you have outlined what you have achieved to date and written a work programme based on the different categories of the competition, you will need to re-organise this programme, in order to be more specific about your plans for future work and set a date against the implementation of these items. The hard work that you have done in the competition has been reflected in the significant increase in marks that you have achieved over recent years - keep up the good work!

The Built Environment:

The school and grounds look well but the boundary wall will also need repainting before next year. This area did not look as well cared for as the main street of the village. Although the Hilltop bar looked well, its gable will need repainting before next year's competition, as it appeared rather stained and one letter in its signage was missing! Do discourage projecting plastic beer signs - rather encourage their replacement with ones of a more traditional timber variety. As you have noted yourselves, there are some marvellous old iron gates along the streets of the village which

would benefit from being repainted. Murphy's Bar looked well but will need re-whitewashing in the not too distant future. The stone church is quite charming, located as it is along its own driveway. Its beautifully maintained graveyard and grounds were admired and the retention of bell and steel surrounding structure is commendable. However, its gates appeared rather rusty and will need repainting before next year's competition.

Landscaping:

The magnificent stretch of planting and flowers on Killealy Road was greatly admired. The adjudicator was impressed when reading from your documentation that it's actually maintained by one person! The stone wall and ditch filled with daisies, poached eggs, snapdragons, easter lilies and the magnificent display of snapdragons and foxgloves overhanging the stone wall opposite, looked quite breathtaking on the day! Tubs filled with flowers were noted on Main Street and there was evidence of further floral displays in the pipeline which were ready to put in place! The planting at the road junction in the vicinity of the Pound was greatly admired. The village pump was fine, but will need some restoration work at its top. The picnic area was admired and the relatively new ash trees were coming along rather well. The stone figure of Nadur looked quite charming and the significance of school children having named him makes him all the more special!

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Attractive wild flowers were noted in the hedgerows, including foxgloves and ferns. The Children's Garden in the school is a marvellous idea, with its planting of native trees in grounds, the daffodils and bluebells must look quite magnificent in springtime. The erection of bird tables in order to feed local birds during the winter is a fine idea. And the adjudicators look forward to reading your future wildlife survey and seeing your wildlife board.

Litter Control:

The adjudicator noted your comments made in your application in regard to this category of the competition - but you should realise that your marks actually do accurately reflect your position in the competition - Ballymurphy, in terms of marks for this category of the competition is "well up with the best of them"! Well done in your participation in the Carlow County Council Litter League and progress to its semi-final. The standard of litter control on the day was generally quite good, although a single paper was noted on the Killealy side of village and one or two papers on the avenue to the church. Cardboard boxes had, unfortunately, been dumped on top of the recycling bins.

Tidiness:

Weeds at the base of the recycling bins created a bad impression. Perhaps you should consider screening the bins themselves with a stone wall or planting? The dumped boxes have been mentioned in the previous category of the competition and the forecourt area as mentioned previously should be resurfaced. The attractive mural for the Forge on the Killealy side of village was admired but unfortunately appeared quite faded and so should be refurbished to bring it back to its former glory!

Residential Areas:

The new housing estate with its stone entrance wall at Inchaphooca was noted. Hopefully landscaping has been considered here in order to soften the somewhat harsh impression it currently gives. Generally houses within the village and along approach roads were maintained to a good standard on adjudication day.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The Glynn Road was quite overgrown. Although the adjudicator saw a speed limit sign, the village nameplate was not visible as far as could be seen. The children crossing sign was unfortunately virtually obscured by overgrowth. The standard of signage could have been better - directional signs on the main road were somewhat grubby. Obviously the village's location on a main road makes this difficult but therefore, continual maintenance is required. Directional signs and the children crossing sign on the main road appeared quite grubby, as well on the Killealy side of the village. Although the advertising hoarding is reasonably discreet, it did appear rather grubby. Your programme to cut the hedgerows every three years in order to preserve the wildlife within their confines, is to be commended but certainly, from the point of view of safety, a campaign of tidying and visibility of signs is an essential one.

General Impression:

Ballymurphy is indeed fortunate, set as it is in some magnificent scenery with - as you have said - the magnificent backdrop of the Blackstairs Mountains. It continues to progress well in the competition.

Second Round Adjudication: