

# Tidy Towns Competition 2005

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballybunion**

Ref: **159**

County: **Kerry**

Mark: **230**

Category: **C**

Date: **10/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	36	37
The Built Environment	40	35	34
Landscaping	40	32	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	23	23
Litter Control	40	33	32
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	23	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	27	27
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>229</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Ballybunion has a very diverse range of features and buildings present. The developments in the town and surrounds have largely been piecemeal and unrelated to one another. To cope with the present very developed situation the committee would need to develop a plan. This should include a policy and procedures for improving the overall appearance of the town. Without such a plan progress is dispersed and there is little cohesion. Plans should take into account contributions from all interested parties and reflect the needs of the people with a good forward looking approach. Only in this way can development ideas be charted over the coming years.

### The Built Environment:

The street side premises are well treated generally with good painting and décor and a crisp and bright appearance. Those that need upgrading are now evident as others raise their standards. There is a wide divergence of building styles and as more and more produce extensions and alternations. There is little cohesion between all of these. Perhaps colour schemes could be considered with reference to neighboring premises. The finger signs are very useful. The Catholic Church is a very imposing building as is the Library housed in the small church. The multitude of guesthouses, hotels and mobile home sites are a part of what Ballybunion is. The community centre is a fine building. The housing in the area of the community centre is very cluttered and with more building work seems set to become more cluttered. Some very impressive public houses have great prominence in the town and are very well presented.

## **Landscaping:**

Landscaping is understandably difficult in this area. The tallest plants possible appear to be Cordylines, Olearias and Escallonia. Planting these in dense clusters is a wise idea where possible giving more body to the plantations. Hebes, Fuchsia and Hydrangeas do well also. The planting at the Cashen car park is a useful attempt but with the sea winds at that situation, it is difficult for plants. Planted containers add a good sparkle of colour in places through the town. The welcome to Ballybunion hedge sign is very good. As is the open green on the road above the hedge feature. The Green Valley area by the Golf Course Club house looks well as does the well-maintained grass by the burial ground in the same area. The Castle Green and Cliff walk green areas are very attractive and provide a great amenity. Individual gardens contribute well to the landscape of the town.

## **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The extensive coastline is a great asset and allows for good observation. The cliff walk and beach walks are excellent places to enjoy nature. Signboards are helpful and more of these could help.

## **Litter Control:**

Litter appears to be well controlled. The real test of litter control is a sunny weekend. Facilities and plans should be in place to deal with litter problem days. Some litter was noted in the Main street and at the Cashen car park. The recycle bins were also noted.

## **Tidiness:**

Much building work is in progress at the moment both within the town and at sites along the coast roads. This inevitably causes some untidiness and it is important to check that all such sites are properly reinstated when the building work is complete. Buildings needing painting attention and also derelict or lapsed care buildings further take from the tidiness of a town or village.

## **Residential Areas:**

Ballybunion - Like many seaside towns has many holiday homes and mobile homes. This means that owners are not always able to take good care of their premises. There are many guesthouses that have extended their properties often in a manner inconsistent with the original property's style. A number of new housing developments were visited and frequently the open spaces were found to be poorly treated. The back areas, particularly near the Community Centre appear very cluttered.

## **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Perhaps more one-way streets and prohibition of parking in main streets would help both the flow of traffic and also provide a more pleasant space for pedestrians. Some road surfaces are in need of resurfacing. The surface at the carpark behind the community centre is very rough and weedy.

## **General Impression:**

As was mentioned last year, there is a need to get more community involvement in the planning of developments at Ballybunion. A recruitment drive for committee members is needed and a strong focus on future planning. The town looks well generally and attracts many people for the lovely coastline and the golf. Stretches of mobile homes are not the most attractive feature, but it must be remembered that they provide great holidays for so many people.

## **Second Round Adjudication:**

The Second Adjudicator is in full agreement with the comments made by the First Adjudicator in regards to the lack of consistency that is apparent in Ballybunnion. At this stage a work programme is drafted and implemented. It was disappointing that ideas and concepts drafted by Murray O Laoire Architects a number of years ago was never realised – what happened in relation to this? Litter was apparent along the main streets in the form of a light scattering, but the modern stainless steel litterbins were admired. The bollards on Main Street were rather flaky in appearance –one was missing its domed top. Some railings to the front of some single storey houses in this location were rather rusty and in bad condition. There is an attractive building opposite the Souvenir shop, which would benefit from a sensitive restoration. One of the caravan parks on the approach road from Listowel would benefit from a planting of trees to act as screening. The entrance to the town from Tarbert is an attractive one, with marvellous displays of montbretia and magnificent views to the sparkling sea beyond. There are a number of new houses under construction along this road – do ensure that their boundaries are finished in appropriate materials – one was just bare blockwork and will, presumably be faced in stone. There is an attractive church along this road, which would be marvellous if restored – could a use be found for it? There is some magnificent planting and well-kept green spaces to the front of some cheerfully coloured terraces of houses on this road. The concrete post and wire fencing at the entrance to the main streets near the children's playground should be replaced with something more permanent in nature such as a stone wall. The large car parking area in this location would benefit from landscaping in order to reduce its impact. Fly posting is a practice, which should be discouraged. The buildings along the main streets looked well apart from the comments made elsewhere in this report. Do discourage the use of curved canopies and encourage their replacement with traditional fabric awnings.