

# Tidy Towns Competition 2005

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballymore Eustace**

Ref: **61**

County: **Kildare**

Mark: **224**

Category: **B**

Date: **11/08/2005**

|                                | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2005 | Mark Awarded 2004 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Overall Developmental Approach | 50           | 36                | 34                |
| The Built Environment          | 40           | 30                | 30                |
| Landscaping                    | 40           | 33                | 33                |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 30           | 24                | 24                |
| Litter Control                 | 40           | 28                | 26                |
| Tidiness                       | 20           | 12                | 13                |
| Residential Areas              | 30           | 26                | 26                |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas  | 40           | 28                | 28                |
| General Impression             | 10           | 7                 | 7                 |
| <b>TOTAL MARK</b>              | <b>300</b>   | <b>224</b>        | <b>221</b>        |

### Overall Developmental Approach:

The five-year plan submitted with the entry form gives a very good indication of the work intended and the committee's priorities. It is good to see a wide range of aims have been identified in the plan indicating that the committee is taking a very comprehensive approach to the development of the village. In tandem with this, it is now important to recruit as many members as possible to assist you implementing this plan, and to secure the help of the general community and business interests, who, after all, will be principle beneficiaries of the committee's hard work.

### The Built Environment:

There are many well presented buildings throughout the town. The church looks well cared for with freshly painted roadside wall as does the parish centre. The bell looks well alongside the church. The Square forms an attractive focal point for the village and the stone feature is particularly attractive – the stonework, pebble, water feature and stone seating together form an imposing feature. The Anvil, Headons, Ballymore Eustace Inn, Paddy Murphy's and the thatch restaurant all look particularly well. Stone forms an important element of the town and the six arch bridge looks very well from the riverside walk. It would be great if further development on the opposite side of the bridge could happen – in that way a view of the bridge would be revealed that is never seen. The school building looks very well presented in its clean white state. There are a few derelict buildings still remaining in the town which hopefully can be resolved soon – the most central one being in the square by the telephone kiosk. The neglected building at the top of the one-way street also offers a

challenge.

### **Landscaping:**

The village Square feature, as mentioned above, has an interesting design using the stream, planting and stonework. The containerised plantings through the town provide a great sparkle of summer colour. The petunia baskets on the lampposts look especially well. The plant filled boat with its surround at the bridge and the plant features by the Ballymore Eustace signs on entry to the town are well done. The entrance to the housing estate at the top of the town on the Blessington road has a well-landscaped entrance. The landscaping and maintenance of the grassed areas, trees, verges and gardens in the estate alongside the church look well. The surrounding trees of the town play an important part in framing the town and renewal tree planting should always be kept in mind so as to leave a similar legacy to future generations as we have received. Individual gardens along the roadsides contribute well to the overall appearance of the town and credit is due for this. The entrance to KTL Sand and Gravel is attractively landscaped and is commended as frequently such sites have a very raw appearance.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The riverside offers wonderful opportunities for wildlife observation. The walkway by the riverside is lovely strolling ground. The entrance area by the bridge is well maintained with good mown grass areas and well-tended paths. The seating is also welcome along the walk. Having the possibility of entering at different points adds further interest. The erection of posters, as outlined in the notes, would be a good idea. The butterfly garden will also be a welcome project.

### **Litter Control:**

There is good litter control and very little litter was noticed. The regular clean-ups with community groups appear to be working well. Litter requires constant attention and the best approach is to encourage everyone to take responsibility for their own area.

### **Tidiness:**

Good improvements have been made with footpaths and kerbs. There is still a number requiring attention and these become more apparent as the remainder gets upgraded. The derelict or neglected buildings are a source of untidiness. Some undergrounding of cables has occurred – notably the standard lamps in the square. There are still many overhead cables in places and these are unsightly. Excessive materials stored or displayed outside shops do not present an attractive picture and are often a hazard to baby buggies, the elderly or partially sighted people. Weeds in paving and at kerbsides need attention. Attention is also needed at the wire mesh fence by the school roadside which currently looks unsightly.

### **Residential Areas:**

There are a number of street side residences – these are well cared for, many with freshly painted walls and a very crisp presentation. The terraced style single storied housing forms an interesting fabric of the village style. The housing estates were visited – a difficulty arose regarding the names of each. The estates by the church and at the top of the town on the Blessington road looked very well with good attention to grass care, trees and edging on the green spaces. The gardens were also well looked after. The estate at the other end of the town across the bridges needs more detailed maintenance and some tree planting. Individual houses along the approach roads appeared well and these make a good contribution to the overall appearance of the town.

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

Within the town there is a very patchy and broken road surface. Resurfacing would be helpful to

resolve this. The approach roads quickly attain their rural context on leaving the town and it is good if this can be preserved. There is ample space in the Square and this appears to be well organised. The new signs are welcome. Footpaths within the town have been renewed in many places - some still need attention – for instance from the riverside park up along towards the church.

### **General Impression:**

Ballymore Eustace is an attractive village with the two strong features of the river bridge and the Square. Good work has been done to date and the content of the plan is very encouraging.

### **Second Round Adjudication:**

The first sight which confronts the visitor on arrival from Blessington is the large neglected building with its scruffy surroundings. Descending towards the town centre at least three examples of undisguised dereliction were seen, and weed growth along most of the left hand side kerb. All this gave a very poor initial impression. The large vacant building, as remarked by the first adjudicator, 'offers a challenge' - something of an understatement. As to the dereliction here and elsewhere, it is assumed that you are in contact with the owners and ultimately with the Local Authority which has legal powers to take action in certain cases. About the kerbside weed growth, it would take each adjacent householder no more than a few minutes each month to ensure that such weeds did not appear. – These may seem like small discrepancies, but it is in the accumulation of details that a town either meets or ignores the objectives of its hardworking Tidy Towns committee. On second adjudication day there was some litter outside business premises in the main street, but no more than noticed on first adjudication day; again, it would only take a few minutes daily for each shopowner to look after their frontages in a responsible manner. Otherwise, the village centre was looking lovely in early August: congratulations to the committee, the residents and the business people of the town. .