

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballycloughan**

Ref: **460**

County: **Longford**

Mark: **165**

Category: **A**

Date: **01/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	25	
The Built Environment	40	23	
Landscaping	40	20	
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	10	
Litter Control	40	28	
Tidiness	20	12	
Residential Areas	30	20	
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	22	
General Impression	10	5	
TOTAL MARK	300	165	

Overall Developmental Approach:

Ballycloughan is a welcome new entrant to the National Tidy Towns Competition. We look forward to having you on board and to charting your progress over the coming years. Your first task will be to put together a planned work programme covering the next three to five years to guide your activities and to ensure that the village develops in an integrated way. At the time of adjudication there were no nameplates in place and so the limits of the village were not clearly defined. The adjudicator suggests placing a nameplate or namestone on the grass verge at the house located just before the existing school on the Carrickboy entrance and a second nameplate or namestone before the speed limit sign on the Ardagh entrance. You might also consider applying to the County Council for traffic calming measures as you are located on a busy thoroughfare and traffic doesn't slow down passing through the village. You will have received a Tidy Towns Handbook this year, this is a useful resource for charting your way through the competition, it gives good advice on how to compile a work programme.

The Built Environment:

The existing school Baila an Cloghán has a simple presentation and it looks very well, however the roadside area to its boundary wall is in a dreadful state and does not complement the school itself and its grounds. The basketball equipment inside the school which can be seen from the public road should be rehabilitated. Your plans to refurbish the old school beside the church is good, have you considered what it might be used for when this has been accomplished? Indeed is it being used at

the moment? You can let us know with next year's submission. St. Annes Church is excellent in presentation and tree planting to the roadside boundary was admired. Other than dwellings, these were the only buildings in Ballycloughan at the moment, so a lot of effort should go into addressing these small problems under this heading.

Landscaping:

Tree planting was noted at a number of locations throughout the village, mostly in the grounds of the church, the school and private dwellings. You make reference to container flower displays in your application for the church and school, etc., however at the time of adjudication these were not in place. When the old well is restored its surrounds should be highlighted as a feature of the village and this will include landscaping, some seating perhaps and some signage giving the name of the well and its heritage - was it used for cures or simply as a source of water for the local population? These are the type of details which people find interesting and which should be recorded for posterity. In your landscaping, ensure that you choose plants that are supportive of wildlife and, where possible, choose native species. Again you are referred to the relevant section in your Tidy Towns Handbook for ideas and for how to compete under this heading.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

We note the small stream between the school and the village centre; this presents an opportunity for a wildlife project. Perhaps part of the banks could be cleared and featured or perhaps a nature trail could be identified. This might be done in conjunction with school children as a wildlife project for them. Your submission made reference to the provision of bird boxes, bird tables and breeding boxes together with bird feeder to encourage wildlife. If these were in place the adjudicator missed them and if so perhaps they could be indicated on the accompanying map on next year's submission so that you can receive credit for these. Again, refer to your Tidy Towns Handbook for help in this section.

Litter Control:

Litter control was excellent at the time of adjudication which is no small achievement given the amount of traffic that passes through the village on a daily basis. We would be interested to hear of your litter management activities and your litter strategy and these should be submitted with next year's application as they are an important source of additional marks.

Tidiness:

The main problem under this heading was unsightly weed growth, for example weeds almost a foot high were noted to the kerb of the footpath at the residential development along the main road. The footpath at the church was a little weedy also. In a village of this size this is not acceptable as it wouldn't take that long to clear, and it is not enough to spray weeds, they have to be removed also when dead as they look unsightly. An untidy site and derelict premises beside the well to be refurbished should be either tidied up or enclosed from public view. The premises themselves could be neatly boarded up at the window and door apertures and the boarding brightly painted as an interim measure until redevelopment.

Residential Areas:

Ballycloughan is a residential village and so it is important that all dwellings make a strong visual impact, both in terms of the actual buildings themselves and their curtilage areas which include their boundary walls and their roadside areas to boundary walls. It makes a strong positive visual impact when roadside areas to boundary walls are grassed rather than allow to remain hard surfaced and this is suggested where possible. The small bog oak sculpture areas at the residential development are a most attractive feature. Many older dwellings feature timber post fencing to their roadside boundary backed by neat hedgerow which was most attractive. No doubt those new dwellings that

have yet to develop their gardens will do so very soon and we will see the benefit of it by this time next year.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The footpath at the residential development should eventually extend from here in both directions toward the school and towards the church and hall, so in other words the residential development should be connected by a footpath to the village centre and to the school in the interests of safety on such a busy thoroughfare. The hard shoulder at the residential development is badly in need of resurfacing. Fáilte stones could also be used with nameplates, perhaps the nameplate giving advance notice, and the Fáilte stone inside closer to the village centre. The small bridge should be featured by cutting back the growth and highlighting it as an attractive feature of Ballycloughan and the wall along the left underneath the excess growth on entering from the Carrickboy Road could also be highlighted as a feature by clearing away the growth at intervals.

General Impression:

To the casual passer-by, Ballycloughan doesn't exist as a village, it seems to be just a number of houses strung out along a busy road. On close inspection, of course, when the existence of the school and church and hall are noted, one realises that there is a village community here. At the time of adjudication nameplates were not in place and road edges etc. were unfinished in a number of instances. No doubt when these features are added and problems corrected, Ballycloughan will stand out as a village in the eye of the travelling public. The village looks set to become a very attractive settlement along this road.