

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballisodare**

Ref: **465**

County: **Sligo**

Mark: **218**

Category: **C**

Date: **23/06/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	41	41
The Built Environment	40	27	27
Landscaping	40	30	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	21
Litter Control	40	32	31
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	23	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25	25
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	218	215

Overall Developmental Approach:

The adjudicator would like to thank your committee for the excellent map and the copy of your Tidy Towns 1-5 Year Plan. Your plan is a very simple straight forward useful document that indicates clearly your vision for the village in the future. Your targets for each year are clearly identified. The very fully completed Entry Form was most useful at the time of adjudication. Ballisodare is a an attractive village with seven building projects under way at the time of adjudication. It is to be hoped that the many new houses under development will not destroy or damage the character of this village. It is really encouraging to see that your committee appears to be getting great financial co-operation and help from the community with your many projects for Tidy Towns. Your involvement with the appropriate agencies is welcomed.

The Built Environment:

Some attractive stone houses and buildings are an important feature of the village, as is the iron canopy at one of these buildings. That canopy should be preserved. The bar across the road has apparently been sold and hopefully the new owner will develop this property sympathetically with the character of the village in mind. The Thatch with its elaborate landscaping is an unusual property maintained to a very high level. The Grotto and associated landscaping was also attractively presented. At St. Mary's College, the railings need to be painted - what about a bright bold colour - blue or red? At the National School just four window boxes have been used on one side to highlight the property and this is very effective. Some buildings are in need of painting. The Mill

building difficulty and the Dun Mhuire Hotel Planning Permission have evidently been resolved. The adjudicator looks forward to seeing the final results. A few derelict buildings were noted that detract from the overall appearance of the built environment of your village. However there is a way in which perhaps you can make a feature of these buildings pending their removal or restoration. Try and get the owners to agree that they will blank out the window and door openings with heavy waterproof Marine plywood. This should then be painted matt black, and window bars and door panels painted in white. This approach as a temporary measure can look quite effective.

Landscaping:

The river and estuary are fine features that provide a very attractive setting for the village. The Sally Gardens Walkway project sounds most interesting and hopefully this will proceed further in 2006 in time for next year's Tidy Towns competition. Excellent landscaping was noted at the Cloondare Estate and the sculpture at the entrance is appropriate yet unusual. Fine mature landscaping was also noted at Woodbrook estate, and the old stone wall here adds some character to the entrance area to this estate. This estate uses a variety of different tree species and when these are combined the colour contrasts are visually effective. The flower tubs, window boxes and tubs were noted and they add some good colour to the village. However be careful not to over do this. Well done with the Ball Alley project.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

In many towns and villages this is an aspect of the Tidy Towns Competition where there can be significant potential for development. All towns and villages have the presence of wildlife to some degree. It is important that your Tidy Towns Committee would examine the wildlife potential, and see what you can achieve in terms of making your area even more wildlife friendly. If you have not already done so, the starting point is to have a habitat Survey carried out of the wildlife in your area. Suggested habitats to be considered include the following-

- Urban habitats – gardens, waste ground, walls, graveyards, hedges
- Wetland habitats – rivers, ponds, lakes, canals, reed marsh, bogs
- Woodland habitats – forests, hedgerows, plantations, parks
- Grassland habitats – roadside verges, parks, wet meadows, dry grasslands

The Survey should produce a species list for each of the habitats relevant to your area. This need not be an expensive Survey. Perhaps there is a knowledgeable local person who might undertake this task for you. It should be remembered that to carry out the Survey properly will probably take a year so that all habitats can be assessed at different time of the year. Using the results of the Wildlife Survey your next step should be do draft a straight forward Plan to preserve the identified habitats in your area, and investigate the possibility of new ones. For example perhaps there is an old Pond in your area that is disused, but with a little work could be an important area for wildfowl. It is most important to try and involve your local school children in this project, and in many Schools there are teachers who may have an interest in this area who would be willing to get involved. As part of the actions to be undertaken in your Wildlife Plan you might like to consider the provision of some weather proof and vandal proof display panels, illustrating and explaining the wildlife in your area. This has been done very successfully in many towns and villages in Ireland.

Litter Control:

You have achieved a commendable level of litter control. Control was especially good in the village centre, but occasional litter was noted on some of the approach roads. It was a good initiative to talk to the builders working on the local projects about the litter and dust problems.

Tidiness:

The adjudicator is not in favour of the display of retail goods on the pavement as was noted in the village. Apart from looking rather untidy such displays can cause major difficulties for people in

wheelchairs or the visually disabled. Watch out for weed growth at kerbs and at the base of walls. Projecting advertising signs were noted on a number of premises in the village and this needs attention. The issue is how many of these signs are really essential from a commercial point of view? At the Woodbrook estate the abandoned car should be removed by the owner as quickly as possible. At the Cloondara estate entrance the abandoned site office should be removed.

Residential Areas:

The general standard of most housing estates and private property was quite high. An unusual level of both private and public landscaping was noted at the Cloondara estate. Well done to all involved. At the terrace of older two storey houses on the left hand side on the Ballina approach road some repainting of some properties is required. Also some road boundary walls need to be painted.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

On the Cooiloney approach road the low stone wall needs to be repaired in some places. The short length of timber fencing should be replaced with a continuation of the existing stone wall. Is there a possibility of developing a small car parking area between the road and the river, keeping in mind the safety needs of young children? The Ballina and Sligo approach roads looked quite well, allowing for the major works in progress on the Sligo approach. On the Ballina approach the landscaping at the front of the Cloondara estate can be seen from the road and it improves this approach to the village.

General Impression:

Congratulations to your committee on your achievements and those of the community to date. Hopefully when the present development phase has ended you will have fewer problems to handle. Good luck in your future efforts.

Second Round Adjudication: