

# Tidy Towns Competition 2005

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballynacally**

Ref: **231**

County: **Clare**

Mark: **236**

Category: **B**

Date: **12/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	41	39
The Built Environment	40	32	31
Landscaping	40	33	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	20
Litter Control	40	33	31
Tidiness	20	19	18
Residential Areas	30	23	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	27	27
General Impression	10	8	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>227</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for well prepared application form, plan and map showing all developments taking place in and around the village. The Committee of the Ballynacally Development Association are a very comprehensive body looking after the well being of the village on a number of fronts. The documentation sent in outlining the ten headings under which you operate, with the motto "A world of possibilities" is how all communities should look at their own place. Two activities that took our attention were your work in connection with obtaining Broadband for the area. This, of course, will make Ballynacally a much more technology friendly place in which to live. Also your initiative in running a summer festival which is planned for July 15th 16th and 17th is good for a number of reasons in that it will help bond the community and also hopefully provide you with finances for further initiatives. The development of a community office should also help you in your endeavours. We would also suggest (if you have not already done so) that you consider taking part in other initiatives such as National Spring Clean Week, (run by An Taisce); Green Schools (for your local schools); Golden Mile (for selected stretches of road outside the town); Pride of Place (county & all-Ireland competition if run by your council) and any other initiatives organised locally.

### The Built Environment:

The built environment in Ballynacally was mainly attractive and looking well during the adjudicator's visit. One premises which must deserve special mention is Michael Griffins Public House and surrounds. The planting and décor here is exceptional. The public house near the Fairgreen was also

being painted on the day. The Post Office and shop, whilst neat and tidy, is out of keeping with the ambience of the village. Even with a grocery brand such as this perhaps signage here could be replaced with something more in keeping with the local setting. The painting of the derelict premises was noted and has masked same until a long term solution can be found.

### **Landscaping:**

Landscaping on the approach roads and in the village was excellent. It is good to see that most of this is sustainable landscaping which has a longer period of flowering during the year and also leads to easier maintenance. As Ballynacally is on the West Clare Cycle Way, those coming this way on their journey will be grateful for all the pleasant and colourful landscaping that you have provided. We noted the cover on the Rose Lovers Bench. Indeed this area, on a lovely sunny day, was the heart of peace and tranquillity. Again, we would feel that the fencing here is a touch harsh and, as there is such a small stretch in this area, we would suggest that this be removed and replaced with something more suitable - green wire mesh topped with a wooden bar perhaps?. We noted the planting here to soften the fencing - this just blocks out the river which is an important feature and so rather defeats the purpose. Planting has also taken place next to the fencing on the way down to St. Michael's Well and this is to be commended as this is such a long stretch that no doubt you don't wish to remove the fencing here as yet. We would suggest that the planting at the Rose Lovers Bench be also transferred to this area and, as outlined above, a different approach be considered for the Rose Lovers Bench area. The Fairgreen is beautifully maintained and there was somebody working here on the day of adjudication. A picnic was enjoyed at the well kept picnic tables and the roses were a delight.

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

All the planting and the riverside area contributes to the wild life aspect of the village. We also note that you have put bird feeders down by the river.

### **Litter Control:**

The litter bins strategically placed around the village were noted and there was no litter to be seen on the day of adjudication. Well done. The litter awareness aspect of visits to schools is obviously paying off. Talks on effluent control which you plan for the autumn should also assist in the general management of waste in the area.

### **Tidiness:**

Ballynacally looked neat and tidy throughout and is a credit to everybody including the FAS workers. When your festival takes place a special task force should be put in place to ensure that the village is back to being neat and tidy as soon as possible.

### **Residential Areas:**

Residential properties throughout are all committed to the tidy towns concept. We would again suggest that in the housing estate a planned colour scheme to blend in with existing yellow house would add a new dimension.

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

The road surfaces throughout were good but there were some poor verges and indeed quite dangerous ones throughout the village. Approach roads were well trimmed on all approaches including the one leading to Kilcreest Cemetery.

### **General Impression:**

Ballynacally has the potential to do very well in the Tidy Towns competition. This is a rural Irish village and we would stress that this aspect is what should emerge as the main theme – don't over-prettify or change too much. We wish the dedicated committee and all residents of Ballynacally every success in the future.

### **Second Round Adjudication:**

Ballynacally has now entered the upper grade of the competition, and is therefore accorded a second adjudication. Congratulations to the Development Association and to the residents and business people for making this possible. 'Don't prettify or change too much!', as the first adjudicator sagely remarked; the advice is worth keeping in mind should plans for ostentatious adornments arise. It is quite difficult, for example, to draw the line in colour schemes between the imaginatively exuberant and the completely over-the-top. This adjudicator found the painting on the narrow bridge to be in the former category, but too much of it would draw attention away from the real quality of this village, which is in its traditional values. For instance, the old stone walls were much admired, and it was good to see that these were being continued; the house next the church where work was in progress in mid-August is a case in point. Some of the older council estate houses could have done with a bit of freshening up with paint. The cottages around the green were looking lovely – they are a truly traditional resource. Some poorly defined road verges were remarked upon by the first adjudicator. A couple of unsightly entrances were seen on the west side of the street, and some of the signage on the Post Office seemed out of keeping. It is details such as these which need to be accounted for, because small details can add up adversely just as good details can add up positively. Your increase in marking has been exceptionally high; you will find that marks are much harder to come by in the upper section of the competition. Best wishes for your endeavours.