

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballybunion** Ref: **323**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **235**
Category: **C** Date(s): **23/07/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	36
The Built Environment	50	35
Landscaping	50	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	23
Litter Control	50	33
Waste Minimisation	20	3
Tidiness	30	14
Residential Areas	40	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	29
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	235

Overall Development Approach:

Ballybunion is welcome to the 2006 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission, we note the absence of a planned work programme and urge you to include one next year as it can help achieve marks also and further your progress in the competition. It is regretful that the committee feel that the competition does not acknowledge the achievement of the Tidy Towns initiative in Ballybunion, this is not the case and the adjudicator has witnessed improvements in the town over the last decade. Ballybunion is probably world famous particularly in respect of its Golf Course but its heritage features such as the cliff walk and the Cashen walk and wildlife area together of course with your magnificent beaches and coastline all combine to make Ballybunion a popular destination for visitors and day trippers. This of course is a mixed blessing for the community as it puts a great pressure on facilities during the summer season and probably makes the work of the Tidy Towns committee more difficult also.

The Built Environment:

The built environment of Ballybunion features handsome two and three storey buildings, the majority of which are nicely painted. It is a pleasure to note the diminishing use of inappropriate signage, hopefully these will disappear from your streetscape altogether. Even the most attractive shop front can be spoiled by the poor positioning of posters in windows and doors and unattractive and inappropriate canopies and security grills. The open mesh type of security grill is preferable to the solid one and provides an attractive streetscape at night for late night window shoppers. Open-ended straight edge retractable canopies are preferable to closed ended ones and awnings. New developments have been noted and admired and the maintenance of derelict sites as an interim measure pending development is an onerous task for the Tidy Towns together with the maintenance of previous achievements. The new sculpture outside the Garda Station is a strong visual feature in the streetscape.

Landscaping:

It was a pleasure to note that important focal points in the townscape have been nicely landscaped and are being maintained to a high standard. The planned landscaping of the Kitt Ahern Road is noted and we urge you to be careful in your choice of plants, these will of course have to have a high salt and wind tolerance however where possible try to feature native species, for example the hawthorn tree has a high salt and wind tolerance also. As noted in previous years the boundary fencing to the golf course looks unattractive with its long grass and weeds to the roadside edge and this would be greatly improved with the planting of O'Learia which also has a high salt and wind tolerance, grows fast and sways beautifully in the wind. The entrance to caravan parks are nicely landscaped and the parks themselves are well presented overall.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your three most important natural amenities are your cliff walk, your beaches and of course your world famous golf course. Both beaches looked really well on the evening of adjudication notwithstanding the large influx of visitors/day trippers in the course of a pleasant summers day and the cliff walk was a popular activity for a substantial number of people also; it too was clean. Your wonderful wildlife and geological information panels were admired being beautifully illustrated, most informative and they appeared to be both vandal proof and weather proof, well done. A word of thanks must be extended to the children of the local schools who participated in the beach clean up.

Litter Control:

Litter control is identified as a major problem for the committee in your submission mostly due to fast food outlets. Have the owners of these outlets been approached as in many towns and villages around the country? Fast food outlets provide staff to litter pick wrappers etc. from their own premises, this might be one approach that the committee could follow up. Again we note your regular beach clean ups and the role played by the schools in this.

Waste Minimisation:

The way forward under this heading is two pronged; firstly it is important to segregate litter for recycling and secondly it is important to adopt a strategy, the goal of which is to reduce the overall amount of waste generated by the community, in addition to collecting for recycling. Some thought might be given to conducting a waste audit for various sectors, for example businesses could be asked to look at the amount of waste they produced and this could be repeated with the households and schools. Perhaps the Kerry County Council Officer could be invited to give a talk on waste minimisation in general or maybe some particular aspect such as composting. The Race Against Waste booklet included in this year's Tidy Towns pack contains a number of good ideas on this.

Tidiness:

It is a pleasure to note that the number of derelict sites and buildings in Ballybunion is diminishing and while this may cause problems in the immediate term due to construction work and associated untidiness the long-term benefits are of course significant. A number of weedy entrances and side areas were still in evidence and reference has already been made to the weedy post and wire fencing of the golf course. The overall appearance of Ballybunion was one of tidiness.

Residential Areas:

Your use of a newsletter to inform residents of various Tidy Towns initiatives is an excellent communications technique. There are some handsome period houses in Ballybunion and of course many beautiful gardens. Terraced houses on the entrance to the town from the Dun Road featured a beautiful colour scheme and the overall effect was completed with nicely maintained wide green open spaces with flower displays in full bloom. As noted above caravan parks are being well managed and look colourful. Encourage householders to take responsibility outside of their own boundary walls including public open spaces. Be proactive in welcoming new residents into the social fabric of the community and encouraging them to become involved in the Tidy Towns initiative.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Your street furniture is a feature of Ballybunion and reference has already been made to the wildlife and

general nature panels. Lampstandards were admired also along the main street and the new sculpture has already been referred to above. Stone walls on approach roads should be revealed and refurbished as necessary, at least for a few metres leading up to the nameplate as they are a handsome feature of the town. Improvements to the public toilet block have been noted. Car parking is difficult to assess as the town was very busy on the day of adjudication but it appears that it is well organised. We wish you well with road resurfacing and with fruitful dialogue with your local authority.

General Impression:

Ballybunion never ceases to impress at any time of the year even in the depths of the winter and this year's adjudication was no exception, we wish you well for the future