

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballylinan** Ref: **98**
County: **Laois** Mark: **183**
Category: **B** Date(s): **28/07/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	39
The Built Environment	50	24
Landscaping	50	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	18
Litter Control	50	19
Waste Minimisation	20	0
Tidiness	30	10
Residential Areas	40	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	20
General Impression	10	6
TOTAL MARK	400	183

Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator would like to welcome Ballylinan to the 2006 Tidy Towns Competition. It is noted that this year you have a Committee of 8 people, where as in 2005 the committee strength was indicated as being 20. What has happened in the past year? Hopefully interest in Tidy Towns is not in decline. Your valuable work deserves all possible support from your community. The successful Tidy Towns Committees are those that succeed in harnessing the goodwill, skills and experience of a number of different groups and Agencies that have something to contribute to the implementation of the 3 Year Tidy Towns Plan. These groups and Agencies include the following –

- GAA
- Local Development Association
- FAS
- County Council
- Local SuperValu outlet
- LEADER Company
- The CLAR Programme (if you are in a CLAR designated area)
- Local school
- Urban & Village Renewal Grant Scheme

Again this year no Tidy Towns Plan was submitted for Ballylinan. All towns and villages are required to have a simple straight forward 3 Year Tidy Towns Plan for their area. This Plan is prepared by your Committee in consultation with the appropriate local organisations. It should be no more than seven to ten pages long. The purpose of the Plan is to guide the work of your Tidy Towns Committee and others for Ballylinan over the short to medium term. Your Plan should detail year by year the work that you intend to do each year. It is recommended that you do not have too many objectives each year – perhaps 4/5 key projects.

The Built Environment:

There are some derelict properties in Ballylinan and such situation can be difficult to progress. Can you get permission from the owners to blank out the windows and doors with marine plywood? This can then be painted matt black and window glazing bars painted in white. Doors and door panels can be treated in the same way. As a temporary solution to derelict property this is quite acceptable from a Tidy Towns point of view. It is noted that you are in touch with the County Council about these buildings. Some buildings stand out in the village. These include Dinny's Pub where the colour scheme and lettering are effective. Across the road the Post office uses minimal small scale signage that is still effective. The Nolan public house uses the simplest of lettering effectively. There are some projecting signs and the issue is how many of these are really necessary from a retail marketing point of view? Can you start talking to the owners of retail premises with such signs to see if they might be willing to consider alternatives such as signage fixed flat to the frontage? The thatched cottage near Wynne Park was attractively enhanced with some landscaping.

Landscaping:

Hanging baskets and window boxes enhance the presentation of Ballylinan. Good landscaping was noted at the village pump feature but the litter here diminished the potential overall visual effect of the planting. Fine mature trees were noted opposite Wynne Park and these provide an attractive entrance to Ballylinan from this road. Wynne Park is well laid out with fine mature trees and seating. It is so sad to see that the area to the sides under the trees appears to have become an unofficial dump for litter as much litter was noted here in at least three places under the trees. Much of the litter here appeared to be 'aged' that is litter that has been in place for some time. The old school park nearby was well presented and is an attractive interesting area that one can visit without being accompanied by litter. The Village Green area was beautifully presented and provided an attractive introduction to the village from the Kilkenny side.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

An area on the Kilkenny side was marked on your map as 'Trees for wildlife'; this area is beside Mace. Nothing appears to have been done for this area in wildlife terms. There is no information panel about the wildlife here and the entrance area to the field is quite untidy. The designation of an area on a map as being for wildlife does not in itself gain additional marks in the Tidy Towns Competition.

Litter Control:

Litter control in Ballylinan certainly appears to have declined this year based on the 2005 Report. Much litter was noted at the beginning of the Carlow road and also at the Village Pump landscaped area. However as indicated above the litter situation at Wynne Park was quite terrible. Casual littering was also noted along the main street.

Waste Minimisation:

This is a new category in the Tidy Towns Competition introduced in 2006. The purpose of this new category is to encourage Tidy Towns Committees and the community that they support to get involved in projects that will reduce waste and encourage recycling. Marks can be gained by Ballylinan for the promotion of best practice. This can include community guidance on methods of reducing waste, segregating litter during clean up events. You could also consider a partnership with local firms and businesses to encourage them to reduce unnecessary waste.

Tidiness:

Weed growth along the base of the Graveyard wall and at the base of the low wall opposite needed attention. At the Village Green the rusty sign pole needs to be treated and repainted. Weed growth at kerbs continues to be a problem in Ballylinan.

Residential Areas:

The presentation of a number of the estates was compromised by the fact that development was still under way and this has been allowed for in the adjudication marking process. At Rahan Wood a lot of litter was noted in this estate, while good landscaping was a feature of The Crescent. The central area of The Village is unfinished and was in an extremely untidy estate. Builders did not appear to be on site on the day of adjudication. Some additional trees here would be an improvement. The stone building near Rahan Towers caught the eye as did the very attractively presented cottage with many flowers opposite.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

In contrast to 2005 the presentation of public roadside verges and banks was quite poor on adjudication day

and no recent work was evident. On the Kilkenny approach a well cut verge area at the village sign stood out.

General Impression:

Ballylinan has potential to do well in the Tidy Towns Competition but approach roads, derelict buildings and litter control are key areas for future attention. Good luck with your 2007 projects.