

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Belmont** Ref: **522**
County: **Offaly** Mark: **226**
Category: **B** Date(s): **07/07/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	33
The Built Environment	50	29
Landscaping	50	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	19
Litter Control	50	32
Waste Minimisation	20	11
Tidiness	30	11
Residential Areas	40	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	28
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	226

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the excellent completed entry form, the easily understood map of the village and its surrounding towns lands and of course the very comprehensive supplemental plan for 2006 -2008.

The Village is unique in that it has three entities and the plan outlines in detail what actions are to be taken in each of these areas.

It has been some time since this adjudicator has visited the lovely village of Belmont and since then there has been an upsurge in community spirit and this is probably due to additional people becoming involved to help the cause.

The partnership approach with the Offaly County Council, Offaly Partnership and Leader is very worthwhile and of course your involvement in the local CE scheme is also paying dividends.

The Built Environment:

There were some very well presented premises both commercial and private were to be viewed on adjudication day. T

There is a particularly fine stone house to be viewed at the Canal Bridge and both Kelly's and Cahill's shop fronts were in keeping with the village's identity.

The core of Belmont has improved dramatically because of the improved road surface.

Larry's Old Time Village is still going strong and it is still the unique feature that people talk about when they visit Belmont.

The Samaritan Traveller sculpture is most unique and worthy of the endeavour award in 1998, a good year for Offaly hurlers! Times have changed somewhat. The GAA Club at Moystown Cross are to be commended for the manner in which they have kept their Ground.

The Church in High Street was in exemplary condition and the adjoining hall, which is unique in its own right,

was also well maintained.

Why are the original windows being replaced with PVC- slightly out of character to say the least?

The National School and grounds were also well kept but the sign needs to be replaced with some thing that is noticeable and appropriate.

There is still problem with dereliction in and around the areas under adjudication.

The Committee is aware of the effect that these properties have on the village and its surrounding areas.

I suppose one can only cajole people to come into line.

Landscaping:

A strong performance in this category, it was noted from the Action Plan that further work is to be undertaken in tandem with maintaining what is now in place.

The idea of placing planting arrangements at appropriate locations in all three areas of BHM was well thought through.

It will be hard job to maintain all given that you have a very scattered area to cover but no doubt help will be forthcoming from the local community.

There were a few additional planting arrangements that took the eye of this adjudicator.

The bed of roses, which was part the garden of house owner adjacent to the Canal Bridge, was easy on the eye.

You are wished well with your planting programme for the future.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The adjudicator had identified the area at the Canal Bridge for further enhancement as a wildlife area and on a second reading of your action plan it was noted that plans are in hand to do this in conjunction with Waterways Ireland.

This is an excellent initiative and it will bear good results for future generations to enjoy.

The proposed development of a wildlife habitat at the School is also a worthy idea as it makes the children aware of the need for proper nature conservation and of course will take on a project with great gusto and pride.

Overall excellent action and plans in this a category that many centres do not embrace fully.

Litter Control:

Litter control was very good but it is always important to keep the momentum up and be vigilant of areas that may be potential black spots. For instance children congregate at the new fountain amenity at Beechgrove Estate, so measures like an additional bin here could prevent any possibility of litter being strewn around indiscriminately.

Waste Minimisation:

The proposed designing and implementation of a composting training programme is one of the ideal actions that fit within concept of Better Waste Management and the overall objectives of the Race Against Waste Programme.

The Committee has understood the needs of the community and reacted accordingly.

Well done for making the effort and this has given you well earned points in this category.

Tidiness:

The village was quite tidy excluding a couple of notable exceptions that have been highlighted in last years report.

As stated earlier it has been a few years since this adjudicator visited Belmont and the areas highlighted then are still there and in much the same state.

It was noted in your work plan that these are the exact areas that you have pinpointed for immediate attention, so lets hope that you get co-operation from the owners.

Residential Areas:

The "village" of Belmont is very small and is in fact a residential area in its own right.

The outlying areas of High Street and Moystown Cross are in reality satellite hamlets - I bet you never had them described like that before! - But taken as a unit the standard was quite good with very few places that could be described as not well maintained.

Beech Grove Estate was in very good condition and has been helped by the addition of the new amenity courtesy of the Village Renewal programme.

I would like to add that some very nice private gardens were observed as one traversed between the three

locations.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The main entrances were v well maintained and the side link roads, where one could get lost, were also acceptable.

Every effort has been made to enhance entrances with planting arrangements and in some cases very impressive stonewalls, note Moystown Cross.

Just one negative that maybe should have been commented upon in a different category.

The little sign depicting different species fauna and flora at the picnic area has been de faced.

Road surfaces in the area have improved in the last few years.

General Impression:

Belmont is a place that would appeal to many people in this frenetic world.

Unspoilt, unhurried and most of all not totally discovered, lets hope it keeps these characteristics.

The Village will make progress in the competition simply because of the excellent community spirit that prevails.

It was only a few short years ago that there was concern from the then committee about the apparent lack of interest in tidy towns!

Keep up the good work.