

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballincollig** Ref: **661**
County: **Cork (South)** Mark: **259**
Category: **G** Date(s): **13/06/2007**
19/08/2007

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	46
The Built Environment	50	37
Landscaping	50	38
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	18
Litter Control	50	27
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	16
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	259

Overall Development Approach:

While extensive development is a feature of many centre in Cork in 2007, Ballincollig has been effectively been transformed. The enormous Newtown Shopping Centre dwarfs all similar development in other towns, while the range of buildings elsewhere makes it critical that careful planning and monitoring takes place so that the inherent attractiveness of this centre is not to be put at risk. Thank you for the splendid presentation of your plans, which amply demonstrates your capacity and determination to meet all challenges in the future. Thank you also for the results of your Estates Competitions which again indicates the extent in which you have succeeded in enlisted the energetic, practical involvement of the entire community in the Tidy Towns objective. We also read with great interest the flora and fauna study of Ballincollig Regional Park.

The extent of trees and shrubberies on the approach from the dual carriageway is certainly most impressive, this is augmented by the excellent presentation of many private gardens. It is pleasant that some reminders of the old military age have been retained and incorporated into the new town centre. Large scale development, Aldi and QV were neat and orderly. Work in progress continues on the Shopping Centre especially the unfinished block. As a concept the extensive use of squares throughout Ballincollig is a pleasant layout format to be preferred to the linear streetscape. Our notes make frequent references to the delightful tree planting throughout the town. Ballincollig Technical Park, the Regional Training Centre with the County Council was looking very well as was Leesdale Drive where major developments were in progress.

The Built Environment:

The incredible extent of new buildings happening throughout the centre has already been alluded to. The existing Fire Station with its very fine shrubs and grassed areas was well presented as was the Medical Centre but unfortunately with some litter in the foreground. Credit Union House was a joy while Harrington's

Pharmacy and Crowley's Funeral Home looked well. The hanging basket on Ó'Crualoaí were very good. Sadly some shop signs were not appropriate in their current locations. The Westgate Foundation especially the front facing wall, with trees outside, was very eye catching. Down's SuperValu looked well as did the School, Our Lady of Good Council.

Landscaping:

The landscaping of Ballincollig has been given great attention and is maturing extremely well. The roundabout at Tulecarew was extremely attractive, featuring low level white roses with higher red roses. A striking feature throughout the centre were the many attractive gardens and communal grassed areas in the squares, mostly well cut, often with suitable shrubs. The mature trees in Main Street looked extremely well with the new young replacement saplings already planted on the opposite side of the road. The footbridge from the Regional Park linking with Inniscarra Road is a welcome facility. The quality of the build at the entrance to the Limeworth Estates on the Kilnumney Road has established a very high standard to be achieved in other locations.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The extensive study of flora and fauna in Ballincollig Regional Park is an excellent basis on which to develop over the next few years a suitable programme on works to advance and accentuate still further the enormous potential and reaches of this fauna rich location. It is hoped that you will follow through on the extensive survey by the development of a three year wildlife and bird programme so that full advantage can be secured from the extensive study. Don't overlook the merit and value of other, small scale, wildlife habitats throughout the centre. Many of the estates Rose Wood, Beech Road, the Cloisters and Hazel Grove for example have locations where a suitable areas can be set aside for development as a wildlife habitat. Please remember that appropriate, native planting is essential as the establishment of a suitable food chain is a prerequisite to a thriving birdlife.

Litter Control:

This aspect too has clearly received attention from the committee but unfortunately things have not improved. There were good litter bins on Harrington's Street but quite an amount of litter was noted at Castle Park, Shamrock Drive, and Mill Range equally left room for improvement. We concur with your assessment that the tackling of litter should be a first priority followed then by curb side weeds and then move on to the overall presentation of the estates. Well done on the extent of litter bins that are available and equally for the arrangements made for their frequent servicing. The assistance you receive from the Lions Club and members of the public are equally to be applauded.

Waste Minimisation:

Congratulation to Scoil Eoin on securing its Green Flag status, this will prove a stimulus to the other schools to be equally successful. The bring site was appropriately located and clearly being put to good use. The introduction of the practice of segregating litter in schools and elsewhere is applauded and to be encouraged. The association with Cork Environmental Forum is beneficial as it does help to extend further the philosophy of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.

Tidiness:

Many of the businesses and shop in the town were very well presented. Logitech and Cloud Nine Shops were neat with trees and shrubs contributing to an excellent presentation. Farran Technology was very well presented also. There were too many examples of minor spoil at the basic of front facing walls. The very large sign for Q&V needs simply to be washed. Some plastic bags persisted on approach road. Your success in securing commitments from some of the resident groups to look after their own area is a sizeable breakthrough and helps significantly to reduce those areas which require your own hand-on attention.

Residential Areas:

The massive development at Old Quarter will be a significant addition to the housing stock when it is completed. We are delighted at your success in securing the involvement of residential groups to aid in the presentation of the areas. West Grove estate with its delightful, open area was very well presented, as was Muskerry where there was an absence of litter, with neatly cut grass in the communal area was were the verges. Willow Drive presented mature houses arranged around a central communal grassed area which was very well presented. The retention of original rubble walls where ever possible is a delightful policy, which has had spectacular success behind the new footpath at Kilnumney Road. Coolroe Heights is well enhanced by the planting at the entrance area.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Few towns or village have reached the same heights of success as you have with the Eastern Approach

Road. The extent of flowers which is echoed and reflected by the private houses along this way give a positive boulevard feel to the centre. This overall high impression is enhanced by the delightful signs in different languages. The approach from Inniscarra is not to the same standard but has maintained an excellent presentation generally. There was a quite an amount of debris on the sides and centre aisle on the bypass route prior to the Poulavone Roundabout. The plastic roundabout towards the west of the town seemed to be working well and might, as soon as possible be replaced by an upgraded more permanent structure. The Link Road look very well while in our judgement the Commercial Park was festooned with far too many signs, many of which did not reflected creditably on their businesses. We would recommend that they all be replaced with one single, suitable sign indicating both the location and names of the various businesses. A cooperative solution would clearly be more suitable and aesthetically appealing while equally successful in the all important commercial marketing sense.

General Impression:

Few centres have experienced the same degree of expansion in such a short period of time or achieved the same substantial increase in their marks as Ballincollig. It is a tribute to all involved that you have remained so focused on the task in hand. Equally your success in generating interest through such a wide spectrum of the community, be they private individuals, clubs, area associations or commercial concerns is to be applauded. Thank you for an excellent submission backed up by a delightful and successful campaign.

Second Round Adjudication:

It was a delight to visit Ballincollig for a first ever adjudication of this new and developing town. First to greet this adjudicator was an impressive Fáilte sign on the town's entrance. The tree planting of previous years illustrates the great value of sustained landscaping and no doubt will strengthen your endeavours for further tree planting in the years ahead. It would be difficult to name a better environmental investment. We commend the planners for the many new developments and their efforts to integrate the old and the new. The now newly created square will be your focal point for generations ahead. It is always a delight to find a Green Flag at any school and we now note you are pursuing your second such flag. We hope it will boost your Waste Minimisation mark next year. The large QV advertising hoarding is quite dirty and in truth its removal would boost the environmental appearance of this area. The Enable Ireland clothing collecting bin was overflowing and there is some abuse of the Bring Bank at this site. We like the large containers in the main street which are very effective. We would encourage supermarket developers to plant trees at the various car parks. While the Aldi car park is well presented an opportunity to plant trees has been missed. The town's streetscape is good and you have good opportunity to raise your marks in this section. The public toilet is well positioned and was inspected. There is a litter trap near the Maxol Filling Station. Our highest praise is kept for the landscaping at the Old Quarter Housing Estates; indeed they are the best encountered by this adjudicator and will now be included in the Special Awards nominations for 2007. Indeed, autumn had come early in mid August and the trees were already colouring on the estate approach. The landscaping in these estates is a model for others to pursue. Roundabouts offer opportunity for rich landscaping and many towns throughout Europe have turned their roundabouts into virtual gardens appropriate to the traditions of the town: you might consider developing a landscaped roundabout that would include indigenous vegetable growing of Co. Cork. It would certainly attract attention and project an image of initiative. We wish you well for 2008.