

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballinteer** Ref: **1338**
County: **Dublin (Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown)** Mark: **202**
Category: **F** Date(s): **18/06/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	25
The Built Environment	50	28
Landscaping	50	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	15
Litter Control	50	27
Waste Minimisation	20	5
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	29
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	202

Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator would like to welcome Ballinteer to the 2007 Tidy Towns Competition and your participation is important to the competition. Ballinteer the development of which started in the 19600s is now believed to have about 4,000 houses. It is recommended that the first thing that the new Committee might do is to agree on the boundaries within which Ballinteer will work for Tidy Towns. Normally this is about 1 km from the town centre but in the Ballinteer area it will be necessary for your Committee to research the official boundaries of Ballinteer and work within these. The supporting documentation for this might then be submitted with your 2008 entry. It is also suggested that at an early date that your Tidy Towns Committee considers the preparation of a simple 3 Year Tidy Towns Action Plan that would detail year by year the projects that you wish to undertake for Tidy Towns. When preparing the Plan it would be helpful to talk to any local organisations or agencies that may have an interest in the Competition.

The Built Environment:

The Ballinteer Business Centre occupies a high profile location on Ballinteer Avenue and the adjudicator wonders if white is the best colour for this building. At the main Ballinteer Shopping Centre the grass areas were due for cutting and here the Ballinteer House pub caught the eye as the lettering here is crisp, clean and visually effective. The closed white unit at the corner of the Shopping Centre was noted to be suffering very badly from graffiti and hopefully new operators will move in to resolve this difficulty. It was noted that the Ballinteer Community School is under going redevelopment. However the entrance\area off the road was poorly presented with grass areas that needed to be cut and kerbing that needed to be repainted. The steel barriers at the entrance to the Staff Car Park needed to be painted and the nearby two disposal units were covered in graffiti. The GAA building stands out as an attractive development where landscaping adds to the overall presentation. The Church of St. John The Evangelist opened in 1973 is of an interesting design given that it is now nearly thirty five years old.

Landscaping:

Good landscaped areas were examined at the main Shopping Centre and the surrounding trees here help to bring some character to the development. Good landscaping of a more general nature was noted along the main roads that surround Ballinteer and create a great impression to the first time visitor. If you are considering developing new landscaped areas do keep the issue of on-going maintenance in mind. Ideally you should consider year-round planting that will look well at any time of the year.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The nearby Marley Park with its 300 acres is a marvelous amenity for Ballinteer and this part of south County Dublin and is an excellent wildlife resource. It is suggested that your Tidy Towns Committee would examine the wildlife potential of Marley Park, and see what you can achieve in terms of making your area even more wildlife friendly. The starting point is to have a habitat survey carried out of the wildlife in this area. Suggested habitats to be considered include the following –

- Urban habitats – gardens, waste ground, walls, graveyards, hedges
- Wetland habitats – rivers, ponds, lakes, canals, reed marsh, bogs
- Woodland habitats – forests, hedgerows, plantations, parks
- Grassland habitats – roadside verges, parks, wet meadows, dry grasslands

The survey should produce a species list for each of the habitats relevant to the area. This need not be an expensive survey. Perhaps there is a knowledgeable person locally who might undertake this task for you. Basically the survey would identify the animals, plants, birds, fish that inhabit your area and their associated habitats. It should be remembered that to carry out the survey properly that it will probably take a year so that all habitats can be assessed at different time of the year. Using the results of the wildlife survey your next step should be to draft a straight forward Plan to preserve the identified habitats in your area, and investigate the possibility of new ones. Ultimately your objective is to encourage the existing wildlife to stay in the Markey Park area and encourage new species to move in. This can only be done by creating an awareness of the feeding and shelter needs of the various species in the area. It is most important to try and involve your local school children in this project, and in many Schools there is probably a teacher who may have an interest in this area who would be willing to get involved. As part of the actions to be undertaken in your Wildlife Plan you might like to consider the provision of some weather proof display panels, illustrating and explaining the wildlife in your area. This has been done very successfully in many towns and villages in Ireland.

Litter Control:

Considering the volumes of traffic that move daily through and in Ballinteer litter control was quite good on the day of adjudication. However much litter was noted on Broadford Road close to the entrance to Chestnut Grove.

Waste Minimisation:

This is a new category in the Tidy Towns Competition first introduced in 2006. The purpose of this new category is to encourage Tidy Towns Committees and the local community to get involved in projects that will reduce waste and encourage recycling. Marks can be gained by Ballinteer for the promotion of best practice. This can include community guidance on methods of reducing waste such as segregating litter during clean up events. The organising of a Workshop on waste minimisation in the Ballinteer area is another initiative that you might consider. This could be held on a waste minimisation community awareness day as part of a series of local initiatives. Your local school or schools should also be involved with their own waste minimisation projects. You could also consider a partnership with local firms and businesses in Ballinteer to encourage them to reduce unnecessary waste. In regard to waste minimisation it is important to remember that quite small actions can sometimes have a significant waste reduction impact. If you do not already have a Bring Bank Centre or if you have one that is not yet properly signposted from the town centre then such initiatives could gain additional marks for your centre in 2008.

Tidiness:

The main problem area under this category was that at the entrance to the Community School and hopefully this will be upgraded as part of the school redevelopment in progress at the time of the visit. Broken glass in the 'Tower' at the Shopping Centre needs to be repaired and graffiti was noted in a number of areas such as at the Community School entrance area. The white flagpoles at the Shopping Centre needed to be repainted and graffiti on some signage was noted around this area.

Residential Areas:

A number of the housing estates in Ballinteer were visited and the standard was a little mixed. For instance much graffiti was noted in Ballinteer Court while in Clonlea the stone faced houses here were enhanced by well presented grass areas. The Ballintyre estate was extremely impressive with excellent landscaping. The iron railings to the roadside are attractive in that it allows the view through to the excellently maintained grass areas inside. The following recommendations are offered by the adjudicator who suggests that the Tidy Towns Committee bring these points to the attention of all estates in Ballinteer.

- Road boundary walls will probably need to be painted twice each year especially on busy roads.
- Gable end walls though sometimes difficult to paint should be painted when the rest of the house is being painted.
- Timber fencing will require treatment at least twice per year.
- All estates should be encouraged to provide entrance name signs and directional signage within the estate.
- Green open space grass areas will need to be cut frequently if a quality presentation is to be achieved. Remember that grass will probably have to be cut back from the top of kerbing by hand. The provision of a few well chosen trees can often transform an open space.
- Areas to the back of estates can sometimes become dumping areas for cut grass and other materials.
- Simple landscaping at individual houses can often be very effective if the proper trees and shrubs are planted.
- By their nature estates can sometimes have litter control problems and this must be addressed by each individual estate in the town.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The main roads in Ballinteer were extremely well presented and the good grass margins and fine mature trees combined with attractive Granite stone walls provided an excellent image of the area. This is indeed one of the strengths of Ballinteer. It was noted along Brehon Field Road that cut grass had not been removed.

General Impression:

Ballinteer is an impressive area and the adjudicator wishes you well with your 2008 projects.