

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballinasloe** Ref: **190**
County: **Galway** Mark: **253**
Category: **E** Date(s):

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	43
The Built Environment	50	34
Landscaping	50	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	24
Litter Control	50	24
Waste Minimisation	20	11
Tidiness	30	12
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	253

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you very much for your impressive application and the accompanying interesting documentation and photographs. It is evident that you have put in a great deal of time and effort in preparing this submission, so thanks once again and well done! Your overall development approach is excellent and it is encouraging to see that you have engaged the support of a great number of agencies and bodies to help you enhance and develop the town. To assist with the adjudication, we would have welcomed a more detailed map with your application, similar to the one in the widow of the Tourist Office (which was closed). For next year remember to include this with you application as it enables the adjudicators to do justice to your work programme and gives them a helping hand!

The Built Environment:

You have a number of impressive old architectural buildings including College House, St. Brigid's Hospital, Garbally College, the Railway Station and the building beside the Bridge over the River Suck. St Michaels Square and St Michaels Church is well presented and we admired the street lighting in this area. The derelict building just before the cemetery entrance on the approach road from Athleague should be addressed. A number of derelict houses are present near St. John Church of Ireland Church at Duggan Avenue. The Church itself enjoys a prominent location in the town and can be viewed from a number of different roads. We are pleased to see that you are renovating the clock tower. A visit to the IDA Ireland Business and Technology Park was rewarding with interesting modern architectural designed buildings and good landscaping. Furthermore the Leisure Centre and the Town Council Offices are worth favourable noting for their presentation. The green flag at Ballinasloe National School was noted.

Landscaping:

This year we liked the Creagh Junction; the trees, shrubs, lighting and seating all combine successfully. We

noted flowers on the wall at the tennis court beside the Bridge over the Suck River and also the extensive tree planting in the Fair Green which we have rewarded you for. We also noted the improved streetscape and landscaping at the Church Hill junction. The Famine Remembrance Garden looked well.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

As you correctly recognise the town contains a rich diversity of habitats associated with the river and its floodplain, wooded areas and greens. The new marina is a great facility allowing access to the town from the Shannon; your friendly ducks at the marina are also a welcome spectacle and followed us on our stroll around. As mentioned in last years report you should consider erecting display boards at Cois na hAbhainn and the Marina illustrating local flora and fauna. In particular we welcome your plans to link a walkway from the marina to Pollboy bog along the old canal towpath and are pleased that you are enlisting the help of experts from NUI Galway to undertake zoology and botany assessments.

Litter Control:

We absolutely loved the statue of the Horse and handler in St. Michaels Square and thought it so apt for the town which is best known for its annual Horse Fair in October. Unfortunately, we have to mention the significant number of alcohol bottles in and around the enclosure visible both on our evening inspection and during our adjudication the following day. Additional bottles were present the next day suggesting anti-social behaviour in this area of the town. In general, litter control is good apart from this black spot.

Waste Minimisation:

Under this category you and your partners have been busy this year – well done. We would welcome more information on the waste programme covering the topics of recycling and composting that was undertaken at the Creagh Training Centre. We are pleased that you recognise the need to work collaboratively with businesses and other organisations in order to manage your waste in a sustainable way. To your advantage we noted a considerable number of recycling facilities in and around the town; these should be used to their maximum potential. We feel that you have potential to score highly in this category as you have good waste management infrastructure in place as a starting point. You now need to keep the momentum up and continue to increase your recycling rates, while moving higher up the waste management hierarchy to minimisation and preventing waste through continued education and awareness programmes.

Tidiness:

Your problems here relate to excessive advertising signage, overhead cables, derelict buildings and poorly maintained laneways. The lanes at Maud Millars and Davitts Place could be improved. We welcome the Chamber of Commerce's initiative to provide hanging baskets to businesses in the town, next year we look forward to seeing these in full bloom.

Residential Areas:

There are a number of excellent residential areas in the town. We liked the lighting and landscaping at the estate across the road from Kilgrave Park and the mature trees in Kilgarve Estates. All residential areas viewed were of a good standard. Those worth commending included: Woodlands, Hawthorne, Ard Mhuire, Meadow Brook, Garbally and Garbally Oaks and the Pines.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach roads to the town are good and many of them are tree lined. The Creagh Junction has been greatly improved both by road improvements and landscaping. We would ask that you treat side and rear entrances with care as they now form an integral part of the adjudication process. The shopping courtyard off Main Street where Curves Gym, Astara Beauty, the Wash Basket etc is located is brightly presented but has potential to be greatly improved, perhaps with surfacing upgrades such as paving and tress landscaping.

General Impression:

The Tidy Towns Committee is working hard to develop the town and we applaud your partnership approach. We recognise that Ballinsloe is a large commercial town but we urge you to encourage businesses in Main Street, Society Street and Dunlo Street to retain traditional shop facades were present and to regularly maintain their properties. Overall you should be pleased with your efforts and we offer you best wishes for the 50th anniversary of the competition next year.