

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Barna** Ref: **1434**
County: **Galway** Mark: **218**
Category: **B** Date(s): **27/07/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	25
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25
Litter Control	50	25
Waste Minimisation	20	5
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	24
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	218

Overall Development Approach:

Barna was entered as part of the drive by SuperValu to work with communities to approve the environmental standards of their areas through participation in the National TidyTowns Competition. Areas were entered on the basis that they fall within the catchment area of the nearest SuperValu store and this 'baseline assessment' is intended to provide a basis on which progress could be made over the coming years through partnership with residents, businesses and local agencies. As such it should not be interpreted as a critique of the area but rather an opportunity for everybody to work together to make their hometown a better place to work, live and visit. As part of SuperValu's strategic approach to sustainable development in the area, a nominal mark has been given to reflect this. Further marks will be awarded in future years where more tangible TidyTowns structures are developed and local environmental plans prepared and implemented.

The Built Environment:

The Built Environment of Barna reflects the massive developments in the town over the past few years. The buildings range from modern design and colour to traditional thatch and encompass some dereliction as at Walshes. The retail centre is most impressive. The SuperValu complex and the Mulberry's complex present a vibrant picture. The buildings are complimented by the landscaping to create a modern, clean image of the twenty first century town. Both the post office and the school need a lift. Other buildings to stand out were Donnelly's for the amount of summer colour and the Twelve Pins. Féachann Teach an Phobail go ríoga. Cúis áthais an úsáid a bhaintear as Gaeilge ar chomharthaí na siopaí, mar shampla 'Cogaslann Bhearna'.

Landscaping:

The landscaping at Mulberrys is first class. Great use is made of the natural rock. Housing estates are also colourful and landscaping in the estates is well catered for. The work at the lights also looks very well. The landscaping of the slope at Mulberrys is most eye-catching. Informal and occasional tubs would help brighten

up approach roads.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It is difficult to comment on this section without a description of the measures your Committee are taking to provide information of wildlife, and what wildlife amenities you provide for your community. Barna is fortunate in having a coastline teeming with wildlife. The many hedges and walls also create habitats. This is a section with great potential for you.

Litter Control:

This is an area that needs a concerted plan of action. There is litter evident. The bins are sporadic. In the estate with the white houses the problem was especially noticed. Very disappointing in a new estate. In your submission for next year detail the measures you take to control litter.

Waste Minimisation:

Without details of ongoing community projects, it was difficult to assess the extent of progress being made under this category and I would look forward to seeing whether progress has in fact been made on future assessments. However taking into account the existing council facilities and SuperValu's own commitment in this area, I believe a nominal mark is appropriate for this year. There are however plenty of ways in which local communities can assist in tackling this growing problem, such as promoting best practice in local businesses and schools, encouraging household composting through local workshops and lobbying for access to appropriate recycling facilities. How this has been achieved in other areas, and indeed many other useful tips, is contained in the Race Against Waste community booklet available from the Tidy Towns Unit in the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Tidiness:

All of the modern town centre had a tidy appearance. Of course where there is construction there will be untidiness. That will pass. Kerbside weeds need to be controlled, an identifiable problem and a challenge for Galway County Council.

Residential Areas:

Barna is fortunate in its many fine private residences. The owners maintain their properties to a high standard and also create fronts full of colour. As a dormitory town there are many new estates. These estates are well laid out, with modern design and ample landscaping. The stone on the walls around Cnoc Fraoigh is echoed in the stone house fronts. As these estates bed in they will add to the splendour of the area.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach road from Spideal has beautiful houses resplendent in summer colour. The maintenance of the road verges is inconsistent. At one point a bin and seat are largely concealed by the grass. The fine wall on the coast road is in need of repair in places. The name sign for Bearna looks well but could be enhanced with landscaping. The road down to the pier has survived demolition but seems to be either awaiting the rock breaker or is in urgent need of maintenance. So also the boithrin down towards the beach needs upkeep. The modern houses are beautiful but the Cox Combs and Buachalláns vie with one another in presenting summer colour. The first glimpse of Barna from Salthill is the handball alley. There is a fine wall but the landscaping presents a poor image.

General Impression:

Barna has made the leap from quiet, rural, Gaeltacht, traditional village to busy, suburban, modern, Breac Gaeltacht town. Despite the relentless summer through traffic, the colour and design of the town centre are endearing. The vestiges of the past create nostalgia. A rare mix.