

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballinamore** Ref: **422**
County: **Leitrim** Mark: **234**
Category: **B** Date(s): **23/06/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	37
The Built Environment	50	34
Landscaping	50	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	23
Litter Control	50	30
Waste Minimisation	20	3
Tidiness	30	13
Residential Areas	40	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	27
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	234

Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator would like to welcome Ballinamore to the 2007 Tidy Towns Competition. Your Entry Form was very detailed and this was of great help to the adjudicator on the day of the visit. The document on the promotion of the Irish Language demonstrates real commitment by Ballinamore to promote the Irish language through the medium of Tidy Towns. Has your Committee entered the new Irish language competition now being run in parallel with the main Tidy Towns Competition? Your submitted photographs were useful as was the detailed map of Ballinamore. The Action Plan was quite detailed but did not have a year indication on it so presumably it refers to 2007. It is suggested that you prepare a 3 Year Plan that will allow you to plan some years ahead for your various projects. Your basic committee of 8 people seems to enjoy good support from the business community and Leitrim County Council. The involvement of the schools in litter picking is a great way of introducing young children to environmental matters.

The Built Environment:

The damaged bridge at the side of the AIB building was noted. Unless the damage is of a serious structural nature can your Committee get permission from the County Council to have repairs carried out since they have been unable to do so to date? Your commitment to the improvement of the presentation of the Sports Hall is commendable. Nearby the Playground is being maintained well. The large well maintained grass areas were admired by the adjudicator. The adjudicator also had a look at the old Convent and indeed it would be a great loss if at least the façade of this building was not preserved; the window detailing here is quite good. The bright red colour of the new Library stands out and this modern building fits well on its corner site on the Main Street. The use of the Irish language on quite a number of the shops in Ballinamore is commendable. Good landscaping was noted at the Valspar property but it is recommended that the steel gates be painted in a bright colour. The Locaboat property was excellently presented in every way from the fine mature landscaping on either side of the sloping entry road to the presentation of the service buildings. At Our Lady of

Fatima the railings by the roadside need to be painted. It was interesting to see the conversion of the old Church in to the Arro premises as it can sometimes be hard to find new uses for such properties. The lettering and colour scheme at the Credit Union building was admired and this makes this building stand out in the streetscape.

Landscaping:

The landscaped area by the bridge at The Basin is an attractive area but some litter here detracted from the overall effect. The Ballinamore sign here needs to be washed. On the Newtowngore approach road the building on the right with the arched areas covered in Ivy is quite attractive. An important focus in Ballinamore is the car park area in front of St. Felins School. Effective landscaping has been carried out here but the adjudicator feels that this area could have more visual impact especially at the end closest to the school. The landscaping at Locaboat has been mentioned elsewhere in this Report but the standard here is high and creates a great first impression of this important enterprise. Good work has been done by your committee in regard to tree replacement and maintenance.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Duck were present on the day of adjudication at The Basin and it is a pity that they are not surviving in larger numbers. It will be interesting to see if next year a project can be developed with the Secondary School. Have you considered asking the school to get involved in a wildlife survey of the Ballinamore area? As you stated in your entry documentation no other projects have been undertaken this year in regard to this adjudication category. The walk by the Canal is being well maintained and this is an enjoyable area.

Litter Control:

With commendable honesty you have pointed out in your documentation that the litter control area is one that is causing problems for your committee. It is noted that the Tidy Towns Committee has adopted the Bring Bank as a special project and also the approach to this facility. At the Bring Bank Centre the proper signage is missing, rubbish was dumped at the side of the units and one of the units was quite dirty. The nearby landscaping did relieve the situation somewhat. If you contact the Tidy Towns Unit the adjudicator though them will be able to let you have some best practice photographs of Bring Bank Centers from around the country that may be of assistance to you. Litter was present at The Basin and in the landscaping at the Genealogy Centre. Nearby litter was also noted on the steps of the Church and by the river bridge. Very bad littering was noted especially at the lower end of Main Street.

Waste Minimisation:

It is great to read that all waste is now recycled and that local businesses are engaging in that process. The adjudicator would like to wish the School well with their Green Flag project and the solar panel project at the boy's School is welcomed. 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 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 your community 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 schools should also be involved with their own waste minimisation projects. The Race Against Waste booklet circulated to all Tidy Towns Committee in 2006 has many ideas on waste reduction that may be of help to your committee.

Tidiness:

There are a large number of projecting signs in Ballinamore that do not look well. Off the Main Street watch out for laneways and narrow openings some of which looked rather untidy on adjudication day. At the bridge the railings would be improved if repainted in matt black. The adjudicator is not in favour of the display of retail goods on the pavement as was noted here. Apart from looking rather untidy such displays can cause major difficulties for people in wheelchairs or the visually disabled. Opposite Arro there is a small building with a sliding steel door that needs to be painted. The issue of real tidiness can only be achieved if all property owners whether private or public come together so that each will do what they need to do to make their own premises and surrounding area as tidy as possible.

Residential Areas:

Quite a bit of litter was noted at Lahard estate. Good landscaping was noted to the front of this estate but some road boundary walls needed to be repainted. At Dun na Bo the very large green area here will need substantial landscaping. The green needed to be cut at Ros Og and weed growth at kerbing is a problem here also. The small cottages beside Hamill's caught their eye as they are attractively presented and some have added landscaping of a suitable scale. Are you keeping a watch on Planning Applications for new housing as suggested by your adjudicator in 2006?

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

On the road in from the Newtowngore side a clutter of advertising signage was noted by the brown Ballinamore sign. Excellent grass verges here give a great welcome to the town. On the road in by the GAA premises some verge maintenance has been done but more regular grass cutting will improve the overall presentation. The Carrick-On-Shannon approach is really well presented and the maintained grass verges extend out quite far from the town centre. The fine tall mature trees of mixed species along this road are beautiful. Some attractive grassy banks were noted on the Ring Road. The street name panels in both Irish and English are warmly welcomed.

General Impression:

Ballinamore is a town with potential in the Tidy Towns Competition. Do prepare the 3 Year Plan as it will help your future work planning. Good luck with all your Tidy Towns projects for 2008.