

# Tidy Towns Competition 2007

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Ballycumber** Ref: **616**  
County: **Offaly** Mark: **226**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **26/06/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	29
The Built Environment	50	27
Landscaping	50	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	21
Litter Control	50	27
Waste Minimisation	20	11
Tidiness	30	14
Residential Areas	40	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	32
General Impression	10	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>226</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Thank you for your comprehensive entry form and accompanying plan. Ballycumber has had a relatively recent drive to improve its village since the reforming of Ballycumber Development Association in 2004. New residents associations only formed in 2007. There is a sense of vibrancy which comes through the well organised plans and aims and objectives included therein, with a positive outlook for the future of the village.

There is a good partnership approach involving the whole community. Ballycumber now included in offaly coco village plans development schedule and the committee inputs into village development plan. 2006 involved in development of a town park, underway on 2 acre site in a larger housing development. This is an exciting development and gives the community the opportunity to ensure the new housing development is in keeping with the style and tradition of the village.

Very pleasant village. Best wishes to all.

### **The Built Environment:**

Some very attractive buildings – Eileens cards and gifts looks well, and the house beside it with the trees in the garden. House across from that good as well, lovely stone wall, lovely grouped planters. Coming up to the post office, side ways down a lane – lovely house with interesting stone feature in centre – possibly water feature or a pond but no water here now. Back lane here clear.

Gussies bar and post office all lovely, well painted, nice shopfronts, totally litter free.. All buildings in town nicely presented. Some plain gardens but neat. Egans shopfront all neat as well, couple hanging baskets. Across from that, area suitable for planting. Theres a half moon shape in the soil so planting maybe planned.

Egans back wall lovely since painting. Across from that the tavern is nice. Bollards could be painted here. Nice table under trees for shelter. This car park has a few bits of litter. Flats at back a bit shabby

Derelicts sites a shame – keep working with owners to improve that. Most houses very well presented – some not so well, but keep working with individuals to support the Tidy Towns efforts. Some railings really badly needing repair.

Outside flynn's is adequate parking. Its clean, adequate – but it could have a bit of colour – maybe some planters down here outside the lounge would be good. There's a good heritage sign here at the green area on ferbane side but almost blends into surrounding greenery. It needs to be cleaned. Hardly can see it from picnic area.

### **Landscaping:**

There is a lovely roundabout at end of sycamore drive, and plantings, nice young trees. Efforts been made to landscape the park on right hand side as you enter, with poles up preparing to put up baskets. Could do with colour there so will look well with basket done

Coming from ferbane side, very attractive grass area, with trees and kates well and picnic area. The young trees here will look lovely when mature. Signage good to say where funding comes from, pity the sign is fading a bit. This is a lovely area and I'd say it would encourage people to stop here.

Nice groupings of planters in centre, and the half moon shape bedding prepared for replanting. Raising this is a good idea

Why are there poles at back of pilgrim? Should there be a sign here? Pilgrim area very well maintained

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The riverside walk is a good amenity to have, with room for improvement, as is planned by the committee. The new benches and picnic tables with shelters and seating areas are good. There is opportunity for nature information panels and this is in the plan. As mentioned, the area has a litter problem despite the presence of a bin so perhaps more regular monitoring here. The plantings are overgrown and there is potential for some colour. Plantings to take into account year round interest, food producing shrubs for wildlife. Get some local expertise advice and consider a survey. The pathway is kept clear. If developed properly this riverside could be in line for a future award so good luck with it.

### **Litter Control:**

The village was totally clean and litter free with the couple of exceptions, one being the area by the riverside. Unfortunately there was quite a lot of litter down there. The other place with a litter problem is in the residential area previously mentioned.

At the pilgrim area, it was totally litter free and that could be a litter spot. It looked well so well done. The regular clean-ups involving all sectors of community are paying off. Keep up the vigilance in this area.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

Well done to Boher National School on their success in the Green Schools programme. This is a marvellous environmental education and action programme which makes environmental management part of the daily running of the school. Involving the wider community is a good way to spread message of waste reduction, reuse and recycling. Further strengthen partnership here to develop more community projects

It is good that the businesses accept materials from the community for recycling

The recycling bins at Sycamore Drive look very presentable with attractive wooden surrounds. Clean and litter free at time of visit.

### **Tidiness:**

The village is overall very tidy, but what is repeatedly noticed is the state of the street furniture. Some street furniture such as benches are in need of maintenance work. One across from Gavins can be pointed out, and the litter bin right beside it is too close. Could it be moved along a bit? The benches at Twickenham have also

seen better days but would be very smart with a new paint job. The bollards in the village should be painted also.

The car park at Gavins is very nicely kept and litter free with some excellent private gardens here.

Do the old petrol pumps need to be there? There's a very old sign saying diesel, but they don't look like they're in use. If not, and its too difficult to have removed, consider painting them brightly and make into a feature.

The laneway in Twickenham needs some work to be flattened out or resurfaced – it is untidy with some large items like washing machine down the end. Down the end of the other street sine temporary railings would be better to have something more permanent there.

There's an old sign outside garvins which isn't in use – I wonder is there a planned use for it. Maybe should be used for something or taken down as its there remains of an electric sign

### **Residential Areas:**

Twickenham, some work is in progress. With the newly formed residents association getting active, this area will improve. The houses are mostly well presented, and there are good trees separating them from the road. Hanging baskets could be filled out more as not much in them. There's work in progress here on the kerbing and infilling pathways/ grass verges as red tape up. There is a problem with litter unfortunately and there's quite a bit of it strewn around in hedges. There is room for improvement, especially broken paths, so keep up the work to support this residents association.

Sycamore drive is presentable with nice trees at entrance and well maintained recycling area. Some paths need resurfacing. Continued efforts by residents here will yield results. There were a few hardworking volunteers out planting and setting up hanging baskets at time of visit.

### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

There are some really lovely signs on entrances from all approaches. They are bilingual, about the meeting of 3 rivers, and a credit to all involved in this project.

The approach from Ferbane is very attractive with landscaping and picnic area at that end

All approaches clean and clear with signs clearly visible

### **General Impression:**

Ballycumber is a pleasant village with some fine features. There is an energy and vigour to the committees plans which bode well for the future. There are good partnerships working well and a strong community spirit.