

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballymote** Ref: **746**
County: **Sligo** Mark: **217**
Category: **C** Date(s): **30/06/2007**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	35
The Built Environment	50	39
Landscaping	50	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	23
Litter Control	50	21
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	10
Residential Areas	40	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	17
General Impression	10	6
TOTAL MARK	400	217

Overall Development Approach:

Your ten-year development plan seems sensible and achievable. The adjudicator was pleased that you had provided updates to show where you stand in relation to your planned work. Your maps were, unfortunately, not as useful as they could have been, on the day. In a town of Ballymote's size it is important that you highlight clearly the position of any nominations you have for special awards and indicate street names plainly, neither of which was the case with the 2 maps supplied! Your strong relationship with Sligo County Council and an Taisce is to your credit. Do you find that you have sufficient numbers on your committee? It seems quite small for a town of Ballymote's size.

The Built Environment:

Colaiste Mhuire was bright and cheerful, as was the adjacent recently extended National School, although the gates and railings to the latter were in bad order, as they were last year. Also referred to last year (and indeed noted when the adjudicator last visited Ballymote a number of years ago) was the marvellous old cinema building - an unusual and unique example of its kind - which would be marvellous if restored! The Church of Ireland looked well in its prominent location, as did the Catholic Church. The adjacent award-winning railway station was as well maintained as ever, both to its car park area and platforms. The Garda Station was fine but the Post Office should be repainted before next year. The shopfronts of the town were generally well cared for, of note being Gormley's Corner House, Cryan's, Tighe's and the Ballymote Pharmacy. Hayden's is a marvellous traditional shopfront, as is Dwyer's. The latter commendably still retains its traditional sash windows above, but would benefit from a fresh coat of paint to its shopfront. Patrick Rogers modern shopfront was admired. Some staining was noted to the façade of the Lord Edward. Loftus Hall was in need of a fresh coat of paint, as was the peach coloured building which houses the Ballymote Snooker Club. The Abbey Pastoral Centre was well presented. The Coach House Hotel and Ballymote Community Enterprise Centre both looked well, although the low boundary wall to the rear of the latter was in need of a fresh coat of paint.

Landscaping:

The landscaping of the station car park, associated park area and town park beyond were as well maintained and luxuriant as ever. The concrete link tunnel appeared a little neglected and would need repainting before next year's competition. The area incorporating the bandstand, mini-train and monument seemed to be new since the adjudicator last visited Ballymote. This adjudicator would be inclined to agree with the comments made by last year's judge regarding the contrast between the presentation of this area and that of the rest of the town! Have you plans for furthering these areas? The area in the vicinity of the Courthouse looked very well, with attractive new landscaping. Marvellous planting was noted to a bank on the Sligo Road with lavender planting and stone monoliths. Timber tubs with planting were noted and admired on the Sligo Road. We were pleased to hear of the great celebrations surrounding the new monument to Brigadier Corcoran.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The conservation of an area in the town park in order to encourage wildlife is a marvellous initiative. Your work with Conservation Volunteers Ireland in order to plan a strategy to attract more wildlife to this area is commendable.

Litter Control:

The standard of litter control on the day was quite reasonable for a town of Ballymote's size. However, a light scattering was evident along main streets of the town and more at the car park of the Train Station, which was unfortunate.

Waste Minimisation:

We were pleased to note that Corran College had achieved Green Flag status and look forward to the other schools of the town achieving an equally high level. We wish you luck in your negotiations with the County Council regarding a more frequent collection at the bottle banks. The Bring Centre was, unfortunately, in a poor state on the day, with evidence of severe dumping - including ones which had been intended for the Spring Clean, to judge by the signage on the bags! We were pleased to hear that so many local residents are composting on a regular basis, the composting leaflets supplied by the County Council are obviously paying off! The provision of a battery collection is commendable.

Tidiness:

Weeds were noted at the base of stone boundary walling on the Boyle Road, and at the junction with the main street of the town. More weeds were evident on the Sligo approach to the town. There are many areas in the town which look quite neglected, including that which leads to Castlebaldwin, where there was evidence of a severe weed control problem. The Fire Station was in very bad order and badly needed a coat of paint.

Residential Areas:

The boundary walls of some houses along the Drumfin Road were in need of a fresh coat of paint. There are many new housing estates being constructed throughout the town. We note your aspirations to ensure that these are finished to the highest of standards and would recommend that you concentrate on developing a high level of landscaping. This really makes all the difference in new housing developments. Hillview Drive and the Millrace were admired. The stone walling looked well but additional tree planting would be marvellous. Keenahan Crescent was also admired. Splendid hanging baskets were noted to a house on the Sligo Road. Good landscaping with plenty of tree planting, hedging and stone walling was spotted to a housing estate on this road - the signage read Stone Park Developments but no estate nameplate was evident. The encouragement of local residents to participate in a local Tidy Towns Competition is a good initiative and one which has proven results throughout the country.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The road surfaces throughout the town and along approach roads were rather rough and need to be resurfaced. Signage - both directional and nameplates, appeared neglected and in need of a wash down. The new bi-lingual welcome signage was admired, however. On the Drumfin approach, verges and banks appeared rather rough in appearance on this long lead into the town. On the Boyle Road signage was also neglected - possibly due to the amount of building work taking place. Directional signage at the main streets and the Boyle Road was also in bad condition, as were some in the centre of the town and in the vicinity of the Catholic Church. New footpaths were noted on the Sligo Road. We were pleased to note your plans in relation to the development of approach roads as these are the first impression a visitor has of the town and therefore vitally important.

General Impression:

The overall impression given by Ballymote is one of inconsistency in standard. There is obviously a high level

of commitment amongst the community but there needs to be a more cohesive approach to the presentation of the town.