

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Balscadden** Ref: **169**
County: **Dublin(Fingal)** Mark: **224**
Category: **A** Date(s):

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	28
The Built Environment	50	29
Landscaping	50	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	17
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	13
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	27
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	224

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the 2008 TidyTowns competition. Thank you for your application and for your detailed plan and work program. We are pleased to see you involve children in your TidyTowns activities.

The Built Environment:

The McCormacks Hotel is a very traditional and attractive building. The area around here was quite well presented. However, flower pots were all dead which was a pity as the hotel was in very good keep otherwise. The beer garden opposite the hotel was a fantastic place to sit. However there was some litter, but it was early in the morning, so hopefully this will be cleaned up later in the day. The church doors looked very appealing, so well done on this new addition. There was some overgrowth in the drive that should ideally be removed. The graveyard was well kept and lovely flowers were planted in the area. Well done on your work re-pointing the bridge. It is looks well and is a great asset to the town.

Landscaping:

There were some lovely plantings in the square next to the recycling area and also in the area diagonally opposite. The plantings opposite McCormacks pub were very appealing. The graveyard near the community hall was well kept and the grass well looked after, although some weeds were growing on the path. The school featured attractive landscaping and the screen around the oil tank is very effective. The school features a well designed chain link fence and the building is attractively painted and generally looking good. The farmer's flowers incorporating the old stones is a unique and interesting idea. The old water pump was well maintained and the stone wall opposite the pump has been maintained to a high standard.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It was great to see bird boxes at the community centre. You may be interested in looking at the Heritage in Schools programme to develop further ideas under this category involving school children. This scheme is a collaborative programme funded by the Heritage Council and administered by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO). A recognised heritage specialist visits the school and topics can cover everything from organic gardening to creating a wildlife environment. Further information can be located at the Heritage Council website (heritagecouncil.ie). ENFO also produce colouring sheets, teachers aids and activity sheets on sea life, wildflowers and birds. Guidelines for creating a Biodiversity Action Plans are available on the Notice Nature website. Your community could also be involved in National Events such as Heritage Week and Biodiversity week. These events would provide a lot of ideas to increase the work undertaken in this category.

Litter Control:

There was some litter in the beer garden as referred to above. The bins in the town were all well maintained and it was good to see a cigarette receptacle at McCormacks. There was little or no litter outside of the hotel or in any of the residential areas

Waste Minimisation:

As mentioned above, the recycling point was generally well maintained other than the small incidence of dumping. There is scope to develop a number of new activities under this category and garner additional points.

Race against Waste (raceagainstwaste.com) provides information for developing a waste strategy in your community. A booklet on this would also have been previously included in your application pack and is still available from the Tidy Towns Unit. There are suggestions for residents as well as ideas to assist businesses in reducing their waste, such as "Waste Minimization Clubs" to learn from each other and share resources. The Green Schools is another programme which offers an important opportunity for students in your area not only to learn about environmental issues such as litter, energy, water and travel but also allows the students to take ownership of these issues themselves and create plans on how to improve these areas within the school and the wider community.

Tidiness:

Overall Balscadden conveyed a sense of tidiness except for the few items mentioned throughout the report. Also, while the recycling area was quite clean, there was evidence of dumping with boxes being left behind by users. When the stone walls have been cleared back this will improve the area and provide a pleasant walk up the school.

Residential Areas:

All residences were clean and tidy and it was great to see a new development incorporating natural stone into its design.

Have you considered holding "Best Garden" or similar types of awards to assist your community to work towards your overall TidyTowns objectives. Such initiatives are used by many TidyTowns groups throughout the country as they allow members of the community to focus on a small task of personal concern to themselves, thereby attracting interest from those who mightn't have the time to assist in overall efforts?

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The entry stone to the town was beautifully created from black stone with gold writing with name in English & in Irish. There was a well presented foot path all the way from the entry sign. All roads were in good keep in the area. The entry sign opposite the community centre also has lovely bright flowers an attractive design and the path up to the school was very well kept and neat.

General Impression:

Balscadden is a delightful little village with only one prominent building, McCormacks. It is being well maintained demonstrating strong pride of place and active community spirit. We hope that this brief assessment, read in conjunction with previous reports, will provide some more ideas on how TidyTowns activities could be expanded and Balscadden earn even more marks under the competition. Every best wishes in your future endeavours.