

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Blanchardstown** Ref: **365**
County: **Dublin(Fingal)** Mark: **240**
Category: **H** Date(s): **08/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	31
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	21
Litter Control	50	28
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	29
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	240

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the 2008 TidyTowns competition and thank you for your entry form - we are pleased to hear that you are finding the process more user friendly. Thank you also for copies of the Blanchardstown TidyTowns news, and a copy of 'Dublin 15 and Beyond' by Cecil Coyne. This project was a unique way to document local history and the ink drawings are very effective illustrations.

We noted the difficulties you are facing in trying to tackle issues in an area as large as Blanchardstown, and it can be very frustrating when others do not deliver as hoped. In such circumstances, all we can do is encourage you to keep trying and remember the great progress you have made already. In urban areas the challenges can be matched by the opportunities of having so much potential backing, and we have pointed out a few ideas that you might wish to take on board to broaden support for your activities. The most important thing is to keep going as, whether its always obvious or not, you do have the support and best wishes of so many in your community and Blanchardstown is benefitting hugely from your work.

The Built Environment:

The Brace Youth Centre was well presented on the day of adjudication as was The Vineyard. The Garda Station looks was well painted and we understand you are encouraging landscaping here. The Hospital grounds were neat, tidy and well landscaped. The exception to this is the small building on the entrance to the hospital. This building is covered in graffiti and is an eyesore. Could this be building be developed for another purpose?

The Blanchardstown Centre is well landscaped and the area was very tidy. Traffic was heavy in this area but it did seem to keep moving. The Bell is an a very distinct and unique building. Clonsilla Road Business Park is very professionally designed and the landscaping was immaculate. The 12 Lock Bar and Restaurant was

looking good in its lovely picturesque setting, far removed from the busy main street of Blanchardstown. The pump restoration has been a great undertaking, but ideally now the surrounding area should also be improved.

Landscaping:

Well done on your efforts for erecting signs for the Tolka Park. It occurred to us that as well as seeking funding from local businesses, why not get together with the school and hold a fete or similar in the park to raise the funds? It would get people to enjoy the park as an amenity while also attracting additional funding. The trees in the village shopping area are very attractive and the landscaping past the Superquinn carpark was extremely well presented. In fact, throughout Blanchardstown there are very good examples of interesting and well maintained landscaping adding colour and greenery to the area.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Tolka River Environmental Alliance is a good partnership your committee has become involved in. The Tolka Valley Linear Park is going to be a wonderful urban sanctuary and the best part is that so many members of the community were involved in creating it. Well done on this achievement. On the day of adjudication getting into the park was not possible as all the gates appeared locked and several were tried. Further points will be awarded on this project as it progresses.

Have you considered getting involved in National Events such as Heritage Week and Biodiversity week? These events would provide a great opportunity to garner local support as well as assist with your overall objectives under this category. The Notice Nature web-site also provides some great ideas, such as creating a Biodiversity Action Plan. Another programme that may be of interest is the Heritage in Schools initiative, a collaborative programme funded by the Heritage Council and administered by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO).

Litter Control:

Overall litter control was quite good considering the size of the area and the amount of through-traffic. Well done on your efforts to encourage businesses to add receptacles to their premises. The Bring Bank in the Superquinn car park was very tidy. The main street area had a good amount of bins and it was pleasing to see they all had cigarette dispensers. No bins were overflowing or too full.

However, First Active Bank had a lot of cigarette butts outside which could be reduced if a cigarette receptacle was introduced here. The receipt bin on the wall at Permanent TSB was also overflowing with ATM receipts. Many ATMs now default to not giving a receipt unless specifically requested so this was disappointing to see.

Waste Minimisation:

We are pleased to hear that you promote the principles 'reduce, recycle and reuse' in the area. There is however still scope to develop further specific activities under this category, such as creating community compost initiatives, working with local businesses etc. You didn't mention whether your schools take part in the Green Schools programme - we're sure many do and their activities can garner additional marks under this category. The Race Against Waste initiative (raceagainstwaste.com) provides information for developing a broad waste strategy in your community. A booklet would have been included in your application pack a few years back and there are further copies available from the TidyTowns Unit. As a large urban area, Blanchardstown has the capacity to do really well in this category.

Tidiness:

Well done on your ongoing monitoring for illegal posting of bills and we acknowledge your letter to your litter warden regarding advertising material on lamps and bins and we wish you the very best in your endeavours. Your graffiti removal session looked very successful as very little graffiti noticed in the main street area, although there was an issue with graffiti on the entrance to the Hospital and some areas under the overpass. Of some concern is the Bring Bank on the slip road to Superquinn next to the Greyhound Inn with the bins marked 'bottle bin for pub use only' - there was a lot of plastic old chairs, bottles, etc. in this area. If this area is part of the inn, ideally it should be closed off.

Residential Areas:

Residential areas were looking good on the day of adjudication. In particular, the New Waterville Estate is an appealing development located in a prime position to enjoy the parkland. This area was landscaped and presented to a high standard. It appears that further development is underway in this area. Glenaulin Drive was well kept and tidy as was the Verdemont residential development. Well done on your work with residents of Mary Brennan Park to tidy up the area and remove the weeds. The new development opposite the 12th Loch is extremely appealing and fits into the natural surrounds very well.

Looking forward, have you considered setting up “Best Street”, “Best Garden” or “Tidiest Estate” competitions in Blanchardstown to further your objectives under this category. These have worked very successfully in other towns in broadening the TidyTowns support base.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Generally roads in Blanchardstown were in good condition. The main street area features attractive pavement stones which add to the appeal of the area. The new route from the roundabout to the Hospital will be a good feature once completed. However, there were weeds on the footpath in the street next to the National Irish Bank we couldn't locate road signs after the Abrakebabra store.

General Impression:

The challenge facing the TidyTowns group in Blanchardstown is fully appreciated and you have done great work to date in maintaining and improving the standard of the area, for which your community should be very grateful. Your work in the wildlife and natural amenity category is particularly excellent and we certainly look forward to hearing more about these projects as they come to fruition. Best of luck in your future endeavours.