

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballinasloe** Ref: **190**
County: **Galway** Mark: **259**
Category: **E** Date(s): **26/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	43
The Built Environment	50	35
Landscaping	50	40
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25
Litter Control	50	24
Waste Minimisation	20	13
Tidiness	30	12
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	259

Overall Development Approach:

Your adjudicator would like to welcome Ballinasloe to the 2008 TidyTowns Competition. Thank you for the most comprehensive documentation submitted with your entry and the excellent town map. The adjudicator was very interested in the concept of the Partnership Forum and believes that this is an excellent way of approaching TidyTowns. The 2008 TidyTowns action programme was studied and you have undertaken a major work programme for this year. We look forward to having the 5 Year Plan available for the 2009 adjudication. The adjudicator recommends however that this Plan be structured along the lines of the ten adjudication categories with a section of your Plan indicating by category the projects planned for each year. Do remember that the TidyTowns Handbook gives great information and suggestions. Both new Committees and those who have been involved in the competition for some time will find this booklet really useful.

The Built Environment:

The regeneration programme for Society Street the key east / west core of the town is commended as this street has some fine stone buildings of quality and character. The idea of standardised colour schemes for railings mentioned in your 2008 Plan is welcomed as this gives a great sense of visual coordination. For this year much work has been done on the replacement of footpaths, railings, litter bins together with a new pedestrian crossing and some road resurfacing. The new blue railings were much admired at key road junctions. The fine Limestone building of the Railway Station was admired as was the excellent presentation of the platform and associated public areas. Good stone walls caught the eye at the modern Leisure Centre. The external condition of the plastered section of St. Brigids Hospital was extremely poor and total repainting is needed here. Not too far away at Creagh the HSE Training Centre was superbly presented and the two colour paint scheme was really eye catching. The fine four storey Bank of Ireland Limestone building is characteristic of Ballinasloe while The Duck Inn has used a very strong colour scheme that appealed to this adjudicator. One of the interesting things about the built environment in Ballinasloe is the architectural

contrasts and the Bruce Betting building is a modern architectural essay in glass and Limestone cladding. The former bank building now occupied by The Pillar house, another Limestone building was attractively presented with a fine stone archway to the side. What is the future of the old Presbyterian Church?

Landscaping:

The Famine Park is a beautiful but poignant area with excellent landscaping that is well maintained. Excellent landscaping was also admired at the Marina where the grass was beautifully cut and the total area presented to an excellent standard. The steel sculpture of the Heron here dominates and is most eye catching. Ballinasloe has many examples of good landscaping at the area at the road junction leading to the Graveyard on the Roscommon road is another great example. St Michael's Square has been attractively presented using a combination of hard and soft landscaping that is most effective. The view down the Square from the horse and man sculpture at the top is impressive. The flower baskets and window boxes enjoyed in many parts of the core of Ballinasloe were colourful and added much to the streetscape. A smaller landscaped area at the bottom of Church Hill uses an area that otherwise could have been a litter trap. Finally excellent landscaping featured on the road to the Town Council Offices.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Survey for the proposed Canal Walk project made really interesting reading for this adjudicator. It appears that this project will offer a number of inter-related projects of key biodiversity interest. The Fair Green area is so large and what an excellent amenity it is for Ballinasloe. However some of the grass here had been cut but not taken away.

Litter Control:

The provision of the Litter Helpline was a brave but excellent initiative and the adjudicator admired your strategic approach to litter control in Ballinasloe. The Civic Amenity site and the Bring Centers visited were well presented and thus encourages maximum public usage. However at the Marina Bring Centre it is recommended that all the units be based on a slightly raised area. The Poster Campaign helps to get your litter message across and the adjudicator agrees fully with you that the approach to litter control must be community orientated rather than Local Authority or organisational based. The Litter Task Force is another of your great initiatives. On adjudication day litter control in Ballinasloe was quite good for a town of its size but litter was evident on St. Michael's Square and on Main Street. Litter was also evident in a number of the laneways off the main streets.

Waste Minimisation:

The work with the Ballinasloe Schools in regard to this category is most important. How has the brown bin Pilot Scheme with the 1,200 bins worked out? Hopefully this will be set to continue for the future. You have been most active in your attendance at information evenings in regard to waste minimisation and associated topics and this is a great way of developing your annual initiatives programme.

Tidiness:

The adjudicator liked your five headings for action under your tidiness programme and your work with the Gum machine seemed to be producing the required results. At The Mart the long road boundary wall needed to be painted and the area opposite the St. Brendan's housing estate was quite untidy. Another road boundary wall noted at Melody's Food would benefit from repainting. In St. Michael's Square the seats here needed to be treated and a few rusty litter bins were also evident. There are quite a number of projecting signs in Ballinasloe and perhaps the Town Council can evolve a support programme to have some of these replaced with more visually acceptable media. Along Main Street some pavement advertising was noted and this should be discouraged. It can also cause problems for the disabled. It was in some of the laneways off the streets that the greatest tidiness problem was noted. Some walls needed to be painted, grass and weed growth removed and in some cases litter was also a problem in these narrow lanes. The narrow stream or canal running below the Town Council Offices needed some cleaning of the retaining stone banks.

Residential Areas:

The Residential Check-List is an excellent idea and presumably you have circulated it to every house in your area. At Ashfield the mature trees were admired though some kerb weeds were noted and the hanging baskets at St. Brendan's were much admired. The raised central grass area at Galbally Oaks gave some additional visual character to this well kept estate, apart from the graffiti on the ESB Sub-Station.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The main approach roads to Ballinasloe were well presented and the Limestone walls provide a great back drop for good approach road landscaping. Your concept on an approach road Manager is a new one for this adjudicator but a welcome development for Ballinasloe. The cul-de-sac leading to the old Ballinasloe

Equestrian Centre was extremely poorly presented and an abandoned Playground was noted along here also. Much litter was noted here also. This road really needs some serious attention.

General Impression:

It was a pleasure for your adjudicator to visit Ballinasloe for the first time. You have adopted a well structured approach to TidyTowns that is showing good results on the ground. Good luck with your TidyTowns projects for 2009 when we look forward to visiting you again.