

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballycanew** Ref: **143**
County: **Wexford** Mark: **263**
Category: **B** Date(s): **05/07/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	46
The Built Environment	50	32
Landscaping	50	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	28
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	20
Residential Areas	40	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	28
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	263

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the completed application form and the excellent 3 year plan from 2008 onwards, the attached map was helpful identifying areas of the village and its surrounds.

It is important to recognise that the plan is a follow on from the previous one which ended last year.

It was this adjudicator's first time to visit Ballycanew and take time out and explore the area.

The village has done well in the competition over the years and the efforts of the TidyTowns Committee are complemented by the local community who have endeavoured to put the best side Ballycanew to the forefront at all times.

Your relationship with the local authority has brought benefits and it is good to note also that you have developed strong links with the local school.

The Built Environment:

The standard of both presentation and maintenance of premises in the built environment was very good; the encouragement that you give to local property owners to keep premises up to standard is paying off.

Like other similar sized villages you do have some problems with dereliction and this can be a frustrating issue and indeed a sensitive one in small communities.

One has to remember that TidyTowns committees are voluntary and have no powers to act, all you can do is encourage.

It is a pity to see a traditional low roofed old farmhouse type premises such as the one on the Gorey outskirts in poor repair, I wonder if the owner could be prevailed upon to improve it somewhat by painting the exterior and the boundary wall.

The first thing noticeable about the village was the clear view of the street scape with no unsightly wires to be seen.

The commercial premises in the village were presented to a good standard even though one or two could have had tidier curtilages.
The RC Church, with the two unusual gates pillars painted in contrasting colours, was in very good condition. The nearby Community Hall also was very well presented having just been painted and adorned with excellent hanging baskets.
Pecirval's is a well run business that has made provision for customers with physical disabilities and well done for doing so.
The School and grounds were well maintained but the boundary fence should be painted pre the start of the next school term.
The Ramble Inn is a good example of a village pub that ones associates with rural villages nice, clean and well presented frontage with ample side area for parking.
The owners of the adjoining house, which may have been a shop at one period of its existence, deserve credit also for the manner in which they have presented their property.
There are a number of other examples of well maintained private homesteads in the core of the village who have responded to the encouragement offered by the committee, so well done to all.
Glanbia has an extensive hardware and garden centre on the outskirts and one has to compliment the local management for having the front yard in such a tidy condition, not easy when one is engaged in this type of business.

Landscaping:

The start of your work outlined in the 3 year plan was noted in some of the areas that you identify, you have not rested on your laurels as the standard of public and private landscaping as top class.
For instance the trees planted at the school side as one exits to Gorey were well staked and protected and thankfully not subjected to vandalism.
This is type of use of trees that is most effective for villages like Ballycanew, one could argue that the use of trees in the core area would enhance the village more but one a personal note I think that it would take away from the expansive streetscape and one would not be able to appreciate the built environment as much.
Many individuals' premises had exquisite hanging baskets and planters in place such as O Connors and Bootlaces Bar.
This type of planting was complemented by the excellent individual gardens that one observed traversing the village and its outskirts.
You have also succeeded in invigorating areas that otherwise would look dull, the colourful flower bed at the unoccupied building at the Gorey/The Harrow Ferns Junction is an example.
I could address all the aspects of an excellent programme that you have in place but this concise overall report does not allow.
Suffice to say that the standard has been even improved upon from other years and an increase in marks is merited.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The work undertaken and outlined for the future in your submission is at the very core of what this category is all about.
One does not have to indulge in major projects to a worthwhile wildlife and natural amenities programme.
The mix of activities such as maintaining the existing wildlife sign on the river, which was observed by the adjudicator are major contributors to the promotion of wildlife in the area.
The work that you have undertaken with the local school is exemplary and will very much help with the advancing of the green school programme.
It might be opportune at this stage of your 3 year plan to make contact with the local wild life ranger or equivalent in Wexford County Council to come and give you some direction in relation the formal requirements for the preservation and conservation of wildlife.

Litter Control:

Despite the nation wide campaign to combat litter it still proves to be problematic for most villages and towns. Ballycanew has an advantage in that the village has a relatively small area to be patrolled, that said it's not without a few potential black spots.
There were one or two spots where litter was observed but the committee has put in place a very practical action programme to tackle litter and this seems to be paying off very well.
Do keep the message of anti litter to the forefront in the excellent manner that you have done to date.

Waste Minimisation:

There is a very comprehensive and proactive programme in place to help the community embrace the concept

of Race Against Waste.

The promotion of a healthy eating programme is novel in that it has a two fold mission of promotion of wellness as well the added bonus of reducing litter.

What you have put in place as the overall waste minimisation programme is an example to other communities who found it hard to come to grips with objectives of this category when it became part of the competition some years back.

Well done for some very innovative and creative actions that will prove to very beneficial to the community in the years ahead.

Tidiness:

The standard in this category was quite good as the village looked very orderly on what was a bright week end morning.

There are areas that in a limited way could take away from the visual impact but some prudent camouflaging or other enhancement measures have been put in place especially around Papa Rhodes which commands a prominent position in the Village.

The former pub across the way, a legacy of the Jack Charlton era methinks, could be improved if the owner is willing to do so!

The problem of fly posting was not as prevalent in the village as in other places so well done to the business people in question.

The village does not suffer from the overhead wire syndrome which is a big plus factor.

The recycling receptacles were well maintained and weed growth was not bad considering the "summer" weather that the country is experiencing.

Residential Areas:

One was impressed with standard of upkeep in both older housing developments and the newer ones that have sprung up when our friend the Celtic Tiger was around.

Ounavarra Park offered the visitor the opportunity to see how a local authority housing development can be presented when all the residents put the effort in.

Properties were well maintained, green areas were enhanced with nice landscaping touches and the positioning of bird boxes or feeders.

The children were catered for by the provision of a play area that caters for sport as well as fun games.

Millfield, Village Gate, and Ballycanew Court, all at different stages of maturity, were kept well and contribute very much to the good impression that one gets of Ballycanew.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The entrances in to the village were very acceptable, good road surfaces, verges and hedgerows treated as per recommended guidelines.

Name signs were visible and clean and other signage was of a similar standard.

The idea to change to low maintenance ground covering plants is a good one as maintaining of annual flower beds at outlying areas can be tedious and time consuming

General Impression:

For a first time visitor to the village of Ballycanew one is impressed by its visual attractiveness, admittedly it was one of a few fine mornings even in the sunny south east.

Local people have put in a major effort in presenting properties to a very high standard.

The committee is very proactive in planning ahead and more importantly these plans are practical and achievable.

You are wished well for the future.