

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballybofey-Stranorlar** Ref: **640**
County: **Donegal** Mark: **253**
Category: **D** Date(s): **21/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	36
The Built Environment	50	31
Landscaping	50	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	36
Litter Control	50	28
Waste Minimisation	20	12
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	28
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	253

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for your entry into this year's TidyTowns Competition. Thank you very much for your very fully completed application. Your plan appears solid and focussed. Well done. Are there really no events on an annual basis in the town? Your application indicates good co-operation with a number of groups. Breaking up tasks into months and per workforce will help.

The Built Environment:

The difficulties of buildings that are empty or are in transition is acknowledged and these are found in almost every town. Many towns conduct a project whereby contact is made with owners and with permission, interim 're-decoration' is undertaken which can conceal dereliction and improve the overall look of the streets where empty buildings are common. A 'whip around' for unwanted paints is often held and this allows the project to be cost effective and has the added benefit of using up unwanted (and often hazardous) materials. Many towns have been most creative with this. Why not contact another TidyTowns group for advice or ideas with this?

Attention is needed on several occupied buildings in terms of upkeep of guttering and chimneys. The HSE premises looked poor. The AIB building needs to be painted. Dunnion's looked good. Many of the premises on Glenfin Street looked very well. O'Connor's Bakery and McKelvey's Bar looked great. Jackson's Hotel also looked very well. Roseville House (B&B) looked great. The Bank of Ireland building needs urgent attention. Cedar House looked good and Butt Hall is a super building. Is the old Ritz still in use? The (RC) church is a wonderful building. Scoil Muire looked great. A fresh coat of paint and a Green Flag too! This is an excellent sensory garden. Finn Valley College looks good and the grounds are immaculate. Kees Hotel is a lovely building and the frontage is well kept. The new HSE centre looked well. The hospital gardens are very nice but the building might be repainted.

Landscaping:

The wooden tubs and flowers looked great. The planters at the Villa Rose are lovely. The street trees look great. The 'Matrimony' sculpture, adjacent trees, flower beds and planters all look great and this is in toto a good symbol of unity. Well done. Both the soccer and GAA fields are in good condition and the track here was in common use for exercise. The clock tower at the bridge is lovely. St. Columba's College could do with some landscaping work. Sean McCumhaill Park is well kept but again could benefit from some landscaping work. The hanging baskets look very well.

In response to your comment on unfair resources available to larger towns: it is true that greater resources may often be available. These tend to be, however, directly related to the scale of the tasks to be taken on by these towns and often to the challenges attendant upon areas of higher population, such as anti-social behaviour and transitory communities.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Well done to both yourselves and Coillte for the creation and maintenance of such a resource as Drumboe Woods. Your plan to create a brochure and disseminate this to schools is very good indeed. The river is a great natural resource and famous as a fishery. Why is there no information anywhere on this?

Litter Control:

Some litter was seen. Most of this was in the centre of Ballbofey and some of this was old. Well done on the Sunday morning clean ups and on the annual event. More awareness work on this aspect of your project may be helpful. Last year's adjudicator made some good suggestions per involving businesses; these are encouraged.

Waste Minimisation:

It is good that the recycling facilities are being used. However, waste minimisation is about more than recycling which is a treatment of waste rather than a reduction of same. Look at projects such as the promotion of household or community composting. You must work with local businesses on this. Bring a bag to shop schemes, use of paper instead of plastic, refilling containers are all examples of what you might do.

Tidiness:

There are several areas of broken pavement (e.g. Navenny Street). Graffiti seems to be an ongoing issue. The old Stranorlar Railway Station sign should be redone. It is a heritage feature. The display of goods on the pavement is a tradition as you point out and done properly, need not be untidy at all but add to the colour of the street.

Residential Areas:

Well done for your work with the Residents' Associations. This is important. Last year's adjudicator suggested a range of initiatives such as competitions for best estates, gardens etc. these are usually highly effective and are strongly encouraged.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Weeds are an issue in some back lanes and alleys. Rubbish was seen stacked at College Court. It was noted that some businesses are making a great effort. The Gallery Bar deserves particular praise in this regard. Lifford Road was very leafy and was litter-free. The bridge looked great. The approach to the town was reasonably good from the two main roads.

General Impression:

Well done on the results of your work for the last year. There are many examples of where this has paid dividends. Some of the day-to-day issues such as litter control and weeding do need to be addressed. This is a very pleasant town to walk around and the natural amenities at its doorstep should not be under appreciated. It is suggested that you contact Donegal's environmental awareness officer for ideas on waste minimisation and work with them on this. They might be able to assist you with the awareness-raising required to make such initiatives work. You are wished every success with your ongoing work.

