

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Broadford** Ref: **359**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **275**
Category: **B** Date(s): **11/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	38
The Built Environment	50	38
Landscaping	50	42
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25
Litter Control	50	33
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	22
Residential Areas	40	30
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	275

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you so much for your 3 year plan submitted along with this year's application. It is very encouraging to see that the suggestions of previous adjudicators have been taken on board and included in the "Broadford Social and Economic Community Action Plan 2009-2011". The incorporation of consultations of many individuals, community groups, statutory agencies, voluntary service providers and business people over a year long process has undoubtedly contributed to gaining marks in this years competition, and in setting a way forward to build on results in the years to come. The plan gives a clear picture of what Broadford TidyTowns is trying to achieve year by year and how each project will be approached. As you propose to conduct an annual review of progress in implementation of the plan, please do submit these reviews with future applications. It would be useful to also set out indicative costs for each project, and an indication of the potential lead partner who will champion the projects.

Well done on getting the media coverage for the Tractor Run and in raising funds this way. Thank you for sharing the article with us, it looks like a fun day was had by all! Thanks also for the helpful maps.

There is undoubtedly a strong community presence in this charming village, and it is unfortunate that some of the outstanding challenges are dependent on bodies outside of the immediate local community. I wish you well in continued efforts with the County Council and Bus Eireann to upgrade the bus stop.

It is noted that people chip in with keeping their places looking well, even if not on the committee.

The Built Environment:

This lovely, linear, village, has high standards of buildings throughout. The church as the central focus is in immaculate condition as are the grounds, and the parish centre opposite. The school is bright and well cared

for, with the tower adding character and much interest especially with its elegant new clock. The buildings opposite the pub have been cleaned up and painted with colours consistent with the rest of the village. The stone sign at the recycling end is in place and will look well when text is engraved like the others. The research on the graveyard is very interesting and it was fascinating to read about the Nangle family history and links with Garrisker house. I wonder how this information has been distributed to the community? It is a good idea to focus on a different aspect of local history to research every year.

The substation is very well presented. There is a good entrance at Garrisker with good entrance pillars.

Landscaping:

The new timber trellises, archways and bench were admired and having a local craftsman able to produce such works is an asset. They are lovely and suit the setting. Timber archways also at the recycling area picnic site are attractive, as is the giant sportsman! The works underway around the Garden Centre when finished should improve the overall appearance of this area, but in the meantime care should be taken that the storage of gravel and stone along the picnic area does not cause damage to the existing wall. Piles of gravel were seen to be spilling through gaps in the wall onto the picnic area and it would be a shame to detract from this otherwise delightful area.

All roadside verges were tidy and well presented, interspersed with shrubbery in natural stone edged beds. The planting was of year round interest. The timber bench in Tobar Coill makes for a relaxing, attractive rest spot.

It is noted that the concrete posts along the Eco Park are due to be replaced by timber in 2010.

The area near the village graveyard, beside the Parish Centre, needs some general maintenance attention for weeding and benches, however, it appears much improved as there was no sign of problems mentioned in previous report.

The Mill Pond is lovely, with its well maintained grassy area and stream with native bankside vegetation playing a valuable part as a wildlife corridor. It looked like some bulbs had been dug up from around the stone. The bollards here were neat and freshly painted.

The sturdy timber fence at the paddock opposite the school formed a lovely sight with its mature native trees and horses grazing on this fine summer's day.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Eco Park is wonderful. It was a pleasure to ramble through the trees. I noted the 'Fox's Path' signposted trail. It would be really good to have some interpretative panels here to promote and celebrate biodiversity and educate on what wildlife makes this area its home. As set out in your plan, some work is needed on finding out about the local wildlife and promoting it in some way. It was good to see some dead wood left lying in the woods as this is important micro habitat for invertebrates and microorganisms that are important base level of food chain for birds and other animals.

The other area identified with potential for improvement in this section is the rushes/ marshy area near the bridge. This would be an important habitat for nesting birds and invertebrates and it would be interesting to see proposals for this. I'm not sure what is meant exactly by the 'Eco-Audit' that is mentioned as having to be postponed because the company was not available. (Was this in relation to the Green-Schools programme, or more of a Habitat Survey?) In the interim, have the Heritage Council website and Enfo general biodiversity leaflets, as well as the Irish Wildlife Trust and local colleges been consulted for info? It might be a good project for say students of Maynooth University looking at environmental science/ conservation/ biology. It may be possible to move on this aspect of your work without having to employ professionals.

Good luck in making progress with this aspect of your work as it will be a way to gain points in this section.

Litter Control:

The on-going efforts of the weekly litter patrols are having effect as there was no litter visible on day of adjudication, and all litter bins were well placed and it would seem, regularly serviced. The cage litter bins at the church entrance are of unobtrusive design, which is appropriate in the setting. The recycling area was very well presented, apart from the sign which is still bent. The planting to soften the concrete slabs is to be commended as an excellent practical approach. This shows how the committee can take on board comments of the adjudicators and apply them in a way that's appropriate in a local context. Its impressive how the Bring Centres are enhanced and embraced by incorporating them into a picnic area with benches and good parking.

If the village does not already register with the National Spring Clean, it should do so as a way to promote action and awareness in litter management.

Although not open at time of visit, the burger van would seem to be a litter black spot and one which needs on-going monitoring. There was some litter in the vicinity and a light weight, open top bin. If the committee has not already done so, the agreement of the operator should be sought in making sure a clean-up is conducted at close of day, and the lightweight bin removed. There are sturdy ones close by in the picnic area that would be better for overnight containment of litter.

Waste Minimisation:

Well done for getting a handle on the figures and types of waste produced – this can go a long way in raising awareness and encouraging positive behavioural change. These results should be circulated throughout the community if not already done, perhaps in conjunction with schools projects or parish newsletter. Promotion of your successes and further links with the school would be good in this regard.

In the Action Plan, waste exchange days and promotion of packaging regulations is noted, and evidence of any such projects carried out should be submitted with next years application to gain marks. A focus on people's shopping habits would be a good way to reduce packaging at source, and also to increase the use of long-life durable products over disposables. In any Tidy Towns meetings or community workshops, the waste minimisation message should also be put into practice by outlawing disposables, and using environmentally friendly, sustainable products.

There was no Green Flag noticed on the school – are they registered with An Taisce and working towards the Green Flag award? Perhaps they have it already and it was just taken down for the summer. There is a section for 'Informing and Involving the Wider Community' in the Green Schools programme which presents opportunities to naturally build on existing links with the Tidy Towns volunteers.

Tidiness:

Generally the village is very tidy, with good traffic management, ample parking and no obtrusive signage.

It is noted that you're finding it frustrating to upgrade the bus shelter, keep it up and I hope your persistence will pay off. It was a shame to see the sign opposite the church had been defaced. Graffiti is noted as an on-going challenge as are your efforts in tackling this.

There were noticeable improvements in this area since last year, however, the site that stands out as still needing screened is the farm supplies business at the bus stop. The Broadford depot has been screened by fence and hedge to the front and side. If possible, it would be good to also screen the back which exposes the yard when leaving the village towards the main Dublin – Galway road.

Garden lifestyle centre is screened by a wall to the front, but is let down by the random bricks strewn around and weeds at base of wall. This should be improved as part of the resurfacing works underway.

Residential Areas:

All residential areas were well presented and tidy. Millrace lawns has nice gardens and communal spaces, and private houses have well cared for entrances.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach from the south meets the charming mill pond, with its attractive stone wall and green area interspersed with planted shrubs. The mature native trees are a great asset on this approach. There is a large private residence wall which would benefit from painting. The approach from Dublin-Galway road direction is also attractive, at first dominated by the bridge over the motorway, and then drawn in past the old graveyard towards the village.

General Impression:

Broadford is a lovely, well cared for village, with evidence of a strong community spirit. There are no major problems to overcome, and all that is needed to do has been set out in the plan. The areas which need to be addressed are well known and highlighted in the report above. There is no doubt that with continued commitment to rolling out the plan you will continue to gain marks in the competition. Good luck!

