

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Galbally** Ref: **452**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **286**
Category: **B** Date(s): **12/06/2009**
27/07/2009

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	45
The Built Environment	50	38
Landscaping	50	37
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	26
Litter Control	50	38
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	21
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	37
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	286

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome Galbally to the Tidy Towns Competition for 2009. Thank you for submitting your completed entry form setting out the 2009 elements of the Five Year Action Plan entitled "Working for a Brighter Future in Galbally in the years to 2013". Also thank you for sketch design for Wall of Fame, which is now completed and located at Priests Cross. Your committee of 12 members, holding monthly meetings year round with additional meetings as necessary, deserves great credit for all the proactive work, the benefits of which are clearly visible in the village of less than 1,000 population. Your hard work has resulted in very worthwhile partnerships with and in gaining the support of Limerick County Council, Ballyhoura Development, FAS, ESB, Telecom, local Councillors and TDs. The use of monthly meetings, church newsletters and the local press to communicate with the broader community are very appropriate methods. It is encouraging that your School Principal is also involved with the Tidy Towns Committee, as this provides a vital link and role model for the children of the community. It is heartening to see that the Tidy Towns Competition serves as a catalyst for the generation of a high interest in the village to maintain it to a high standard. The various festivals in which Galbally is involved also are a very positive feature of Tidy Towns activities.

The Built Environment:

Set in the heart of the Galtee Mountains, in the picturesque area that bounds Tipperary, Limerick and Cork, Galbally is a beautiful picturesque village with a population of less than 1,000. One of the dominant features of Galbally is the very impressive village square. Much local life seems to centre around here. The centre of the square is dominant by a mix of residential and commercial premises and fine two and three storey buildings. Several attractive shop fronts include W.Wallace, O'Neill's Newsagents, Quik Pick shop, and The Abbey Bar. In the centre of the square is a memorial to the War of Independence, which is nicely adorned with roses in full summer bloom. It captures the history of Galbally in times past.

The National School is found on the outskirts of the town and is, in the main, nicely maintained, clean and tidy, with pretty floral displays in half barrels outside the school wall. The presence of 15 or so silver birch trees inside the school wall adds to the attractiveness of the school complex. Litter bins were in evidence, and were clean. The exterior railings and perhaps the boundary wall could do with painting.

The Health Centre was also in good shape, as was the church, with pleasant planting in tubs and half barrels.

The sports grounds of Galbally GAA and Galbally Rugby Clubs were in excellent condition and litter free. The grounds of Galbally AFC further out from town also looked well. The numerous club members involved in the administration and management of these excellent facilities deserve credit. Both sporting facilities are located in a beautiful picturesque setting with the magnificent Galtee mountains as a backdrop. It is appropriate that the memorial, 'Wall of Fame' to your sporting heroes, which was unveiled in September 2008, is located at this part of Galbally, close to the sports grounds. This is an excellent tribute to local sports people, with the central focus on James J. Fahey, "The Irish Kangaroo". Amazing that Jim Fahey was almost 40 years of age when he broke a world record for the three standing jumps in Chicago in 1923.

The Church and Grotto were enhanced by neatly landscaped grounds and the car park, with planted containers and bench seating of a good standard.

Landscaping:

Landscaping on approach roads was of a high standard. In the Village Square, the triangular stone flowerbeds contained very appropriate bedding plants and were very eye catching. There is also some nice standard hanging baskets on black painted posts at the corners of the square, with the numerous standard trees on the square's perimeter, provide a nice border to the square, offsetting the heavy 21st century traffic. Planting of flowers at the base of these trees was appropriately set off with annual flowers. Many individual houses and residences have been decorated with nice hanging baskets and potted flowers also.

Mature deciduous trees, in the field opposite the church, were a fine feature of the area, as are the nice tubs and planting in the church car park

The inviting picnic areas near Moor Abbey were ideal spots to pause and reflect on the historic Abbey, the grounds of which were well laid out and clean, and litter free.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

There are 3 information panels for the benefit of the visitor in the centre of the square, highlighting "The Ballyhoura Way," "Driving Routes", and the newest of these, "Stories on times Past" on the history of the village of Galbally itself. Also in evidence was the Bronze Plaque commemorating the village as the National Tidy Towns Winner 1994.

On the edges of Galbally, another information panel covers the Sli an Beara Brifne Way.

Moor Abbey, found along the Beara Way, is a historic attraction beautifully situated in the sylvan setting on the road to Lisvarrinane. This popular site is in excellent condition, with an immaculate picnic area, picnic tables, clean litter bins and trimmed green.

Litter Control:

The "Litter Free Area" and "Scoop the Poop" signs were obviously working, as there was no litter of any kind in evidence on the day of our visit.

Your annual spring clean and regular contact with the Environment Officer of the County Council are very worthwhile initiatives. The team have done good work in keeping litter under control. The village had a good supply of litter bins of mixed styles and these were coping well with the volume of litter.

Waste Minimisation:

The 5 clothes banks and 5 bottle banks on the Tipperary side of the town are in excellent condition, brightly coloured, with no littering in evidence, and nicely camouflaged by a wall with some shrubberies to soften it. Obviously, all those responsible, including FAS staff, are very efficient in the recycling process, credit to all.

Tidiness:

The absence of overhead cables, in particular in the village square is a positive feature, and it is only on seeing some overhead cables on adjoining streets that you appreciate the difference.

As another example of tidiness, seven townhouses for sale on the edge of the town were completely litter free on the day of the visit. It is good to see that in times of economic downturn.

Your strategy of writing to sport clubs requesting them to maintain their properties is proving successful. Sports grounds in the area were very well presented. The Ballyhoura Way and Driving Routes display boards were well presented in the Square.

Residential Areas:

The village square is the natural centre and focus of Galbally, and the terraced residences (and the commercial mix) are well laid out and present a nice image. Some are in need of renovation. Galbally possesses a good range of traditional and new houses and most were very well presented. Aherlow Close displayed some attractive planting and hanging baskets, but some property window frames needed to be varnished. Riverside View houses were well painted with neat gardens; Galtee View houses were well presented. The derelict house, currently being renovated, still presents a negative image.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach roads on the Tipperary side were clean and well maintained, with well trimmed grass margins, and weed free footpaths and nice stone walls. With the spectacular Galtee Mountains in the background, the approach to the village is quite impressive.

Nice stone walls and well cut back hedgerows, and ditches make the approach roads on Beara side very pleasant, as is the case on all approach roads.

Some of the older road signs could do with being touched up.

General Impression:

Our visit to Galbally was most enjoyable, the village square presents, in general, an inviting welcome with nice layout of buildings, absence of overhead cables, nice flower displays, some impressive trees, and the majestic backdrop of the mountains. Galbally is a lovely location and the residents and wider community are taking an obvious pride in the village. Success in the Tidy Towns results from hard work and attention to detail. We wish you well in future plans and in your work to ensure Galbally has a brighter future.

Second Round Adjudication:

It was a number of years since this adjudicator had the pleasure of visiting Galbally and it was reassuring to see that, as a former winner of the competition, the town's high standards were still being maintained. Approach roads are an attractive introduction to the town, well maintained with the magnificent backdrops of the mountains behind. The Tipperary approach was particularly admired, with its overhanging trees, and well cut ditches. The mural on the outbuilding along this road was admired, although the roof should be repainted before next year's competition. The attractive and colourful window boxes, and hanging baskets throughout created a cheerful impression. The public and commercial properties of the town were generally fresh and well presented. John Scanlon's and Mulvey's are attractive traditional shopfronts, and unusual traditional plasterwork was admired throughout the town. The modern recessed frontages of houses, opposite the playing field, were admired on the Limerick road. Do discourage advertising hoardings, as they can give approach roads a rather cluttered appearance. The modern church was admired and the Post Office was quite fresh. Some of the signage on the Glen of Aherlow road appeared a little flaky. The Square looked well in its pivotal location, with its floral displays at the monument and attractive lime trees.