

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Old Pallas - Pallasgreen** Ref: **1996**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **220**
Category: **B** Date(s): **15/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	28
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	18
Litter Control	50	30
Waste Minimisation	20	7
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	5
TOTAL MARK	400	220

Overall Development Approach:

A warm welcome to the twin village(s) of Old Pallas/Pallasgreen to the TidyTowns National Competition 2009. It is always good to see new entrants joining the Competition and we wish you many years of success in TidyTowns. Thank you for submitting your completed entry form, together with your sketch map, on behalf of the residents of Pallasgreen, a twin village of less than 1,000 population. Your committee of 8-10 members, holding quarterly meetings per annum, has achieved some progress in the village. It is encouraging that a 3 to 5 Year Plan has been commissioned for the Village by Ballyhoura Development Ltd, with input from an external consultant, as part of the TidyTowns initiative undertaken for East Limerick. You need to maximise the potential of the plan and buy into the planning process as much as possible. The development of a strategy and structure for your committee will help set the necessary targets for the benefit of your community over the next three to five years. A plan for three years for 2010-2012 is probably an appropriate timescale, as it's more difficult to set five year targets, particularly in the current economic climate. Regardless of timescale, no plan will be set in stone and a review process will be part of planning.

Your engagement with the local school at Barna and the Green Flag are positive. The use of public meetings is an appropriate method to make the community aware of TidyTowns activities. Also Church newsletters and the local press are worthwhile methods to communicate with the broader community.

The Built Environment:

The village of Old Pallas is made up of a combination of residential and commercial buildings. At the heart of the village is the Dairygold Co-op Stores, an indication of the importance of the agricultural industry to the area. While the Co-op itself is a large and busy shop, the building is untidy in places, with graffiti on side walls and fire escape doors for example.

A very impressive two-storey residential townhouse is found at the junction in front of the Co-op and adds greatly to the feel of the village. This white washed stone building has neatly kept ivy growing on its front walls, and is truly a relic of times past. Powers Pub is a lovely, well maintained premise with white coloured walls and some nice hanging baskets with summer floral displays.

On the Dromkeen Road, there are some very nice individual bungalows and two storey homes. These modern buildings are well kept, with nice landscaping visible from the roadside.

Some dilapidated buildings take from the attractiveness of the built environment. Opposite the Co-op, next to the garage on the Dromkeen Road, there is an incomplete building that appears to have been that way for some time, and is now a derelict site. This site is now a real eyesore, with graffiti and overgrown weeds everywhere.

A short drive brings us to Pallasgreen. Some nice cottages are seen approaching the town from Old Pallas, and there are many nice individual houses throughout. The main village centre is on the Tipperary Road. Here, there are some nice commercial premises, such as The Red Deer, The Chaser, and E. O'Dwyer Pubs, and John Harty Family Butchers. The apparently new St.Ailbe's Credit Union is another attractive building in the town. On the right hand side, approaching from the Limerick side, the Topaz/Centra Garage and Shop deserve a mention for its neat appearance.

On the Tipperary side of the town, St.Anthony's Nursing Home, set in front of the ruins of an old castle, is another nice, well kept building on the village outskirts.

The Garda Station on the Doon Road is in good condition also. The Mulcair Inn is in poor condition and seems closed.

One very prominent building is the old police barracks in Pallasgreen; this is now an eyesore, but could be an opportunity for some innovative development; a difficult task in current economic climate. A topic for discussion in the preparation of your action plan for TidyTowns activities. One wonderful facility with great potential is the present village park at the side of the Credit Union complex. This is currently in need of better maintenance. However, the memorial to the athlete Paddy Ryan is a great tribute to a wonderful Olympic champion. Maybe this could be further highlighted by the use of spotlights, if possible? The memorial inscription needs some cleaning also. One other recommendation is the removal of overhead cables from the village, as this would greatly improve the overall streetscape.

Landscaping:

At the edge of Old Pallas, some nice planted flower beds can be found on the roadside. In front of the Old Townhouse previously mentioned, next to the entrance to the house, is a fantastic bed of roses in full bloom, with a well kept stone border. At the junction on the road to Pallasgreen is another flower bed, well kept and pleasing to the eye. Many individual houses have well kept landscaped gardens also, such as those on the Dromkeen road, as previously discussed.

In Pallasgreen, we found a mixture of different standard landscaped areas. The three pubs mentioned above, all had pretty flowers on display, offering a wonderful display of colour. Approaching the town from the Tipperary side, there are nice standard trees on both sides of the road and some colourful tubs of flowers, but the surrounding grass margins need cutting, particularly those on the Doon side of the road.

The area in and around St.Anthony's Nursing Home was well landscaped as well, but the grass around the Special Olympics Sign just in front has become long and overgrown.

The Park next to the Credit Union has great potential, which unfortunately is currently being unfulfilled. 3 flower beds bordered with wooden railway sleepers are completely overgrown, the lawns in the park have long grass and are untidy, and some monuments at the rear have been knocked and not maintained. This is a great pity.

A nice linear park is found in front of the Graveyard on the Limerick side of the town. With 6 tubs of flowers, 3 painted white benches, and flowerbeds at the edges of this park, it offers a nice retreat on a busy roadside. In the graveyard itself, the grass needed cutting however.

The wall in front of the Topaz petrol station was planted with nice shrubbery also.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

A wildlife Habitat survey of the villages could be undertaken as part of your plan, also a wildlife management plan could be prepared. You might consider organising a survey of existing wildlife in the area to establish their requirements, so that an appropriate range of trees and shrubs can be provided within your plans. The survey could be an ideal project to involve the local schoolchildren, under the guidance of their teacher or a local wildlife enthusiast.

Your Entry Form mentioned a Jack Ryan project for wildlife for birds and bees etc. However, there were no further details and no evidence of such a project on the ground.

There is need for the erection of some further information panels for the benefit of the visitor; the only one visible was the Driving Routes of County Limerick.

Litter Control:

On the day of our visit to Old Pallas and Pallasgreen, there was some litter in evidence in both villages, despite the presence of litter bins. However, on the overall the village was mainly free of litter. The work of FAS workers is paying dividends. An annual spring clean day and regular contact with the Environmental Officer of the County Council are initiatives that would be worthwhile.

Waste Minimisation:

At the GAA clubhouse, the 4 clothes banks and 7 bottle banks on the Pallasgreen side of the village are in good condition. It is good to note that Barna School has the Green Flag. Also positive to see plans for committee members to attend workshops on the topic with Ballyhoura.

Tidiness:

The removal of overhead cables, in particular in the main street of the village is a feature which would be positive and should be included as a target in your plan. While traffic was busy, in particular in Pallasgreen, there seemed no major traffic disruption in the village. Some graffiti was visible on the walls of the Co-Op and the derelict building opposite. An old abandoned car near the Co-Op was not attractive. Pallasgreen was nice and tidy in particular the areas near the commercial premises and private residences. The public amenity areas of the park in Pallasgreen needed a clean-up.

Sports grounds in the area were very well presented. Some Election Posters were still visible.

Residential Areas:

Old Pallas and Pallasgreen possess a good range of traditional and new houses and most were very well presented. In Old Pallas, the wonderful townhouse and farmyard area looked so impressive. Powers pub and residence was also in excellent condition. On the Dromkeen road, there are some lovely residences. The road to Pallasgreen is a lovely drive with beautiful views of the surrounding countryside, trimmed hedges and mature trees provide a backdrop for some nice residences. The entrance to Pallasgreen has some nice residential schemes including Canon Lee Park. The grassed area here needs maintenance.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

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

All approaches to the village were in reasonable condition, but the grass margins required trimming

General Impression:

Old Pallas and Pallasgreen are unusual in that the entry to Tidy Towns Competition represents a twin village location. There is much scope for improvement and development of new and improved projects. Well done on all the work undertaken to date. Your proposed plan will be a very important exercise both to set aims, objectives, targets for the twin villages and for liaison with potential partners in the task of the improvement of Old Pallas and Pallasgreen for the benefit of its residents and visitors alike. The best of luck with your task. We look forward to further visits to this lovely area of Co. Limerick.