

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballina** Ref: **766**
County: **Mayo** Mark: **251**
Category: **F** Date(s):

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	45
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	31
Litter Control	50	24
Waste Minimisation	20	12
Tidiness	30	13
Residential Areas	40	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	29
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	251

Overall Development Approach:

Ballina Tidy Towns Committee is welcomed to the 2009 Competition. It would appear to be a small committee given the size of the town. It was pleasing to hear that you meet regularly with Mayo County Council and the local Town Council to discuss your work. You would also appear to have a good relationship with FAS and local businesses and organisations. Your work with local schools is also commendable. It was reassuring to hear that you have found such positive and realistic results from your participation in the competition over the years.

The Built Environment:

There have been many developments in this category of the competition, as witnessed by your supplementary material submitted with your application. The new pedestrian suspension bridge is an exciting and innovative development which will have an impact on your important fishing industry. The Ice Hotel has provided a wonderful new facility to the town and this extends to its external treatment with car parking and landscaping, to the wonderful riverside area. The Post Office is a fine building of its type and style, and the adjudicator read with delight that its current condition was due to your lobbying, it is an important building in a prominent location. The provision of grants for shopfront renewals is excellent news also. Shopfronts are an important part of ensuring streetscapes look at their best. The AIB and Bank of Ireland were both in good condition. The new Civic Offices building was well presented, in stone and terracotta render. Do discourage plastic signage and encourage its replacement with signs of a more traditional timber variety. The Design Guidelines are an excellent idea which other towns would be well worth following. The cast iron detail to the Moy Hotel is unusual and attractive. Discourage plastic signage and encourage their replacement with ones of a more traditional timber variety. McCaine's Pharmacy is a charming shopfront, as is Garvey's with its unusual use of glass blocks. The modern Garda Station looked well, as did the district hospital and grounds. The streets generally looked well cared for, shops on Tone Street being particularly admired.

Landscaping:

The large Tom Ruane Park alongside the river is a marvellous facility and it was been well used on the day, especially its playground area. It was as well maintained as ever and is situated in a marvellous location. The mature trees and statue of Our Lady outside were well presented, also. The two amenity parks will be excellent supplements to the existing facilities. Plans for the roundabouts, riverside walk and Urban Landscape at St Michael's Church were all read of with interest and will be excellent contributions to the town. The photographs included in your submission show clearly how well your various projects work throughout the year.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your efforts in this category of the competition have been excellent over the years and this year is no exception. The Brusna River Island habitat is a marvellous initiative. The various other projects such as the Wood Sanctuary and the Bishops field wildlife Sanctuary are all interesting and well worthwhile ones. The Belleek Heritage Trail sounds very interesting also. We look forward to your future projects, such as the wildlife panels and preservation of trees and hedgerows.

Litter Control:

The standard in this category was quite good on the day, given the size of the town of Ballina. There were a few problem areas - such as along streetsides, outside the District Hospital, on the Crossmolina Road and in front of the Civic Offices. Your projects in this category were read of with interest. The award you received for your work at St Patrick's Well is commendable. We were pleased to hear of the fact that you have two designated litter wardens. The reintroduction of the hand-cart sounds like a good idea. The Big Belly Street Bin sounds very unusual and effective! Daily clean ups by FAS workers must be very helpful with your work. The L Factor Litter Awareness Initiative also sounded like an unusual and fun idea. Quite a litter problem was apparent at the riverside in the vicinity of the new bridge.

Waste Minimisation:

The figures relating to the usage of the Civic Amenity Site at Rathrooen were very interesting and it's remarkable to see that its usage has expanded six - fold in the same number of years. The provision of an additional four bring banks is all to the good. The planned project relating to the waste minimisation competition between schools sounds very interesting.

Tidiness:

Work in relation to derelict sites is vital in a town of Ballina's size. Advertising hoardings are a distinct problem along approach roads and give them a rather cluttered appearance, and so we read of your Blitz on Signage with interest. The Blitz on Graffiti is also well worthwhile. Don't forget outbuildings when considering overall appearance. A tin roof on the Sligo Road could be repainted before next year's competition. The information signage outside the Tom Ruane Park was in need of attention. Weeds were apparent to some gutters along Pearse Street. An empty site on Lord Edward Street and Teeling Street looked somewhat neglected.

Residential Areas:

Funding from the Town Council for housing estate improvements is an excellent initiative, as is the amenity grant scheme. We were pleased to hear of the success of Spires Housing Estate in the Mayo County Council competition-congratulations to those concerned. Your residential areas competition is an excellent initiative. The housing estate at Bothar na gCuige looked fine on the day, although its open space could be improved by adding to the tree planting. Individual houses further in the Sligo Road, with their mix of pebbledash and smooth render to their facades, looked well. The colourful houses on the Crossmolina Road looked well, one in particular with attractive garden filled with lupins. A most unusual house with stained glass windows was admired on Nally Street.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Ongoing works under this category of the competition were read of with interest. The roundabout proposals sound particularly effective in making an impact and welcome to visitors. The Sligo Road was reasonable on the day but, as mentioned elsewhere in this report, the large numbers of advertising hoardings give a cluttered appearance to its appearance. The footpaths and tree planting in the vicinity of Connaught Gold DIY and Garden Centre were greatly admired.

General Impression:

It was a pleasure to revisit Ballina after a number of years. Your hard work is evidently paying dividends.

