

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Belcarra** Ref: **508**  
County: **Mayo** Mark: **263**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **12/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	44
The Built Environment	50	31
Landscaping	50	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	28
Litter Control	50	31
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	14
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	34
General Impression	10	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>263</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Belcarra Tidy Towns Committee is welcomed to the 2009 Competition. You have been participating in the competition for many years now and that brings a wealth of experience to the competition. Many thanks for your submission, which was very useful on the day. Photographs gave a very clear idea of where you had concentrated your work and where improvements had been made. The Village Design Statement from the NBA is a particularly useful document. You work closely with local organisations such as Belcarra Community Council and Belcarra Community Co-Op etc. Mayo County Council and the Rural Social Scheme also provide valuable support. We were pleased to hear of your annual school's competition, particularly as this year's theme is wildlife.

### **The Built Environment:**

The standard in this category was good on the day. Stone facing to a wall was ready to be constructed on the day, on the Castlebar Road. There was a large building at this end of the village that had a "to let" sign on it (the old dance hall?). The national school was very fresh, with an attractive dry stone wall to the front and planted bed outside. Cuffe Car Sales was in good condition, as was Moran's Family Butchers, although a building opposite looked quite neglected. Hennigan's is an attractive shopfront which should be restored to its former glory. Flukie's Cosy Lounge and Bar was in good condition but Curley's could be repainted before next year's competition. Cunningham's Foodstore was quite fresh and sported colourful window boxes. The Post Office looked well. The community centre appeared a little stained, but the stone church and its associated car park, and landscaping are maturing well.

### **Landscaping:**

The various flower beds and landscaped spaces throughout the village were admired and were pleased to hear that you had received funding from Mayo County Council for landscaping, and used this for your work,

including the new seating etc. The grassy bank above a retaining wall was well maintained in the centre of the village. The various planted tubs throughout make a cheerful impression, particularly in front of the low stone wall, in front of the tennis courts. The village pump was simply presented with a whitewashed wall surrounding it.

#### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

This is an area of the competition that you obviously enjoy. We were pleased to hear that the annual school's competition revolves around the theme of wildlife this year. The riverside walk to the eviction cottage has developed well over the years and we were delighted to see the provision of a bridge to complete the route. The erection of additional information boards is good, as are the laminated information leaflets. The butterfly and mini beast garden is a wonderful addition to the village! We were pleased to hear of the investment in insect boxes.

#### **Litter Control:**

We were pleased to hear that all in the village keep a daily vigil on litter. Presumably, you participate in the National Spring Clean and Mayo County Council's litter league? No mention is made in your application and you left this section of the form blank. Litter control on the day was good, with only a minor outbreak spotted on the Balla Road near the Church.

#### **Waste Minimisation:**

There appeared to be no recycling area in the village. You mention in your submission that you hope to have one in place for next year. Do you recycle the litter you pick and use a recycling area in a nearby town? Have you looked at the idea of composting your cuttings from your work or promoting composting in the local community? Does the school take part in the Green Schools Programme?

#### **Tidiness:**

The village was generally well cared for on the day. One problem area is a site in the centre of the village with hoardings around it, which is in a prominent location at the crossroads. An abandoned house had been boarded up on the Ballyglass Road. Messy yard areas in the vicinity of the graveyard, leading up to the heritage cottage, should be screened from public view.

#### **Residential Areas:**

The houses in the village centre and along approach roads were generally well cared for. Gardens were particularly impressive and that opposite the planted tubs on the Ballyglass side of the village was greatly admired, as was a square bungalow with roses around the door and timber colonnade. That with peony roses and lupins in the centre of the village looked most cheerful. The new terrace of houses on the Ballyglass side of Main Street are quite appropriate to the character of the village, the scale and use of materials fit in very well with a traditional Irish village. Cois na hAbhainn was a well maintained estate.

#### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Approach roads were generally well cared for on the day. The Castlebar Road looked good with well cut verges and attractive stone walling. The trees in this location are maturing well. The grass verges on the Ballyglass road were in good condition, with attractive stone planted beds and floral displays at the nameplate, on this side of the village. The dished planter with baby pansies was particularly admired. The speed limit sign was a little faded and grubby on this side of the village.

#### **General Impression:**

It was many years since this adjudicator had had the pleasure of visiting Belcarra and it was delightful to discover it still remains charming, and its residents continue to make a real effort to ensure it retains its character and looks at its very best!