

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballycanew** Ref: **143**
County: **Wexford** Mark: **274**
Category: **B** Date(s): **03/07/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	46
The Built Environment	50	34
Landscaping	50	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	31
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	22
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	28
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	274

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the Tidy Towns Programme for 2009 and thank you for the Completed Entry Form and your excellent Three Year Plan. This is a model of focused thinking, suitable scheduling of attainable objectives and gives clear evidence of the backing you enjoy from the community and local agencies.

In a village of this nature, especially those on a busy through road, it is beneficial to strive for a clear cut start point – a definite dividing line between the village itself and the surrounding, rural countryside. This can be difficult to achieve on the Dublin Road as there is not any natural almost 'self-selecting' start point. Using a combination of the village name plate jointly with traffic calming speed limit signs, coupled with suitable cutting of the verge and hedges will often help in this regard.

The Built Environment:

Ramble Inn caught the eye as did the Boot Laces Bar with the splendid little boots. The Church of Ireland is enhanced by the improvements to the roof and part painting. Hopefully over time the remaining sides will receive similar treatment. The curved road dividing wall was quite a feature with bird boxes, planting, and seats in the centre and was in general bright, colourful and inviting. The Catholic Church was newly painted and the Presbytery beside it was neat and orderly with the Ballycanew Parish Hall in the former school (1901) also looking well.

Landscaping:

The trees on the small traffic island at the school are excellent as is the well cut grass in this area. Incidental small areas have been cleverly used for planting and the results; collectively add to the overall scene.

Ballycanew Holiday Park entrance area was colourful and well presented.

The river development amenity area is a real gem. Congratulations to those involved in its concepts and in its ongoing maintenance. The fine old stone bridge sets off the lush grasses while the hard landscaping on the village side gave exciting contact with the rushing water, bird and wild life of the area. The example of the herringbone stone wall construction is of special interest. It is not clear if the segmented flower bed is aliened on a cardinal point basis. If it is, add the traditional N to signify north. In its ten years this amenity has been improved gradually but to excellent effect. Two of the welcome seats now need to have their timbers repaired. The 'lazy man's entrance' direct from the bridge should be built up and the correct entrance suitably indicated.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The information panels at the river amenity areas are very well drawn and packed with information about the birds and wildlife of the area. Unfortunately they have attracted the unwanted attention of a graffiti vandal who has disfigured them somewhat. The grass in this area is suitably cut and also retained close to the river where ample shelter remains to encourage insect life, so the vital food chain is undisturbed and birds will continue to be attracted to the site.

There is a delightful perfusion of bird boxes in Ounavarra Park where the grassed areas and fine planting all support the necessary food chain to attract birds.

Litter Control:

Ample and suitably designed litter bins are available as necessary. The bin at the Ounavarra River amenity area was in good shape and is evidently frequently serviced. Thankful the area was free of litter.

Waste Minimisation:

The seven items set out in your Plan for this year go straight to the heart of the requirements of this category. It is as much about encouraging a change of mind-set in respect of all forms of waste minimisation as it is about dealing with material recycling as such. It is an attitude rather than listing out a whole litany of specifics which all of us can do without difficulty once we begin to think along these lines.

Literature is available from Wexford County Council and elsewhere to help individual households and the community at large to firstly reduce usage of scarce and expensive energy, re-use items where appropriate and recycle materials wherever possible so that the final amount of waste carried to landfill is minimised.

Tidiness:

The grassed area at Glanbia is cut frequently and adds a pleasant touch on the Dublin Road approach. At the school three of the horizontal cement bars are missing and the white vertical supporting bars would benefit if repainted before next year's competition. The signposts opposite the school need to be washed.

The outer wall of the little former church at the beginning of Wexford Road was nicely painted.

Residential Areas:

Ballycanew Court is a new development of 67 houses which was very well presented, communal grassed areas are suitably laid out and maintained. There is an imposing entrance to the estate with extensive planting outside. Millfield on the Killenagh Road is a new development. Give attention to the amount of weed growing between the road and the pavement. Do the owners have a residents association up and running as yet? The well established Ounavarra Park Estate was most colourful with a fine communal grassed area display to the front. The hard standing at the upper end carried excellent planters and a number of bird-boxes.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The long, wide entrance from the north was well presented, speed limit signs are washed and easy to read, the fine stone "Welcome to Ballycanew" was excellent. Select your planting here with care so as not to obscure the signs worthwhile message. The few trees here are maturing well. Additional trees might be considered here from time to time.

Killenagh Road where the little bridge provides a ready made and suitable start point for the village. The Speed limit signs are well presented and easy to read.

In general the splendid village name plates on all approach roads in stone are suitably displayed, that on the Harrow Road would benefit from a good brushing.

On the Wexford Road (R741 South) the speed limit signs are clean and readable as is the fine stone village name plate. Check the visibility of the metal name plate as it may become obscured by encroaching vegetation.

General Impression:

Once believed to be in danger of becoming just another anonymous village to be got through on the road to and from Dublin, Ballycanew has instead carved out for itself a separate, distinctive and impressive personality. In doing so it has skilfully used its history and its river to provide a suitable oasis of calm in this busy world.

Ballycanew's success is a great tribute to the foresight and tenacity of those involved over the years in the maintenance of the core and soul of this most interesting community. To everyone and each agency associated with this year's entry our best thanks and applause. Please keep up the good work and you are wished well in next year's competition.