

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballymurn** Ref: **27**
County: **Wexford** Mark: **255**
Category: **B** Date(s): **17/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	39
The Built Environment	50	34
Landscaping	50	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	24
Litter Control	50	40
Waste Minimisation	20	4
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	28
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	255

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the 2009 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission, which included the completed application form and useful layout map, backed up by illustrative photographs, all of which were of great assistance to the adjudicator. Congratulations to the Green Flag School on the presentation of the Energy Flag received at Croke Park last March. This was a great achievement. The Ballymurn committee is to be congratulated in engaging the help of other agencies, such as Wexford County Council, FAS, Credit Union, and local businesses. It is noted that the net is widening in relation to applications for development assistance and no doubt this approach will pay dividends in time. Your continued liaison with the local schools is to be commended and the results so far have been stunning.

The Built Environment:

Last year's report outlined in detail the various public buildings, the Church, the School and the Credit Union. A high maintenance standard is again achieved at each of these locations and the Church itself is spectacular, located prominently over the village. The presentation of the grounds here are a highlight. It is good to see that the derelict cottage on the Oylegate approach road has now been demolished and the stone reused for the building of a stone wall. In the village core, Cost Cutters filling station and shop is neatly presented. Here there is an interesting contrast of scale when one considers the now closed shop on the corner (John and Kate O'Connor) and the newer development. A rapidly changing Ireland! The Anvil Bar is an important corner building. Its location closes a number of important vistas when viewed from surrounding roads. The building has a nice presentation and was adorned with some colourful planting and, taken together with some of the adjoining residences, looks very well. The covered anvil name sign is a nice feature.

Landscaping:

One of the great advantages that Ballymurn has is its magnificent woodland setting surrounded by clusters of

high, mature, deciduous trees. Reinforcement of this natural advantage with substantial new tree planting, particularly in new housing developments, will ultimately restore enclosure to this rapidly expanding village. Evidence of the committee's hard work is very apparent in many areas throughout the village. Some particularly attractive shrubberies and rockery developments were noted, with the area in front of St. Patrick's Terrace being a feature. In addition to this, there are a number of hanging baskets, planted tubs, window boxes and flower beds throughout the village, which hugely enhances the natural setting.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The committee already liaises with the local school and it is to be hoped that you can now build on this contact. As a rural village Ballymurn is rich in natural wildlife, green areas and habitats and perhaps a good way of raising awareness of environmental issues amongst the local community would be for the committee to further liaise with the Green Schools programme to encourage local wildlife surveys. The results could then be illustrated on bi-lingual, wildlife boards providing interesting information points in the village. It would be most beneficial if this information could be visually displayed by means of display panels, to enhance local awareness. There are numerous attractive grass margins and green spaces throughout the village where these boards could be located, as mentioned by last year's adjudicator.

Litter Control:

Litter control was reasonably good throughout Ballymurn on the day of adjudication with a small quantity of litter observed scattered on the roadway at Ballymurn Upper. It is good to see the community involved in this effort and their hard work being supplemented by the involvement of a FAS worker. Well done also on involving the school children as this effort must have a great educational value for the years ahead. A litter survey to identify sources might also be undertaken with a view to developing an effective litter strategy and therefore cut down on litter picking.

Waste Minimisation:

The Recycling Centre is well located close by the school and the area was generally well presented. However, one of the receptacles was full to capacity and had begun to overflow on the day of adjudication. Last year's adjudicator suggested a number of further actions the committee could engage in under this heading. To proceed further in marks under this heading, a good start would be to encourage the various sectors of the community to audit the amount of waste produced by themselves and to devise ways of reducing it, in addition to segregation for recycling. The Race Against Waste website contains a number of good ideas on this. It is to be hoped that this programme will be developed in the coming years and that more initiatives from this website will be adopted in the future.

Tidiness:

Considering the village has undergone quite a large amount of construction over the past few years, the overall appearance of the village was one of tidiness and the efforts of the committee are to be commended. The village hall is nicely presented and the hard landscaping and seating here looks well. 'The Irish Rover Takeaway' appears to be staying for the long haul. If this is to be the case, perhaps it could be properly painted and more attractive signage introduced.

Residential Areas:

Many of the new housing schemes are now maturing quite well and generally have individually attractive name signs, nicely presented, such as Tulach Gael, Woodlands and Woodview. Some additional tree planting would hugely enhance the well located central scheme at Anvil Court. The planting of creepers along the mass concrete screen boundary walls would also have a softening effect on this new development. St. Joseph's Terrace, and its well presented grassed open areas and shrubbery, remain a highlight.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

As previously mentioned, the village has a number of nicely wooded approach roads. The stone walls, hedgerows, and the nice mix of vegetation on these, were admired. The stone cut village announcement signs are a feature and these were well illustrated by the photographs enclosed with your submission. It is to be hoped that you will be successful in your discussions with Wexford County Council on the issue of the ducting of overhead wires and the resurfacing of some roads. Some signage in the village centre was in need of cleaning and refreshing.

General Impression:

Ballymurn is an attractive village with a wonderful rural ambience where the pride of the community is evident in the presentation of the village. Well done!

