

# Tidy Towns Competition 2012

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballygawley** Ref: **2097**  
County: **Sligo** Mark: **201**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **30/06/2012**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2011</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2012</b>
Overall Development Approach	50	0	23
The Built Environment	50	0	26
Landscaping	50	0	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	0	18
Litter Control	50	0	36
Tidiness	30	0	12
Waste Minimisation	20	0	5
Residential Areas	40	0	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	0	24
General Impression	10	0	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>201</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

The TidyTowns Competition is delighted to welcome Ballygawley for its first entry into this national competition. Thank you for the time you took to complete the entry form and map. You have a good sized committee for your community and you work well with other businesses in the community and with Sligo County Council and Coillte. It was also good to read that you have forged links with the local school as it is vital to have some input from the local youth. Well done.

In order to be able to monitor your success over the years and to focus your efforts, all TidyTown Communities are asked to work to a long-term strategic plan. This need not be a very detailed document but should outline clear targets on a page or two. Ideally everyone should have a chance to submit ideas for inclusion so you could consult with local clubs or ask via your newsletter. Submit this plan with your entry next year please.

### The Built Environment:

Callaghan's pub is exceptionally well presented – painted very nicely with window boxes and clean and tidy surrounds. It was good to see the ivy in place on Kelly's Bar which provides shelter and nectar late in the season for wildlife whilst also adding to the grandiose appearance of this building and its old Guinness sign looked well. The garage, Post Office and True Colours all looked well but watch for clutter of signs on the garage forecourt and in front of XL shop.

The village pumps were admired. The village's name stone sits very well - perhaps the Irish version of the name could be added? The ESB junction boxes, though very clean, looked very stark and detracted from this nicely planted area at the Collooney junction. They could be enhanced in some way (painted? honeysuckle

planted around edges of wire cage? Or screened off with fencing?). The flags and bunting flying all looked very good – so often these can be left to become bedraggled.

### **Landscaping:**

You have put a lot of effort into the landscaping throughout Ballygawley providing a sense of pride of place – well done. Your adjudicator particularly liked the use of shrubs in many of the larger planters which will provide long-term structure throughout the year. The competition is pushing towards this aspect of work rather than the use of annuals.

The planting of trees throughout the village was also admired especially behind the new-built approach road walls and behind the laurel hedging at the Collooney junction. The large horse chestnut by Kelly's pub looked particularly fine.

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

Well done on planting wildflowers – do allow them to self seed prior to strimming so you have some next year! What wildlife do you have in your area? Are there any designated wildlife sites near you?

Your laurel hedging was noted and your adjudicator notes you intend to enhance this. Cherry laurel is an invasive species producing berries that should not be eaten and releasing cyanide that helps prohibit other plant species to grow nearby. Further details are found on [www.invasivespeciesireland.com](http://www.invasivespeciesireland.com). Whilst its uniform look may work well in some places, your adjudicator questions if this works for more rural setting of Ballygawley. Interspersing the current hedge with native hedging plants such as holly or hazel could provide the variety that can offer more shelter and food for local wildlife whilst still maintaining the sense of place that you are hoping for at your Collooney intersection. This could also help you gain marks in this section of the competition.

### **Litter Control:**

Business premises had no litter evident outside – so well done here. Your regular litter patrols are working also except for one area which maybe no one has considered - litter (cans and batteries) were located on the access road to the 'Fairways'.

### **Tidiness:**

Well done on the cleaning and weeding carried out. There are a few other simple actions that you could undertake that will make a great difference to this category. The advertising hoardings should be removed at the entrance to the 'Fairways' (as mentioned under residential) and a redundant black and white post on the Sligo road could be removed.

There are numerous signs for roadworks, tourist venues, advertising, warning signs etc making it difficult to read! Thus you could carry out an audit of signs as a starting point for this category. The electricity poles on the left as you arrive in your village from Sligo are not straight, of two different heights and have wires tangled between both poles. This could form part of your long-term strategic plan and discussions could be started with ESB on this. Likewise you should also highlight the pole in the middle of the road junction at the entrance to the Fairways estate with two stays crossing the pavement here also.

The car park adjacent to Callaghan's was very potholed but at the time of adjudication a steam roller and tarmacadam lorry were there so maybe this was to be improved?

### **Waste Minimisation:**

This aspect of the competition is about reducing waste – further details can be found in the competition handbook available from the TidyTowns offices or on-line. For example, the composting of the grass cuttings in Ríocht Na Sí estate could help gain marks in this area, especially if the compost was used in your village planters.

### **Residential Areas:**

Homes throughout Ballygawley were very well presented – credit to the occupants. Ríocht Na Sí had a lovely entrance and the individual homes here looked very well indeed. The pavements were weed-free and the grass tightly mowed. Whilst, lovely to see the trees here, they do need some attention to stop more dying here: stays should be removed, they could be watered, and compost added around the base. The boundary walls of homes here are all concrete and perhaps some work on these (eg. painting or power washing to remove the red fungus) could greatly enhance this lovely estate. There is a site at the back of this estate that is closed off with a gate and pallet. This would look better with a barrier of a more appropriate nature.

Whilst it is great to see a permanent fence at the unfinished estate – 'Fairways', much could be done to enhance this short section of public road – lifting of litter; removal of 3 redundant advertising signs etc. What a shame that this fence was not put back 5 m to allow access to the lovely ball alley – one of the few older structures still in the village.

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

Along the front of Kelly's and the garage, it was difficult to distinguish between the road edge, pavement and car park. With the development of the community park, it is thought that more pedestrians would want safe access up the village so ideas to address this could be included in your long-term plan. The walls with integrated seating and trees behind, work very well as you arrive from Sligo. There are a number of farm gates in the village – perhaps they could be painted a uniform colour to add to the sense of place here?

Driving around, the roads are in a poor condition with potholes. The old road that is now redundant and has bollards at either end, looks incomplete as road lines are still in situ – what are your long-term plans for here?

The welcome sign arriving from Sligo looks well with the evergreen under it – may be the Sligo logo on this could be enhanced as it is a little faded? The cutting of the edge of the verge on approach roads demarcates a sense of place and looks good.

### **General Impression:**

For a community with no school, church or hall there is still a real sense of pride in your well-presented community. Good luck with your festival in August and the development of the local community park. Do be aware that marks allocated for first entries allow great scope for advancement in the competition. It is great that you have entered the competition and it is hoped the comments above may help your future work and could form part of your long-term plans.