

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballingarry** Ref: **1141**
County: **Tipperary(South)** Mark: **192**
Category: **A** Date(s): **19/06/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	0	26
The Built Environment	50	0	30
Landscaping	50	0	25
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	0	13
Litter Control	50	0	27
Tidiness	30	0	16
Waste Minimisation	20	0	5
Residential Areas	40	0	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	0	24
General Impression	10	0	6
TOTAL MARK	400	0	192

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome back to the National Tidy Towns Competition 2012. Your last entry was in 2000. Your committee of 15 members and other volunteers are to be commended on your efforts particularly this year because of the wet spring and summer. You are obviously hard working and enthusiastic and you have many successful links with the local authority and other public bodies in the area as well as support from the community. We thank you for your detailed map which we found very useful. Please consider preparing a three year plan to assist you in prioritising your improvements works for the future.

The Built Environment:

The Fire Station, the Health Centre, The Garda Station and Ryans Pub were all well maintained and enhance the village core. Tobins, Amby's Bar and the Post Office all looked well and Meagher's Pub had a floral display in baskets. A stone wall boundary near the school has a number of breaches which need repair. The Church and the old Cemetery is impressive and in good condition. In the laneway near to the cemetery there is a nice stone wall and the gates are painted. However, the other wall needs improvement, rendering at least is advised. The Old IRA Memorial is a fitting tribute and is well maintained. The colourful playground was clean as was the school. The impressive mural depicting former days in Ballingarry was admired on the gable wall of the well painted Miners' Rest. The decoration/painting of Norton's Garage was admired, well done on this initiative. The GAA clubhouse has weeds in the car park. The Community Centre looked fine and would benefit from tree planting. A small tree could be planted in the open space outside the wall.

Landscaping:

It is important to use permanent planting as structural elements of the landscape and therefore the main focus should be on trees, shrubs and hedging with the use of flowers being restricted to the village centre to

highlight its importance. We noted the plant container with flowers at the village signs. Such floral decoration is not necessary in a rural area such as yours. Also, as a general rule avoid the use of plant containers where you can plant directly into the ground. In this regard plant containers in grass are unnecessary. New trees are not thriving and this may be due to the competition for nutrients and moisture. It is recommended to maintain an area one metre in width at the tree base for the first few years until they are established. You should focus on screening walls with wall/climbing plants or shrubs instead of planting low flowers at the base. A case in point is the area with two signs, one for Cashel and the other for the Famine Warehouse. These are placed against a corner with walls which need screening instead of small flowers.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Appreciating your local wildlife resources is vital in order to achieve under this category. In this regard researching and raising awareness is more important than 'doing' at the early stages. Biodiversity is under threat globally and sadly Ireland is a part of this trend. Learn why this is important and discover areas designated for conservation close to you at www.npws.ie or www.noticenature.ie. Habitats of value include specimen trees, hedgerows, treelines, stream, woodlands and wetlands. Some or all of these are likely to be present in your town and they should be mapped. Learn how their quality can be enhanced through careful management. Try to list the plants and animals to be found there and recognise their significance (native, protected, or alien invasive?). This information can be fun to gather and can involve the school or other interested parties. Raise awareness through holding events such as hedgerow walks or bat walks. We are sorry that the Slí na Slainte route has to await for another while until funding is available from the County Council.

Litter Control:

It is good to have the school involved in litter awareness. Your control of litter is to be commended as we found very little evidence of litter on adjudication day.

Tidiness:

You have done well to sort out the problem at "The Corner", it looked neat and tidy. We look forward to great pictures of it with next year's entry. We noticed the improved car houses, the roof of one of them needs repair. A rusty shed and its roof near them needs attention. Weeds were noted in the gutter of the house beside the Garda Station. The corner of Ballyline Road had an empty site. There is some clutter at the back of Casey's shop.

Waste Minimisation:

This category is about tackling the growing waste mountain that is creating problems of pollution, unwanted land use, and the use of dwindling resources. It is a global and a local problem. To save the Earth we need to move quickly to a zero waste society. Your town can play its part by first looking at the volume of waste that is generated. Contact your waste contractors who can help with this. Try to find out what is being thrown away and armed with this information you can start to think about how waste can be reduced. Examine the waste pyramid and note that recycling is only the fourth most preferred option after avoidance, reducing and re-using. One third of our waste is organic in nature. There was a green flag flying at the school so the next generation is in training for TidyTowns. We commend you on segregating the litter collected in your clean-ups. The Bring Banks were well maintained.

Residential Areas:

In Assumption Terrace, the trees were good but it is time to remove supporting stakes before they cause damage to the tree stem and we noted the Tipperary colours on the fence. The concrete wall opposite was clean but some use of wall plants would help to reduce the impact. New housing on the Gragaugh Road is clean and tidy, there is scope to plant more trees here and in Church View Estate.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

On the Kilkenny Road there were weeds in the car park and at the wall of the new cemetery. The wall on the left as you approach the village needs cleaning. On the Cashel Road, the stone wall and the natural vegetation are complementary and add to the character of this environment. Please note our comments under landscaping regarding the treatment of approach roads.

General Impression:

We are delighted to see the improvements in Ballingarry and your re-entry to the competition. We hope that this report will assist you in preparing your community for next year's competition.

