

Tidy Towns Competition 2013

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballybunion** Ref: **323**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **282**
Category: **C** Date(s): **14/07/2013**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2012	Mark Awarded 2013
Overall Development Approach	50	40	41
The Built Environment	50	40	40
Landscaping	50	39	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	28	28
Litter Control	50	37	37
Sustainable Waste And Resource Management	20	9	11
Tidiness	30	18	19
Residential Areas	40	26	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	32	33
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	400	276	282

Overall Development Approach:

Ballybunion is most welcome to the 2013 Tidy Towns competition. Many thanks for your clear application form with additional information including photographs and community development plan. You are wished every success in the implementation of this plan and look forward to reviewing the final product in 2014. Your use of photographs is welcome but do ensure that they are of a sufficient quality to deliver the message you are trying to convey and also try to caption all of them so that the adjudicator knows to which project each relates. There is a wonderful sense of energy and positive spirit that is conveyed through your entry form. You have been open to the constructive criticisms of the adjudicator and dealt with each point head-on. This is excellent. You have an open approach to your meetings and recognise that they need to be fun and social as well. Your big development this year is the reinvigoration of the green schools project and the imminent award of their first green flag. This is truly wonderful and you are developing momentum by involving the Tír na nÓg creche. You are wished every success in the formation of the junior Tidy Towns group and this will no doubt ensure the sustainable development of the broader Tidy Towns group. Well done on this excellent application.

The Built Environment:

You have been systematic in your audit of derelict buildings and dealing with them within your powers. Accept your limitations as well as your opportunities and maintain your positive attitude. You are applauded for your work to date on the old bakery. The lovely old church, now the library, was admired. The health and leisure centre is an attractive facility that was very well maintained on adjudication day. The Tír na nÓg mural on the community centre was admired and more of this would enhance the appearance of this building. The Garda station is looking well and the statue to Bill Clinton admired. The lovely information panels were admired also and the quality of building facades looking down Main Street is very high. The Tintean Theatre is a nice building but surrounds badly let it down with litter, poorly maintained landscaping and assorted debris. The lovely entrance to Scoil Íosagain Naisunta was admired while the church next door would be improved with better landscaping and flags on the poles. The Cliff house hotel is looking well and its surrounds were neat and tidy. Ballybunion Castle is an important part of your built heritage which looks well and has suitable interpretive information. Its presentation was let down however by litter and superfluous pots of small flowers. The Marine Ireland Links Hotel is a most attractive new building with appealing frontage. The Promenade is of a similarly high standard. Huge areas in the key locations of the town are given over to car parking. Work with these operators to ensure that their boundary features do not already detract from the sea view. In similar small towns across Europe car

parks would be placed on the outskirts from where people can walk – only in Ireland it seems does parking take on such an important function!

Landscaping:

Landscaping in seaside areas can be a challenge given the vagaries of the Atlantic climate. Trees may not succeed due to the salt laden air but many species of pine do work well so these may be worth considering, especially Scots or Corsican pine. Streetscapes can therefore look bleak in winter especially. The abundance of summer flowers for example outside Harty Costello's and Hellards work very well. Formal landscaping beds for example at Church road are neglected. To enhance landscaping and planting schemes look at what is already growing well, for example in hedges or people's gardens to avoid experimenting with species that may not tolerate the climate. The well used playground was clean and tidy on adjudication day. This green area is let down somewhat by the numerous urban street lights and wooden poles, although the view was great towards Loop Head.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

You have wonderful natural amenities and are successfully developing the infrastructure that provides access to these. Once your trails and interpretive panels are in place ensure that these are actively utilised to promote appreciation of the natural heritage. This can be done through holding wildlife centred events with one of the local organisations, perhaps centred around biodiversity week in May or heritage week in August. Make sure the school gets involved with a nature-based project, you have so much on your doorstep and it is an area that is ripe for art or research projects for all ages.

Litter Control:

Well done for participating in the national spring clean and involving your younger citizens. As an important beachside community the presentation of the town in terms of litter will be a challenge but one that it is vital that you are up to. You have weekly litter patrols along with additional assistance from Kerry county council. You are also targeting actions specifically towards dog fouling and cigarette ends and this is excellent. Altogether this amounts to quite a comprehensive approach. Litter had gathered on adjudication day at the car park behind the library. A lot of cigarette ends had gathered outside the Garda station. Litter had accumulated along the path to the beach from the hotel. There has been some dumping at the bring bank on this road. The beach was very busy on adjudication day but we can happily report that litter control was to a very high standard in this key area, well done. The area around the small kiosks near the castle were littered with numerous small items. Overall it was felt that greater attention to litter is required to achieve the high standard required at this level of the contest.

Sustainable Waste And Resource Management:

Well done for attending the waste workshop and are using this as the basis for a quiz which sounds exciting. Do ensure that the grown-ups are included in this awareness raising drive as much as younger ones. The achievement of the school in the green flag program should be given a full airing here. What projects are they undertaking to win their first green flag for waste? How can these be applied across the community? You already have experience with the hospitality industry with regard to food waste. How can you use this to promote the core message across the town? Perhaps one of the chefs could give a demonstration on cooking with leftovers. This could mean one less meal a week to shop for with consequent savings on the pocket.

Tidiness:

Well done for contacting the golf club and for their positive response in addressing their boundary. The lack of overhead wire clutter in the town centre is most welcome. The lamp standards are nice but perhaps too tall, being more suited to a high-density urban setting. Bins are sturdy but need to be washed. At least two empty poles were noted outside the Cliff House hotel and these should be removed. Generally however there was a high standard of tidiness throughout the town.

Residential Areas:

Your approach to concentrate on the Marconi estate is a sensible idea. What is the connection here to Marconi, is there a heritage awareness project here waiting to happen? Sandhill Park is a nice estate of well-kept homes and an expanse of well mown lawn. The landscaped bed at the entrance needs attention however. An attractive enclave of (holiday?) homes near the leisure centre was admired but has no name. The signage here is old and worn. The Hill View Close stone name sign is nice but is surrounded by weeds. The green areas here approaching the theatre are well mown but dead grass is being dumped on the hedge and this is bad practice as it will poison the native vegetation here. The Sands is a very nice estate indeed with an eye-catching design.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

You are applauded for retouching the lettering on stonework following remarks in last year's report. The approach from Listowel passes the lovely dolphin statues and a planted boat. Watch out for poor quality signage here as it will create a cluttered impression. Boundary walls across from the golf club and elsewhere need attention including one with a broken wooden fence. Your newly planted boat on the Tarbert road is a beautiful intervention.

General Impression:

Ballybunion has the wind in its sails and is gearing up for great things with the launch of your community plan. We very much look forward to next visit in 2014 to check up on progress. Best of luck.