

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballynacally** Ref: **59**
County: **Clare** Mark: **312**
Category: **B** Date(s): **17/06/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	49	49
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	42	43
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	43	44
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	28	29
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	15	16
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	66	67
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	30	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	34	34
TOTAL MARK	450	307	312

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Your adjudicator would like to welcome back Ballynacally to the National TidyTowns competition. You are to be commended for the public meeting in the autumn when you asked for ideas and suggestions across all aspects of the competition. You have support from local businesses and sports clubs in particular the GAA. Links with Clare County Council and FAS have made a difference in the area. It was great to read of the time and effort put in by your volunteers and experts such as the local historian and the staff of National Parks & Wildlife Services. All ages and sizes have been involved and your adjudicator particular liked the fact that the pre-school children took part in a litter pick in the area. Your long-term plan was examined and it was nicely laid out and should prove easy to follow.

Built Environment and Streetscape / An Timpeallacht Thógtha agus Sráid-dreacha:

The Credit Union, the Health Centre and all the premises around the Village Green looked very well and complimented each other nicely. Your adjudicator particularly liked the way in which the windows at the Health Centre were painted in the same bright yellow colour of the door of the building.

Lovely cascading window boxes at Daly's public house and McGriffin's public house also looked very well with nicely positioned flowers on the picnic tables. The freshly painted mural was admired with the information on Ballynacally.

The GAA club house was very nicely presented and the works in progress on the boundary wall will further enhance this area. The boundary wall of the GAA pitch looks quite bare and need attention – see note below under wildlife.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Landscaping is of very high quality and very appropriate in Ballynacally. The change of emphasis from Summer bedding to more perennial planting is to be commended. Every planter or hanging basket makes an impact and your work to review the position of planters has paid off. The bed as you arrive from Ennis contains shrubs and perennials providing year-round structure that the competition favours. There were also nice little bits of ivy and flowering plants growing on the bridge. The planting is very appropriate and considered. It makes an impact and is appropriate for the location. The planting at the bring bank is novel and resulted in not a spot of litter in this area. Planting of the wellington boots at the public house gives you extra marks in the Sustainable Waste and Recycled Materials too! The sensory bed was noted and enjoyed.

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fiadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádúrtha:

Your adjudicator liked your native tree trail and enjoyed the path down to the grotto. The newly planted climbers enroute to the well were noted and this screens this off very well. It was also great to read of the bat walk and

heritage events on the community noticeboard and your FaceBook page (though you used an image of a fruit bat not found in Ireland!).

It was a shame to note the ivy on the boundary wall of the GAA pitch appears to have been cut back. Ivy is a great native climbing plant that supports wildlife through provision of shelter and food in the form of nectar late in the season. There were some nice stone worts and flowers growing on the bridge and it was good to read that you are not removing lichens from the walls. As you know, stone walls can provide important wildlife habitats in our town and villages.

Japanese knotweed was noted at a couple of places in Ballynacally. On the R473 you have been treating this appropriately in the picnic area so you are well aware of the dangers and the structural problems this plant can cause. A large patch was also noted across the river at the far bank when walking down the Riverside Trail. In the UK you cannot get a mortgage for property where this plant is growing. Further information on treatment options are at www.invasivespeciesireland.com.

Sustainable Waste and Resource Management / Bainistiú Acmhainní agus Dramhaíola Inbhuanaithe:

Your Facebook page has a lot of followers and is kept up to date with information on events and activities. Your staged composting site with an area for holding branches etc is commendable. Do you use your own compost in your planting schemes?

You carryout a wide-range of actions in this category of the competition. The 'Waste-watchers guide to slimming your bin' provided good information as well as having a catchy title. Your adjudicator particularly liked the bike maintenance workshop at the school and the use of a converted oil tank now used to collect rain water.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Litter bins were in use and clean. The corrugated tin roof of lovely stone shed adjacent to the mural may need to be replaced in near future. The signpost on the Cranny road is rusty. Overhead wires continue to be an issue but sustained correspondence on this matter may help.

Residential Streets & Housing Areas / Sráideanna Cónaithe & Ceantair Tithíochta:

On adjudication day a private residence was being refurbished opposite the Village Green where some well-designed wooden sash windows had just been installed and these looked very well. All private homes were well presented. There was an older house opposite the insect hotel area where the entrance gate could be enhanced – maybe it could be painted the same colour at the field gates elsewhere?

Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes / Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna & Lánaí:

Stone walls as you approach the village and red painted field gates provide a real sense as you arrive into Ballynacally. No doubt you have concerns with the speed of traffic in particular at the narrow bridge area where two vehicles flew past your adjudicator. It is hoped you can continue discussions with the County Council to consider appropriate options in particular here to allow for pedestrians to safely pass.

Concluding Remarks:

For a small rural community you have taken actions for every category of the competition and packed them into your locality. Ballynacally is a delight to visit and there is great community pride which is strongly evident in your efforts and high achievement in this competition, well done.