

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballymore Eustace** Ref: **357**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **306**
Category: **B** Date(s): **02/07/2015**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014	Mark Awarded 2015
Community Involvement & Planning	60	50	50
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	38	38
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	40	41
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	40	41
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	13	14
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	54	55
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	33	33
TOTAL MARK	450	301	306

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Many thanks for your entry in this year's Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for the effort that making such a submission must take. The adjudicator is well aware of the hours this part of the competition takes up so please bear that in mind with regard to the following. This entry contained far too much information and much of it was unnecessary. The adjudicator counts ten bound documents and three other pieces of material. Several of the above, while relating to relevant areas such as waste management are generic documents which could simply be referenced in your entry. The results of surveys and questionnaires may be summarise, the data or reports themselves need not be submitted. It is noted that last year's adjudicator did not comment upon volumes of material received. However, please be aware that if the material submitted is not reduced, you may well lose points in this category. Please refer to the competition guidelines for guidance on amounts of material that are acceptable.

All of the above said, thank you for some lovely materials including the 'photo journal' of the Ballymore Eustace Tidy Towns efforts and projects. The entry form itself was very well delivered with excellent 'before and after' pictures and good details. The map was perfect for use and came with a key! Well done Ballymore on your work - its clear to see how much it means to you and your community. The impact that your work and diligence are having is very clear on the streets, approach roads and river of your lovely village.

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

The old mill premises gates are a focal point of your village and the walks therein so it's great that they've been done up. The under-grounding of cables is hugely expensive but it will happen so keep up the lobbying. The repair of old stone walls such as St John's is vital to your streetscape. Other substantial projects this year were road surfaces and footpaths and other gates repaired or repainted. Your submission leaves the adjudicator in doubt as to your diligence in following up after infrastructure work such as that you've had completed.

The national school looks well but empty planters were noted here. The side walls were well-painted and the bollards too. The derelict cottage opposite is well treated. You could consider painting the plywood in the window of the shed adjacent the school. Some lovely shop fronts were noted on this visit. These included the Liffey Gallery, Beautifulicious and the Ballymore Inn. Is the Local still open? The woodwork here is in need of treatment. The Green Energy premises look great and this is a very eco-friendly business to have in your village. Tilly's looked quite well but the planters at the entrance were empty. Fogarty's looked good and busy. A side area here has been developed since this adjudicator's last visit. The windows would look better with less clutter such as lotto and other advertisements. The Thatch Pub looks really great. The adjacent takeaway is one of the cleanest and neatest that this adjudicator has seen. However, it would be greatly improved by the removal of the two large plastic signs. Pictures of food are rarely appealing or even necessary.

Paddy Murphy's was well-painted with lovely window-boxes. Deegan's is closed now but this place would make a great display / exhibition space. The butcher's is a very nice little premises and really fits the streetscape. The Sputnik 5 window display was a blast from the past. New signs were admired at both churches. The Day Today shopfront looks very poor and there is no individuality or personality to this collection of special offer pictures.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Well done on your extensive tree and shrub planting which you detail very well. The 'ash' with the red berries is Rowan - also known as Mountain Ash. You've extensive areas of landscape planting that you also manage. Well done on the repair of the wrought iron bench but this might be too tempting a target and will probably need to be replaced in the long-term with a composite materials seat. You are minding your wildflower area well.

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

It's great that such a knowledgeable group are taking care of the salmon redds of your wonderful river. The adjudicator spent a long time just watching your river from the mindfully tended bankside walk. The new signs here were admired. Equally, the Anglers' Association review and monitoring of water quality data is so important. Please support them in any way that you can in this regard. The Alien Species Survey report is an excellent piece of work - especially the management recommendations - exactly what local groups like yours will need to have. A point is awarded here for this.

Many swifts were seen and heard on this visit to Ballymore Eustace. The wildflower area seemed limited to one species (ox-eye daisy). The new benches and litterbins by the river were admired. It is recommended that you remove straps and supports from young trees when not needed. This adjudicator is dubious as to the utility of the platform here as an angling area and indeed to its suitability in a setting such as this.

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

While last year's points in this category may have disappointed, this was due to an increase in overall marks being available not to a fall-off in any standard of submission or work carried out. Please refer to the communications from the Tidy Towns Unit in this regard. Nonetheless you are already above average level in this section of the competition and are not short on ideas. Please be more brief in your submission in this category. The nearly 8 pages of this could have been reduced to 2 with the judicious use of bullet points and without unnecessary detail. You are advised to make your submission clearer too through editing as the text goes from subject to unrelated subject with no gaps. Again, the amount of time you have spent on this is to be applauded but please focus on the end-user.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

By contrast to the preceding, your submission here was perfect for use; Clear and properly laid out. The 'before and after' pictures you provided are most useful in this regard. Having had major works completed, cleaning, clearing and resorting is going to be on the agenda. As usual, Ballymore Eustace has been very diligent in this regard. A little bit of car-borne litter was noted and a single can was in the jetsam at the river. The new olive green litterbins were admired. Being very tidy overall on the day, another point is awarded here.

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

This is a relatively strong category for you and the various dwellings of many different styles really make the village of Ballymore. Hillcrest is lovely. There is a spectacular sycamore at the entrance and beautifully kept green. Understated landscaping was noted in the gardens here. It was good to see that the 2-storey house on top of Market Square is reoccupied and is being done up. Lots of remedial work was noted on houses at the square and on Chapel Street. This is great to see. The little single-storey terrace on Oliver Plunkett Street was admired as was the terrace on Chapel Street. Assumpta Terrace and St Brigid's Park are just gorgeous. So much work has been done by residents here that another point is awarded.

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

Again, you have lots to report here. You have had major work in terms of road surfacing and new name signs.

Bishopphill Road's new surfaces were appreciated by the adjudicator. However, speed limit signs were both missing, it seemed. The old lamppost here is in need of repainting or removal. Pulaphouca Road is a gorgeous approach with neatly trimmed banks. However, the adjudicator wonders if they need be so tightly cut. Banks can be very important for solitary bee species and too close a cut dissuades habitation. The new surface here was lovely though. A wall was broken close to the village. A beautiful new rectangular planter was admired. The new sign here was noted. One 50kph warning sign was obscured by a sycamore. The village name stone and sign were well presented. The R413 (Kilcullen Road) roadside wall was broken in places and looks poor. Does the new Ballymore Eustace sign here await the addition of the Tóstal logo? Truce Road is a gorgeous and very natural little road. Remediation works after the flood alleviation works were noted such as hawthorn planting. A little bit of stone wall is in need of repair here. The Dowderstown Approach is beautiful: oxeye daisies, pyramidal orchids and corn flower all help to make this approach to Ballymore Eustace really lovely. The 2014 Tidy Towns sign was noted. However, the old (black and white) sign is sadly neglected. The side area of the Ballymore Inn was spotless - well done.

It was noted that many of your old telegraph poles and lampposts are to be replaced. Could the latter be replaced with low light-spread devices?

Concluding Remarks:

A lovely entry this year with lots of evidence of work completed. Many thanks for all your efforts. You are now in the top level of the competition so best of luck with your work in the next year.