

Tidy Towns Competition 2013

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballincollig** Ref: **661**
County: **Cork(South)** Mark: **304**
Category: **G** Date(s): **02/07/2013**
02/08/2013

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2012	Mark Awarded 2013
Overall Development Approach	50	47	47
The Built Environment	50	40	41
Landscaping	50	41	44
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	28	28
Litter Control	50	33	35
Sustainable Waste And Resource Management	20	13	13
Tidiness	30	22	22
Residential Areas	40	33	34
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33	32
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	400	298	304

Overall Development Approach:

Ballincollig is welcome to the 2013 TidyTowns competition. Congratulations on your recent Gold Medal award. Thank you for your comprehensive application. Can you please put your key code of projects on or beside your map as well as throughout the entry form? Thank you for being so clear about your most recent work as marks are awarded for year on year improvements. Congratulations on being selected to represent Ireland in the Entente Florale competition. This is a great honour for Ballincollig and we wish you much success. It is good to hear you have recruited two new committee members and we wish the new officers well. You have plenty of volunteers to assist you as required. You have strong links with Cork County Council, SECAD, FAS and University College Cork. You are engaging locally with businesses, schools, clubs and schools and all relationships appear to be positive. Your structured and professional approach is impressive. Well done for embracing social media and using text messaging. This also reduces waste. You also use the more conventional channels to promote your messages. Thank you for submitting your Village and Area Enhancement Plan (2010 - 2015).

The Built Environment:

The former furniture store now operating as Kelleher's Pharmacy looks very well. The other new premises Paul's Bread Shop is tastefully presented and The Good Fish Company enhances this end of the street. The unused building at Turin Glas Estate is detracting from the surrounding area at present so we look forward to its refurbishment in due course. Well done for encouraging the use of Irish language on your signage. The Shopping Centre is modern yet enhances the traditional village character. Other buildings that caught the eye included Desmond Menswear, Teleflorist, Pratt Financial Services, AIB, MacEoin Jewellers and Mary O'Connell's Bar. The modern Garda Station is well presented with good planting. The area around the Cinema is well presented with some attractive landscaping. Your planned walks will also highlight your built heritage. Good luck securing funding for historic signage.

Landscaping:

It is good to hear that you have changed your emphasis with regard to year round planting and are already seeing the benefits. Well done for seeking training on proper tree maintenance. Tree planting enhances the streetscape and your new tree planting is noted. The Westcliffe bed is a credit to those who maintain it and greatly enhances this long stretch. The entrance to Coolroe Meadows was admired and well done to Lee Valley

Golf Club for adopting this area. Posters highlighting Entente Florale were noted. Aldi is neatly presented but do they have any plans to plant inside the wall? It looks unfinished in its present state and was attracting litter on the day of our visit. Attractive landscaping at Dunnes Stores car park included a mix of trees, shrubs and lavenders. The large tree planters further enhance the Main St streetscape. The Rugby Club has been improved with good use of landscaping. The stunning roundabout near Greenfields was admired with its contrasting pink and white roses. The Inishcarra Road junction is enhanced by a stone bed. Efforts have been made to brighten up your large junction at Muskery through placement of flower boxes on the railings.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Regional Park is a wonderful amenity for local and visitors alike to enjoy. Your plans to further develop and promote walking trails are to be welcomed. This will further integrate the park with the main village. Well done to Ballincollig Trails Group. It is great to hear that some of your members have attended SECAD's 'Green your Community' course. Please provide details on lessons learned next time or initiatives implemented as a result. Well done for seeking expertise to identify species in the Cloisters wetland. The main thrust of this category is to determine what wildlife is in the community and to raise awareness of it among the community. Are any of your schools working on their 'biodiversity' theme as part of their green schools programme? In this case, working in conjunction with the local school would be of enormous benefit.

Litter Control:

Your litter pick statistics are impressive! We look forward to hearing how you get on with your new gum litter bins and if they make a difference. The erection of eight new dog fouling bins is also welcomed. Are you running an awareness campaign in conjunction with either of the above projects? Litter management is excellent in general. There is plenty of minor littering around the town centre and this presents an ongoing battle I'm sure. The bottle banks at Aldi were very neatly presented. Well done to the schools for carrying out litter patrols and to the transition year students that have been carrying out invaluable work. Everyone is on board including businesses and residents groups. Well done for segregating materials for recycling. Awareness is an important element of this category. Your various efforts to promote your litter campaigns are noted.

Sustainable Waste And Resource Management:

Well done for using compost from Cork City Council's Green Waste facility. Your St. Patrick's Day Float is another great way to profile your activities, particularly in relation to waste minimisation and litter. Your attempts to liaise with your seven schools in a co-ordinated way are welcomed. Have you appointed a schools liaison officer? You mention some good initiatives such as the reuse of sports kit, uniforms and purchase of second hand equipment. Well done for promoting Earth Hour. We look forward to hearing more about your allotment project next year. Your recycling initiatives are noted. Do you have any water or energy saving measures, e.g. for watering plants/flowers during summer season. Do any of the schools organise any walk/cycle to school promotions? This cuts down on your carbon footprint and your traffic! Your monitoring statistics are impressive.

Tidiness:

Thanks to your lobbying, unsightly signage on the Link Road has been removed. Your efforts to have the entrance area to Rosewood tidied up are noted as is your quick response to graffiti. A little weed control is required at the western side of town (Macroom Rd). There is a disused pole in this area. All areas around the Shopping Centre are very neat and tidy. The post office is well presented, however the Christmas decoration should be removed. Just inside the rugby club entrance, there are two disused poles. The large sign visible from the main road could be cleaned. Capping on the wall at the entrance to Tuarin Glas needs attention; otherwise there is an attractive stone wall here. A little attention to weed control is needed along the side road of Our Lady of Good Counsel School, on the road into Inishmore estate and along the road opposite the Garden Centre. The open area near Aldi is untidy with heavy littering. It's a pity there has to be permanently closed shutters at the unoccupied Bacco's Restaurant. It detracts from this otherwise pleasant laneway. The bar on the corner (Davis?) has an untidy appearance. You are making very good efforts with weed control generally and this creates a good impression.

Residential Areas:

Residential areas were a joy to adjudicate. Most were presented to a high standard. With the Entente Florale looming, it appears as if every area is out to impress! Good tree planting was observed at Lisheen Fields, it also has an attractive name sign and flower bed at its entrance. Good planting was observed on the entrance road to estates across the way. Mature trees were admired at Wyndham Downs. There were small amounts of litter in the latter areas. Coolroe Meadows and other estates along this road were very impressive with neatly presented green areas and flowers enhancing every junction. New planting and stone beds were noted at the entrance to Caislean. On-going maintenance and planting at the Flynn's Road/Greenfields Junction enhances this prominent corner. Your Annual Estates competition is a wonderful initiative to encourage pride of place and a little friendly rivalry! Having 106 residential areas to maintain is no easy feat so well done to all residents and volunteers.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The new road behind the main street is attractive with some good tree planting. The roundabouts as you approach from Cork are stunning and whet the appetite for what is to follow. Each one has a totally different style which is unusual but it works. The roundabout on the Macroom end of town is not quite so impressive but

neat nonetheless. Your frustrations regarding the changeover of responsibility are understandable. Attractive name signs further enhance your approaches. The footpath railing outside Aldi is adorned with flowers. The back areas of the Shopping Centre are neatly presented with no untidiness or litter issues. Well done to all involved. The lovely road to the GAA club has a rural feel. Work was going on at the roadside verges here. Cycle paths are in good order. We are glad to read of your plans to introduce signage on walks which will further integrate the Regional Park. Signs for drivers are also required at each end of the town. The Inniscarra entrance was in excellent order and maintained to a high standard.

General Impression:

It was a pleasure for this adjudicator to visit Ballincollig for the first time. It has expanded rapidly in recent times but you are embracing the changes in a positive way and working to bring 'old' and 'new' together. Your recent achievements are giving you renewed energy and enthusiasm. Your approach is structured and positive. This has resulted in you bringing all sectors of the community on board with the TidyTowns effort. Well done to all involved. Thank you Ballincollig for an excellent presentation and we wish you much success this year.

Second Round Adjudication:

Celebrating its Gold Medal win in 2012 the town was also bedecked, on the day of the second adjudication just days after the visit of the international jury of Entente Floral. The well marked cycle track, on both sides of the main street is admirable. The housing estates of the town were very well presented, notably West Grove and Castleknock, full praise also for the many individual householders who contributed to the enhanced presentation of Ballincollig. The low level planting and the two tone timber verges at Flynn's Road junction were noted. The splendid high wall was admired on the road leading to the Regional Park which was itself recently swept and free of litter. The park also was free of disfiguring graffiti albeit it continues to be present on the equipment in the skate park. Walking and cycling are well catered for and the Riverside Walk was in high demand during our visit.

The public library in its new building is among a suite of civic structures which with the huge shopping centre are fine examples of the substantial new build in the town over the last ten years. Fortunately the policy to retain where possible the tall and imposing stone walls of the former military presence in the town continues. The Barrick Square is superb in this context being a successful merging of the old with the new, retaining the feel and flavour of the interesting past. Every opportunity has been availed of to introduce ground planting into the streetscape. This has worked very successfully with the flower beds incorporated into the top of the wall at Lidl. The most colourful O'Mahony Walsh office with the barber shop over head was a delight. Sadly in a town with such a deep military history it is unfortunate that the much praised Gun Power Mills Exhibition was unable to be retained. The well-researched Gun Power Trails and other developments planned for the next number of years following your SWAT analysis confirms the existence of a mature, well thought through series of developments and objectives. The implantation of these plans over the next years will be watched with interest. Well done to all associated with this year's entry.