

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballycoog** Ref: **2146**
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **238**
Category: **A** Date(s): **07/07/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	35	36
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	30	31
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	30	32
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	14	14
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	8	10
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53	55
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	29	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	29	30
TOTAL MARK	450	228	238

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

You are very welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2017. Well done to Ballycoog and District Development Association for participating in this year's Tidy Towns Competition. This is your 6th year to enter and thank you for your very clear, interesting and informative Application Form which included many great photographs showing the work by your Committee undertaken this year. You have a Committee of 14 with a further 20 volunteers and 10 Macra/ICA Members and you meet at least monthly and in the summer months more frequently as part of a rota to carry out litter collections, weeding and maintenance. You engage widely with the local community using your very professionally produced Newsletter and Facebook Page. A wide range of bodies support your work through sponsorship, funding and advice. You have engaged in excellent fund-raising and social activities including the 'Ballycoog Challenge' and Christmas Celebration to name but a few and similar events are planned for 2017. This is a testament to the hard work and dedication of your Committee and the strong sense of Community which clearly exists in Ballycoog. You have forged strong links with the local school who are working on their 3rd Green Flag. We are very grateful to the businesses and organisations who continue to support your work. We note that 2016 was a busy year for the Committee as it celebrated the bi-centenary of St. Kevin's Church and this has fostered a common sense of pride amongst the Community in Ballycoog.

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

The new stone walls erected at the bottle banks were admired - this really does provide a neat and tidy enclosure for the facility. The road signs here are the traditional type which are worthy of preservation and would benefit from cleaning and painting. St Kevin's Church and grounds were presented to an excellent standard. The Church building was entered and the restored stain glass windows on either side of the Altar were really admired. The works undertaken on the Church roof and guttering was noted - this has been carried out to a very high standard and will help preserve the building for many years to come. The work undertaken on the Mass path and installation of the granite seat was noted positively. It would be good to extend the gravel surface on this path along the heather bank, when possible. Your Christmas tree is growing well and we presume it is a great spectacle in December each year. The stone wall along the frontage of the new part of the Graveyard was admired. The grounds around the Community Centre were found to be very neat and tidy and complemented the presentation of the building. The wishing well feature was visited and your adjudicator even dropped in a few coins in for the ICA! It was good to see the defibrillator placed at a prominent location in the village.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Hubba's Park was visited and it is suggested that the rear of the site might be suitable for the development of a small wildflower meadow. This would reduce the amount of grass cutting needed. The planting schemes in the

village were presented and maintained to an excellent standard particularly at the 'Ballycoog' namestone, Recycling facility car park, Church car park and in the vicinity of the Grotto. Perhaps the area to the front of the stone wall at the 'Ballycoog' namestone could be paved with granite setts to remove the loose gravel here?

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

Ballintemple National School was visited and the grounds, with flower beds along the frontage which were in full bloom, were well presented. The Green Flag, Butterfly and Bee Garden and Bird Sanctuary were all noted positively. The heather bed and wildflower garden at the old graveyard are establishing well. As noted previously, it may be a good idea to make use of an area at Hubba's Park to progress some projects under this category. You might also consider getting involved in Biodiversity Week or prepare a habitat survey in the area perhaps on a site close to a streams and watercourse, to see if there are any areas of interest locally in terms of wildlife and habitat conservation.

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

It is great to note that the Parent's Association in the local school organised a healthy breakfast and walk to school for the children in working towards their next Green Flag – 'Travel' and that walking to school is gaining in popularity. The cemetery green waste area was noted and no doubt this will provide a supply of compost for future planting schemes in the village. Your Project 19 – the enclosure of the Recycle Bins with a new stone wall has really improved the overall presentation of this part of the village. In terms of progressing in this category you might consider actions to reduce your reliance on resources. Your group might consider further sustainable water, energy and transport actions e.g. encouraging car- pooling, use of water butts for watering of village flower beds and gardens, cycling facilities, building and home insulation projects, the fitting of use of solar panels on Community Buildings and dwellings, small solar farms as a potential source of funding, and heat exchange systems to reduce energy consumption by households/Community Buildings etc. The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland website has good information in relation to the development of Better Energy Communities. Grant funding may also be available to provide energy efficiency upgrades for Community facilities.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You have a rota for gardening and landscape maintenance work and litter picking and you have also picked 80 bags of litter waste as part of your involvement in the Pure Mile Initiative. You might consider an alternative design (with canopy) for the overhead barriers at the Church Car Park or maybe these might be removed altogether? The village was found to be neat and tidy on the day of adjudication and completely litter free- well done to all concerned.

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

Residential properties and front gardens in the village were generally presented to a high standard.

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

The approach roads and natural boundary hedgerows on the approaches to Ballycoog from Thomastown and Woodenbridge were neat and tidy. It is noted that you have secured 25% of the funding required to build a footpath from the Community Hall to the school. We wish you well in your endeavours to secure the balance of the necessary funding in relation to this project.

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you for enclosing a copy issue of the Ballycoog and District Development Association Newsletter and BDDA Community Development Review 2016 and Plan for 2017 – these convey a very active and vibrant Community spirit in Ballycoog. You have great potential to gain marks across a number of categories in the Tidy Towns competition and your future planned projects, where possible, should reflect this. We wish you well in all your endeavours for the coming year.