

# Tidy Towns Competition 2018

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballymore Eustace** Ref: **357**  
County: **Kildare** Mark: **324**  
Category: **C** Date(s):

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2017</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2018</b>
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	51	52
Streetscape & Public Places	50	39	41
Green Spaces and Landscaping	50	41	43
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	41	43
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	18	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	56	57
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	34	35
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	33	34
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>324</b>

### **Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:**

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Ballymore Eustace Baile Mór na nIústasach chuig Comórtas na mBaile Slachtmhara SuperValu 2018 agus chuig Ceiliúradh 60 Bliain an Chomórtais. Ballymore Eustace Tidy Towns Committee is very welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2018. Thank you for your comprehensive submission which included useful dated photographs showing works undertaken over the last year and the document was very clear and concise. The map provided with your application was also very easy to read and with the legend provided, this was very helpful in the adjudication of your town. You have six members of your Committee meeting monthly with a further six non-committee members who volunteer from time to time. Your group meets on Saturday mornings and Monday evenings from February onwards to undertake various works around the Town. There are a wide range of agencies which support your work and you engage with a specific stakeholder group including Irish Water, Dublin City Council and Kildare County Council in relation to developments along the nearby River Liffey. You employ a range of Communication methods to provide information to your members and the wider public including a social media, text alerts and local print media. Specific projects which you wish to highlight this year would include the commencement of a 5km riverside walk along the River Liffey, erection of interpretative signage and the completion of salvage projects.

### **Streetscape & Public Places / Sráid-Dreach & Áiteanna Poiblí:**

Ballymore Eustace is rather untypical in that it is characterised by a wonderful historic streetscape pattern dominated by terraced cottages with a central space within the town known as the Market Square. It is noted that Ballymore Eustace Tidy Towns Committee implements an ongoing programme of maintenance and conservation of all buildings and public spaces throughout the town. The urban environment provided by the Market Square in Ballymore Eustace is very impressive. The Imagen Stuart Stone gateway sculpture known as the Anna Livia Monument and fountain is the centrepiece in the square and was particularly admired. The birds were very grateful to be able to drink from the small rivulet fountain here during the hot dry weather. The reference back to the blackbird and 'the scribe in the woods' poem and the Anna Livia river goddess on the sculpture was particularly fitting. The Interpretive Sign erected here was noted and provides a very good guide for the visitor. The cottages along Barrack Street are very well maintained and presented. Headon's Licensed premises is impressive but would benefit from repainting of the facade. It was heartening to see business premises in the Town doing well which serves to bring a sense of vibrancy to the Town as was found at the Ballymore Inn, where clients were able to sit and eat outside to enjoy the good weather. The post office building is well presented although some painting/attention is needed to a section of the façade over its shopfront sign. Fogarty's Quick Pick Pavillon was admired as was Mick Murphy's and Paddy Murphy's licensed premises. The hanging baskets on Main Street added great colour to the streetscape but were not overpowering. No doubt great effort has been made to keep these floral displays watered during the recent exceedingly dry weather. Overhead power lines are an issue to be resolved in

the future at Chapel Street. A number of cottages opposite the newsagents on Chapel Street would benefit from painting. The Church of the Immaculate Conception grounds were visited and were found to be presented to a high standard and there was even some restful church music playing within the Church. Perhaps the Bell tower would benefit from a coat of paint as it is an important feature in this part of the Town. Scoil Mhuire Primary School and the environs of the school, front boundaries, car parking areas etc. were all very well presented. The stone wall repair at the end of the river walk was noted and this has been carried out tastefully and the new work has matched in well with the existing wall. The Truce Road was visited and the old stone walls together with the view of the rock outcrop in the adjacent field were admired. It was wondered was this the site of an old Quarry?. The presentation of Tinnycross Bed and Breakfast was delightful. The removal of overhead power lines at Truce Road would be a positive step. In relation to St Mary's cemetery on the Kilcullen Road perhaps consideration could be given to lowering and painting the wall at the entrance here. The Cemetery is maintained and presented to a high standard. The Country Kitchens property on the Kilcullen Road was also very well and tastefully presented.

### **Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:**

The 'double boat' gateway feature at Barrick Street was particularly admired under this category and it really does highlight in a very positive way the entrance to your Town and links in with the recycling element of Tidy Towns work. Your before and after photos were helpful here. The general maintenance of the planting displays, hedges, paving, walls etc. at this location is superb. Also noted here was a swing barrier providing access to an unused site at Barrick Street which has recently been painted an attractive blue colour. The Floral displays on Chapel Street were particularly admired. It is noted that you have planted 16 Rowan trees along the River Walk to reduce the visual impact of a nearby sewage treatment plant.

### **Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality / An Dúlra agus an Bhithéagsúlacht i do cheantar:**

The River Liffey Linear Park is a fabulous wildlife and recreational amenity to have on your doorstep. The bee Hotel on the riverside walk was greatly admired as was the nearby wooden platform which provided wonderful views over the river. The restored seats and table were a great addition to the walk and will be robust enough to withstand any future vandalism. Perhaps in the future the gravel surface might be upgraded to allow for easier bicycle /disabled access to the riverside. It was heartening to see little children and parents enjoying a swim to cool off in the river in the vicinity of the Salmon and Caddis Fly Lifecycle signs during the visit. We noted the compost area made from wooden pallets. The damp woodland was really enjoyed and the wetland areas of scented meadowsweet along the Liffey were teeming with wildlife. A large beech tree along the route slightly impeded progress when moving along the path. Perhaps the solution could be found here in the future by bringing a path around the tree. It was somewhat disappointing to see a concrete base on the stream leading down to the Liffey, which is not good for wildlife. Perhaps this can be remedied in the future. It is good that your Committee recognises the importance of areas of trees and woodlands located in and very close to the Town, and you are monitoring these to ensure their continued protection. You have also engaged with Birdwatch Ireland in relation to installing Dipper Boxes and Swift boxes at various locations. The Biodiversity Action Plan currently being developed for the Town will provide a blueprint for future actions under this category covering items such as the future development and expansion of the riverside walk, various pollinator projects, areas to be managed for wildlife, pollution control, and control of invasive species etc. The pupils of Scoil Mhuire School are commended for their work on the development of the Suaimhneas Garden.

### **Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:**

The re-use of salvaged materials by Ballymore Eustace Tidy Towns has been a focus of your Committee under this category e.g. the salvage and re-use of boats to create flower displays at Barrack Street. The Hydraulic Ram Pump project is a very interesting way to harness the energy provided by falling water and it is good that the local school are employing this system to help with their irrigation requirements. It was good to note the presence of the electric car charge point on Barrack Street and maybe similar facilities could be provided at other locations in the town. Some further items for your Committee to consider under this category might be the development of a local car-pooling and park and ride facility, promoting the use of low carbon vehicles promoting greenways and improving cycle parking facilities. The further promotion of grant aid for the installation of wall and attic insulation on older building stock could be considered. The greater use of solar panels on roofs for water heating and heat exchange units to reduce energy consumption by households/businesses are also worthwhile initiatives. The greater use of water butts and gutter storage tanks to assist the watering of private gardens and floral displays during the Summer months might also be encouraged. The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland website has good information in relation to the development of Better Energy Communities.

### **Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:**

The attractive re-painted bollards along Chapel Street were noted and the Committee is to be commended for the painting and renewal of various other items of street furniture in the Town. These relatively small actions can make a significant difference to the overall presentation of a town. The cleaning and repair of the water feature at Market Square has a significant impact on the appearance of this area. Your regular litter picks help to maintain the generally clean and tidy appearance within the town environs and in general the Town was largely litter free on the day of adjudication.

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

Your work in relation to arranging for the repair of footpaths in residential areas is acknowledged. Hillcrest Estate which is maintained by Ballymore Tidy Towns in conjunction with local residents was visited and it is recommended

that the old tree stump here near the open space should be removed. Otherwise this estate is maintained to a very good standard with attractive private gardens, open spaces and trees. Liffey Court and Heights on the Baltinglass Road were visited and the general maintenance and presentation of these estates was admired. There are large goalposts and old nets located on the small open space at Liffey Heights - are these needed? Smaller posts might suit better here. The prominent ESB kiosk could be screened with planting. Assumpta Terrace has a very well maintained open space and attractive private gardens. Perhaps a barrier is needed along the frontage to stop vehicles driving on the open space. The rockery at the entrance here is difficult to maintain and may need to be re-designed. The communal car parking area at St Bridget's Park is well maintained and the gardens were generally very colourful and presented to a high standard.

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

The approach roads into Ballymore Eustace are characterised by stone walls and ditches and natural plantings of hedgerows and trees. The Kilcullen Road approach was noteworthy for its wonderful natural stone walls with overflowing plantings. In general road surfaces and markings are good although some remarking is needed on the Kilcullen Road. The Tidy Towns Committee is commended for the major clean up at Pudding Lane.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

It was a pleasure to visit Ballymore Eustace. Due to its unique character and setting, abundance of heritage buildings and proximity to the River Liffey, the town has great potential to develop in a sensitive and sustainable manner in the future for the benefit of all its residents and visitors alike. The Tidy Towns Committee has played a key role in protecting this heritage and based on the work carried out to date, will continue to guide progress into the future. We wish you well in your future endeavours.