

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballynacally** Ref: **59**
County: **Clare** Mark: **307**
Category: **B** Date(s): **01/07/2012**
31/07/2012

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	48	48
The Built Environment	50	41	41
Landscaping	50	42	42
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	24	26
Litter Control	50	43	43
Tidiness	30	23	23
Waste Minimisation	20	13	13
Residential Areas	40	29	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33	33
General Impression	10	9	9
TOTAL MARK	400	305	307

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome once again to the National Tidy Towns Competition in this year of 2012. Thank you for your submission, it was most impressive and it is this adjudicator's first experience of an interactive heritage trail in Tidy Towns, well done; the Ballynacally community celebrates and presents its heritage in a most professional manner. The development plan for your lovely village has well informed and feasible objectives and well thought through strategies. It is good to note numbers involved at both committee level and junior level and to have a stated mission focused on quality of life, maintenance of heritage and character and inclusiveness. Strong links are noted both locally and with the broader community.

The Built Environment:

The majority of buildings are very well presented and admired, the M.K. Griffin public house was nicely presented and the terraced buildings incorporating the Ballynacally Health Centre was excellent in maintenance and presentation, hanging baskets here completed the picture. Daly's bar is also nicely painted and the old national school with its grounds together with the Community Hall and its flower displays enjoy good maintenance and presentation also. In particular the murals, sheds and wagon wheel seats at the school were admired; the two flags here should now be replaced as they look quite tattered. The gable wall of a building at the top of the Cranny road is beginning to flake and this should be addressed before it becomes a serious problem. The white wall with blue capping in the centre of the village was especially admired. Plans for the redevelopment of the Community Centre are acknowledged in addition to the proposed Island Life public display board and we wish you every success in both initiatives.

Landscaping:

The grotto is a beautiful feature and flower and shrub displays here are colourful and maturing well. The Fair

Green and Children's Paradise playground is a wonderful recreational amenity feature serving the needs of both the community and visitors. The Rose Lover's bench is a beautiful touch as is the thatched wishing well at the pub. On the day of adjudication most flower displays in containers were not in bloom however this is hardly surprising given the amount of rain and lack of sunshine we have had this June. Mature trees in the playground are a valuable heritage. The adjudicator wonders about the large (limestone?) stone on one approach road. The Native Tree Trail is an excellent initiative that can be built upon over time.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The picnic site at one entrance to the village with its Interactive Heritage Trail boat feature and wildlife features (Insect Hotel) enjoys excellent maintenance a beautiful presentation and the adjudicators enjoyed a nice picnic here. A stretch of wild grasses, flowers and hedgerow along both sides of the Cranny road is a wonderful celebration of our natural heritage. The walk along the river to Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto and St. Martin's Shrine is a pleasant peaceful and meditative experience and is amply rewarded on arriving at the Grotto and Shrine; it is a beautiful experience to sit listening to the sounds of the busy river; the availability of the heritage panel enhances appreciation significantly. The proposed bio diversity plan, Sli Na Mara, and Bird Hide are all eagerly anticipated.

Litter Control:

Ballynacally was litter free at the time of our visit, well done. Dedicated area litter patrols and on-going public awareness activities no doubt play an important role in managing the cleanliness of the village. We note with appreciation the input of the Junior Tidy Towns group. Might a litter bin be provided for the picnic site? Don't forget to ensure that litter collected is segregated for recycling.

Tidiness:

Well done on the fine treatment to the derelict remains located beside the Fair Green. A few vacant dwellings on one road may need to be boarded up to their window apertures soon the boarding could also be brightly painted. The overall appearance of Ballynacally is one of tidiness. Participation in the National Spring Clean and County Litter initiatives are considered under this heading also, they appear not to be mentioned in your comprehensive entry or perhaps your adjudicator missed reference to them?

Waste Minimisation:

The small flower beds installed between each recycling container is a lovely and refreshing touch, well done. The 'Ballynacally Focus on Energy' and 'Focus on Waste' initiatives are well informed and very practical; it is good to note the variety of ways these initiatives are communicated. The deferred 'Waste Audit' project will start when the proposed Community Centre redevelopment project becomes less time consuming no doubt; optimum performance under this heading requires as much focus on prevention at source as on recycling reuse etc. the 'mulching lawnmowers' must be a great timesaver; the subsidized home composter units are favourably noted.

Residential Areas:

The small housing estate (Roscliffe?) is beautifully presented in all respects and indeed the majority of dwellings are impressive in their presentation; representation of the estate on the Tidy Towns committee is fruitful. Perhaps a co-ordinated colour scheme might be considered? Well done on maintenance of planted areas and trimming at vacant properties.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Nicely maintained and presented road signs, seating, landscaping, grass verges, road surfaces, footpaths and interpretive panel for wildlife are an important feature on entering Ballynacally from one approach road; nameplate, green verges, road signs, etc. at another entrance are good also however the stone wall approaching the speed limit sign is in need of refurbishment. A wall located across from the nameplate is in need of cleaning and/or painting and the nameplate could look a little better. Verges into the centre are being neatly maintained to their roadside edge and road surfaces and footpaths are reasonably well surfaced however a stretch of road surface by the school is quite poor. The bridge looks well.

General Impression:

The overall impression of Ballynacally is one of a beautiful village with a community that is proud of their heritage and more than willing to share it with others, a visit to your village will not easily be forgotten.

Second Round Adjudication:

The appointment of a designated Education Officer is an interesting development and the progress of this focused initiative will be monitored with anticipation. Education is a continuing element of your Tidy Towns

ethos with the establishing of The Native Tree Trail in the village and the fine display concerning plants and flowers. Excellent work has been done on all the access roads and the bare rock provides a dramatic vista on the main approach. Have a care that floral displays do not, as has happened on the Ennis Road, obscure the wording on the sign they are meant to embellish. As a general principal it is worthwhile, on a relatively frequent basis, to monitor all signs and wash as required.

The flower boat, picnic area, details of wild life and flowers make for a delightful combination on the approach road. Small amounts of traffic spoil outside the kerbs detract a little from the pristine presentation in some areas. The Lady of Lourdes shrine (1958) would benefit from repainting the main statue and also the small urn to the front. Grassed areas generally were very well presented.

Road surface heading towards Knockfaggart before the school was somewhat below par. The school was very well presented. There was no Green Flag in evidence on the day of adjudication. Has it joined this valuable movement? Two of the flags flying on the day should be replaced as they are quite worn.

The pale green house beside MI Griffin festooned with flowers and inset windows and doorway was admired. The substantial heritage information sign to the front was excellent. This house, albeit abandoned and derelict, was so well 'disguised' its actual status was quite unnoticeable. The house opposite with its 'Wedgewood' blue topped, crisp white walls was a joy. The terrace of houses from the Credit Union to Thomas Rice-Henn House is a delight. The bring centre which is being well respected was enhanced by the flowers between each container. The hanging baskets before the bridge and the bridge itself were admired. However the wall on the left (East) needs remedial attention. Technical advice should be sought before this task is undertaken. For example the rebuilding/ repairs require a suitable strength, lime mortar rather than concrete.

On the Kylladysert the village name plate looks tired and would benefit from replacing before next years competition.