

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **BALLYHALE**
County : **KILKENNY**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 17-07-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	22
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16
Landscaping	40	19
The Built Environment	40	21
Litter Control	40	34
Tidiness	20	11
Residential Areas	30	17
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25
General Impression	10	6
TOTAL MARK	300	171

Adjudicator's Comments

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Your entry form states that Ballyhale is new to the Tidy Towns Competition. This is a very welcome entry, and it is hoped that you will not be discouraged in your first year, as it is always difficult to get started. However, centres which began very low in the marking scale have become county and national winners. It is a matter of perseverance, and also of taking note of other centres' achievements. You are in a good location to benefit from observing the work in villages which have done well to date - all of them from very modest beginnings. It is good to read that you are in contact with the Local Authority, and especially that you have already inaugurated a FAS scheme; this should do very well for you over the coming years. On your map next year, please name all sites mentioned in your notes to draw the adjudicator's attention to work accomplished over the previous twelve months, and also work in progress.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

This is a new heading in the competition, and you are ahead of most centres in already having a project in the introduction of ducks to the river. You might consider creating a pond at the north end of the village by the sports field, or developing the potentially attractive, but at present neglected, river site on the side road by the church.

LANDSCAPING

If the paddock referred to by the Committee is on the right as you come from Kilkenny, the work did not seem to be completed and will not be marked until next year. The GAA grounds themselves appeared to have been recently improved. There are splendid opportunities for grassed spaces, shrubs and flowerbeds in Ballyhale - always take advice from qualified people as to what plants will grow best in what locations. Planting in troughs was seen to be very successful here and there. There is always room for tree planting on approach roads. Encourage business premises to decorate their frontages with window-boxes, tubs and hanging baskets.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Church is very well maintained, though the surrounding graveyard had a considerable amount of weeds growing in flowerbeds on adjudication day. It was not clear from your notes or from visiting the site what work had been done on the Castle, and if you were referring to the Castle which is the tower of the Church. The school and its grounds were much admired. At least three derelict houses were seen, and there is a derelict (or uncompleted) structure on the left coming from Kilkenny which is something of an eyesore, and one particularly unsightly corrugated-iron roof is very visible from the street on the opposite side.

LITTER CONTROL

There was very little disposable litter in Ballyhale on adjudication day. Congratulations.

TIDINESS

Weed growth, referred to elsewhere, is unfortunately very prevalent. Discourage plastic or mass-produced signs over shops, post-and-wire fencing as it is hard to keep free of weed, and building in exposed concrete blocks.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Many older street houses are attractively presented, and there are some modern homes with good gardens and frontages. When discussing new housing with the County Council, suggest infill housing to replace the derelict sites. This has been done successfully elsewhere, it gives a "lift" to a hitherto

unattractive area, and many people prefer to live in the village centre rather than out on an estate.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Verges on approach roads were not well kept. They should be trimmed from the name-sign (or alternatively from the 30 MPH sign) in to the village. The kerbside at the stone bridge to the north was unkempt. Weeds were growing on some pavements (e.g. opposite the large supermarket and by the pump - which should be painted). The parking area outside Kilkenny Mantlepieces was also weedy. There are several broken walls, but there is an excellent newly-built (or rebuilt) stone wall on the Waterford Road - its good example could be followed elsewhere.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

A village of much potential, which will undoubtedly obtain a more favourable placing when this Committee starts to make significant improvements.