

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **BALLINA-TIPPERARY NTH**
County : **TIPPERARY NORTH**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 01-07-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17
Landscaping	40	28
The Built Environment	40	27
Litter Control	40	27
Tidiness	20	13
Residential Areas	30	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	29
General Impression	10	6
TOTAL MARK	300	192

Adjudicator's Comments

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The information on the entry form continues to give the impression referred to in the 1994 report that there is only a small number involved in the Tidy Towns effort in Ballina. The town shares its Irish Heritage Town status with Killaloe and, with the increasing visitors to the twin towns, more needs to be done to improve the overall appearance of Ballina. In 1997, the new rules of the competition will require each centre to produce a development plan which should help Committees direct their activities and should ideally cover a 3 - 5 year period, setting out clearly realistic objectives, with a number of targets set for each year. This could be circulated throughout the community and should, hopefully, encourage more involvement and support. The plan should include a detailed map - there was no map (as was required) with your 1996 entry which would have been helpful to the adjudicator especially with the new residential and other developments throughout the town.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The river is a great natural amenity and much has been done along the amenity area, the riverside walk and the area across the other side of the bridge along the approach to the Hotel. As a Tidy Towns Committee, there is a role to play in protecting, enhancing and increasing the wildlife value of your environment and greater nature conservation should be considered in your long term plans and development programme. A good starting point would be to identify the wildlife habitats of your catchment area and see what species of animals, birds and fish these attract. Look to your local environmental experts and groups to get involved.

LANDSCAPING

The landscaping in the vicinity of the swimming pool and the slipway, together with the riverside walk is being well maintained. However, the access to the walk from the main street is still deplorable and should be dealt with as a priority - the recent tree planting along the walk was noted. Some landscaping along the Nenagh road (water pump, grassy banks, mature trees) was quite attractive, as was the grotto nearer in to the town. The planting at the corner opposite McKeoghs has been completed and brightens up this area.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The standard of presentation of public and commercial buildings throughout the town is somewhat mixed. The premises along the main street could make a more co-ordinated effort. McKeoghs stores is a good example of what can be achieved as is the simple treatment of O Riains and Goosers pub and restaurant beyond the Church. The Church itself and the grounds looked well and the grass was being cut on the day of adjudication. Around the bridge, the restaurant (old station sheds ?) and Mollys Pub also looked well and the area around the Killaloe Co-op has improved somewhat. The Lakeside Hotel and its grounds continue to be well presented. Elsewhere, the new National School and grounds and the GAA grounds on the Nenagh side of the town are also well presented.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter control could be better and this was particularly noticeable along the road and lay-by overlooking the amenity area and along the river beyond Mollys Pub. More litter bins and more regular clean-ups might help as this work should not be left to the Local Authority exclusively.

TIDINESS

Despite the litter, the town did give a neat and tidy impression, mostly due to the well maintained amenity area and the overall impression of the river and the whole ambience it creates. The litter mentioned above and the condition of back lanes, such as the access route to the river walk, are regrettable

intrusions on an otherwise pleasant aspect - with more effort and thought the town could look very well.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The amount of building in progress in Ballina is extraordinary - your report suggested over eighty houses under construction and even this seems a conservative estimate. It is difficult to comment on these developments other than that care should be taken that each development should be properly finished in terms of access roads, footpaths, open spaces etc. Otherwise, private houses are generally well presented, with some very attractive houses and gardens - along the approach from Birdhill including Willowcliff private housing development; on the other side of the town along the road to the Look Out; also the residential area on the road to the Graves of the Leinstermen and the houses in the vicinity of the old Railway Station near the Hotel.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The two main approaches from Birdhill and Portroe are well maintained but care should be taken that the roadside should be fully reinstated along the Ashgrove Meadows and Ivy Close developments on the Portroe road. Signposts and other signs should be kept clean and repainted where necessary.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Ballina, with Killaloe across the bridge, are popular places for visitors - day-trippers and people using the marina and, as an Heritage town, has an additional appeal. More should be done to ensure that it lives up to its full potential. To achieve this goal the Tidy Towns Committee should endeavour to obtain greater community support and assistance.