

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **BALLON**
County : **CARLOW**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 25-06-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33	33
The Built Environment	40	28	27
Landscaping	40	25	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	20
Litter Control	40	27	28
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	21	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	27	27
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	200	200

Ballon, County Carlow

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

It was good to note that you are in the process of preparing a plan for the village. Do include it with your 1998 entry form. It is recommended that you liaise with the County Tourism Officer who should be able to offer useful advice to you on your planning objectives for the next few years. Do establish communication with the County Council, the National Rehabilitation Board, FAS, etc who will also have valuable advice to give you in preparing your plan. We look forward to seeing your plan next year.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The standard of maintenance of public and commercial buildings was good with McHenrys looking particularly well. The Church was well presented with nice railings and steps - those responsible are to be commended for providing suitable access for persons with disabilities. The Grotto and School were maintained to a very good standard. The old school is a lovely building but has some weeds around the door area. The Credit Union building gate needed to be painted. The Community Centre and the Credit Union area need some suitable shrubs, trees or plants to soften up the front parking area. The graveyard is maintained beautifully but pay attention to the weeds at the wall outside.

LANDSCAPING

The maintenance of landscaping needs attention in many areas of the village. The shrub bed on the roundabout was overgrown with weeds and grass as was the shrub bed on Fenagh road junction. I do note from the map that the Council would appear to have a plan for the roundabout. The crash barrier would need to be painted here. The trees planted throughout are maturing nicely. The picnic area looked well with the containers of flowers. The ivy is really coming on nicely on the Ball Alley wall.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Wildlife was a new category introduced in 1996. You as a committee have an important role to play in protecting and increasing the wildlife value of your community. Do not be overwhelmed - it does take time to develop. The area on the Carlow road beside the stream has possibilities as a wetland habitat. Do seek advice from a local person who perhaps has an interest and expertise on nature conservation. It will prove to be a worthwhile and highly enjoyable way to preserve the past and protect the future.

LITTER CONTROL

The control of litter was reasonably good but there would appear to be some slippage this year. Litter was observed at the Fenagh road junction, at the wall of the Community Centre (mineral bottles) and at the mesh wire fence opposite the housing estate.

The streets were quiet good apart from a few paper pieces. Do try and control this with the provision of more litter bins and a regular clean up campaign involving schools and youth groups.

TIDINESS

Weed control at kerbs throughout needs attention. The areas around many signs need to be cut. The layby-type area will have to be tidied up and some type of suitable surface put on it. The telephone booth needs to be painted and the glass should be cleaned. The litter bins in some areas would need to be replaced. We note the problem area on the Rosslare road.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The open green space was neat and tidy. The houses in the estate were well presented. The flower bed had a high blend of colour - yellow and purple.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The approach roads need repairs, especially the hard shoulders in some areas. The railings look untidy with grass and weed growth. The Laragh approach road needed to be cut. The owner of the redbrick house is keeping the area under the 30 mph sign clean and tidy. Across the road from the Garage the railing would need replacing.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Ballon does have potential and is on a very busy main road. When you have your Plan ready it will help you to focus on the tasks in hand very clearly. With good community effort in the years ahead Ballon should improve and progress in the competition. Keep up the effort.