

"Caring for our environment"

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

Results

Date of Adjudication : 18-06-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	23	22
The Built Environment	40	22	21
Landscaping	40	20	19
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17	16
Litter Control	40	34	34
Tidiness	20	11	11
Residential Areas	30	18	17
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25	25
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	176	171

Ballyhale, Co. Kilkenny

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

It is disappointing to note that the Community of Ballyhale have not got behind the Tidy Towns effort to any great extent but in spite of that some good work has been done. Perhaps what is required is a more methodical approach to the competitions in terms of producing in conjunction with your Local Authority, FAS and other agencies, a 3 to 5-Year Plan to which the Community or individual members of the Community could respond. Perhaps for next year you might consider holding a Tidy Towns evening in Ballyhale to which you could invite a Local Authority representative, your Regional Tourism Authority tourism officer - Patrick Nolan (Kilkenny-based) and others at which slides and videos could be shown of what has been achieved in other centres. In the meantime, please continue to refer to the in-depth report which you received last year and take the following comments in conjunction with it.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Church and the School were very well presented on adjudication day. As mentioned last year dereliction is still a problem for you. It is very difficult to know how to approach this in a local community. Perhaps your Committee might take some advice from your Local Authority who have powers in such matters. Your entry form indicates that you propose to repair the wall close to the GAA Park. This was not done on adjudication day and it is assumed that it will be a 1998 project.

LANDSCAPING

The comments made in last years report are applicable. Ideally you should also try to judiciously plant some trees and flowering shrubs which in the case of the latter, will give you some colour on an all-year-round basis. The emphasis here however is on the word judicious as to plant too many trees and shrubs only causes clutter. Ballyhale has a fine wide Main Street which could easily cope with judiciously planted trees and which would be a great enhancement to the village in years to come. In addition there may be other places on approach roads, which could also benefit from some landscaping work..

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

As was pointed out last year this is a comparatively new category in the competition under which Committees are being asked to place emphasis on the conservation and enhancement on wildlife habitats and the environment. Woodlands, rivers, ponds, hedgerows, grass margins, open spaces, graveyards and walls are such habitats. The Committee would need to identify the habitats in their area and then determine the appropriate actions to conserve and enhance these. There are guidelines in the Tidy Towns book and other suggestions as to the type of initiative you might undertake. If there is a local wildlife expert or a member of

your Committee with experience in this area please do use them. You have already indicated that you propose to carry out a number of projects which could be looked at in the context of this category.

LITTER CONTROL

There was very little litter to be seen in Ballyhale on adjudication day. Congratulations to all concerned.

TIDINESS

A number of commercial premises in Ballyhale might be approached with a view to tidying up their outdoor storage. On adjudication day there were at least 3 premises which could have been better presented. As mentioned in last years report and, if possible, please discourage commercial premises from erecting plastic signs. Nicely designed wooden or wrought iron signs are much more acceptable and would be in keeping with the general architecture of the village.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

This appears to be a strong point in Ballyhales Tidy Towns effort. It is also absolutely important that you will have this individual support where there does not appear to be a full community involvement. Progress in the Tidy Towns Competition cannot be made without it.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

On adjudication day these were not well presented and will need attention for future adjudications. Perhaps you could discuss with your Local Authority a verge cutting programme for 1998. Please bear in mind however that the thinking nowadays is that grass verges, etc should not be cut right back to the hedge or wall but a portion should be left so as to encourage the propagation of wildflowers. Road surfaces are good.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The village does indeed have much potential but it will call for a much more concerted effort from all concerned if Ballyhale is to make progress in the competition.