

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **BALLINA-MAYO**
County : **MAYO**
Category : **E**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 14-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	35	34
The Built Environment	40	18	17
Landscaping	40	26	25
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	13	12
Litter Control	40	18	19
Tidiness	20	10	10
Residential Areas	30	13	14
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	17	17
General Impression	10	5	5
TOTAL MARK	300	155	153

Ballina, County Mayo

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Many thanks for the completed entry form, maps and strategic Development Plan. The joint submission by the Urban District Council and the Tidy Towns Committee shows a close working relationship and we trust this extends to support from all other agencies and possible contributors, e.g. LEADER Programme, etc. The advice workshop on colour schemes and shop-fronts offered by Mayo County Council is a welcome and commendable initiative. While the planning and organising roles are correct, you need to focus attention in winning public support, especially from the estates in the Crossmolina road and the Greenhills estate. In addition, you need to focus additional resources on the approach roads, developing low maintenance shrub beds, extending appropriate tree planting and tidying up boundary walls and access areas.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Buildings such as the UDC offices, the Library and Fire Station do not look well despite the laudable efforts of the UDC with window boxes and hanging baskets. The original design and drab appearance of these buildings creates a poor impression. The Catholic church, schools, Tourist Information Office, hospital and swimming pool looked well. The public area of the railway station was very well presented and the outside landscaping and paving area were attractive. The Bus Eireann station looked reasonable and the trees in the car park were attractive but further landscaping and flower presentations would be desirable. The area between the train and bus stations needs attention. Hotels like the Downhill, Belleek Castle and the Deanwood were well presented. New shop-fronts like Abrakebabras, Gavins, Archers, The Loft, Murphys, Tullios, Stauntons Opticians and Londis on the Bonniclonlon road were very attractive but you do still have a problem with old plastic signs some of which are damaged like those at the Amusement Centre and Fahys and quite a number more in the centre of the town. Derelict buildings, which are also numerous, need your attention. Your work on the Bunree road is to be commended. The colour scheme and advice workshops are welcome initiatives and will impact in time.

LANDSCAPING

Recent work developing walled flower beds on the approach roads from Crossmolina at Gurteens and Bonniclonlon at Shanagh looked well, but further tree and shrub planting should be planned for all of the approach roads. Work on Marion Crescent is proceeding well. The Town Park by the river looked attractive, as did the flower bed on the junction as you turn off for the Downhill Hotel.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The River Moy and Belleek Woods are wonderful natural amenities and wildlife resources. Your information panel on the Western Way Walk near the Town Park might be an example for further information panels on the indigenous flora and fauna which would further assist locals and visitors appreciate the area. Try to involve local environmentalists in assisting to develop this category of the Competition. The opening up of the River along by the Tourist Information Office is very attractive and the Moy Plan undertaken by the Fisheries Board will assist you develop this important resource. The area further up the Moy on the Foxford side seems to provide further opportunities to develop the amenity value of the River with river walks, etc. and should, in time, be considered.

LITTER CONTROL

This category presents a problem for your committee with evidence of much litter at the GAA Park and access roads, in the council estate on the Crossmolina road, on the approach road from Killala and the route from the upper bridge to the Moy Valley food units. In the Greenhills estate, the area around the small estate shop is a problem area. The main shopping areas were relatively litter free which leads me to assume your control measures here are working well. You will now need to extend your attention to the more outlying areas of the town. Try to encourage shop and home owners to look after the area outside of and around their own properties and to keep them litter free.

TIDINESS

The new trees, flower beds, flower baskets and well maintained shop-fronts do add to the tidy appearance of the town. However, derelict buildings, poorly maintained properties and litter detracts from your goal. In addition, some residential areas have unoccupied properties which have been allowed to become overgrown and run-down giving a very poor impression.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Childers Heights is generally well maintained and presented save for one or two properties which are for sale and in poor repair. The new estate to the right after Childers Heights as you approach Ballina has poorly maintained common areas. The local authority estates in the area of the hospital were generally very poorly maintained with some unoccupied houses in need of repair and generally homes here are poorly maintained and presented. The new estate on the Killala road and Bothar na Sup are well presented while the Castlecourt estate and the new estate off the Bonniconlon road were very well maintained. It would be good if your programme of erecting housing estate name-plates was extended throughout the town and more focus on winning support from local residents should be a priority.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The route along the river between the two bridges in front of the Tourism Information Office is most attractive. The use of railings and the stone walkway has opened up the amenity and is well maintained. The Foxford / Pontoon approach is attractive - trees and shrubs will be more effective in time. Watch out for weeds at the base of walls and excessive sign advertising. The new walled beds on the Crossmolina and Bonniconlon roads are attractive, however the raised bed on the Bonniconlon road had been damaged or the wall was never completed. The Killala approach road is poor - the flower tubs are attractive but the temporary wooden railings are less so and the Council storage area opposite should be moved to a more suitable location, or at least screened-off from public view. The grotto closer to town is overgrown and in need of attention. More attention should be given to boundary walls, gateways and common areas. Your programme of planting needs to be extended over the coming years. Leigue cemetery is in very poor condition with grass and weeds overgrowing and litter on the route from the Killala road was excessive. Try to encourage property owners in the industrial park to sponsor a landscaping programme for their area. Back areas like that of the train station should have rubble and litter removed. Watch out for excessive use of weed killer and have dead grass and weeds removed.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Your efforts in the centre of town and the landscaping programme are commendable. You must rally more support from local residents to contribute to the goals and objectives of the Competition and focus more efforts on the approach roads and outlying areas.