

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **BALLYRAGGET**
County : **KILKENNY**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 24-06-98

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1998	Mark Awarded 1997
Overall Developmental Approach	50	31	30
The Built Environment	40	24	22
Landscaping	40	31	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16	16
Litter Control	40	26	30
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	20	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28	28
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	197	196

Ballyraggett, County Kilkenny

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for the information and the map which was most useful on adjudication day. It is gratifying to read that you are receiving assistance from local commercial firms, the local Community, school children, scouts and FAS together with your Local Authority. Community involvement is the key to success in the Tidy Towns competition. Perhaps what is required now is an update of your 1996 plan in which you should try to identify what you can achieve within your physical and financial resources, say for the next 3 years. It is this type of planning, subsequently, implemented, which will gain you additional marks and bring you further success in the competition.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The main buildings such as churches and schools were again well presented this year as were the Credit Union and the O'Gorman Home buildings. There continues to be some dereliction in the town. This is also an area that you can work on in conjunction with your local authority who do have some powers in these matters. Commercial premises in general looked well but some do need a coat of paint. Ballyraggett Castle looked exceptionally well on adjudication day. It was nice to see that the walls projects, some of which were started last year, have been completed. There are however still some broken walls on the Ballyouskill Road and in the Green area.

LANDSCAPING

All the sites mentioned in your report were visited. The Square continues to improve every year and street furniture looked well. However the two abandoned petrol pumps are becoming an eyesore. It is suggested that advertising hoardings should not be allowed on the Square as they take from what is overall a very nice development. Do look carefully again at the points raised in last year's report re the planting of trees and shrubs. Your flower beds are excellent but they do require a lot of maintenance, particularly in hot weather. Shrubs for example, judiciously selected and placed, will give you some colour on an all year round basis with the minimum of maintenance. The open places on the Durrow road looked well and there was evidence of work taking place on adjudication day.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Perhaps this is a heading to which you could give some further thought. For example there may be an area in or around Ballyraggett that would lend itself to a wild bird sanctuary or some similar type project. Your planting and preservation programme is excellent and will, in itself, help to preserve and propagate the

wildlife/flowers of the area. In the event seek possible advice on this from a local wildlife expert.

LITTER CONTROL

Unfortunately there was some small evidence of litter in Ballyragget on adjudication day. This is a situation which needs constant monitoring as very often the litter involved is not of local making. It is gratifying to see that you have managed to involve the school children and scouts in this aspect of your Tidy Towns effort.

TIDINESS

The town, in general, was well presented. Comments however in last year's report under this heading are still applicable.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

All the housing estates in Ballyragget were visited on adjudication day. Unfortunately other than Castleview, they are nameless, and therefore cannot be specifically identified. However in general houses and gardens were very well presented and this is obviously a strong point of your Tidy Towns effort. In the main open spaces attached to these housing estates were very well kept but could do with some grass cutting to give them that crisp look. Individual private houses were also excellent, many with lovely gardens in full bloom.

ROADS, STREET AND BACK AREAS

Road surfaces in general are good. The work on pathways etc., which has taken place around the Green, was noted. You are very fortunate to have a Green area and these new pathways are a great addition to its general ambience. Some approach roads are still very overgrown. Perhaps you could discuss this with your local authority and ask them if, at a minimum, they would be prepared to cut these for you at least once a year. Bear in mind however the comments made in last year's report about the cutting of verges in relation to habitats for wild flowers.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The overall impression is that the town is progressing in the competition. Excellent work has been done and congratulations in this respect are due to all concerned. However a lot still remains to be done- hence the need for a new plan. It might be beneficial for your committee to visit other centres of similar size such as Inistioge, Ardmore in County Waterford, and possibly Rossadrehid in South Tipperary, to meet with the local committees and, in the process, learn from each other as to how common problems may be overcome. Your local Regional Tourism Authority, based in Kilkenny, has a video film on the Tidy Towns competition which would be worth viewing and also run a Tidy Towns seminar each year with guest speakers and site visits and is well worth

attending.