

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **BALLISODARE**  
County : **SLIGO**  
Category : **B**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 21-06-1999

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	30	26
The Built Environment	40	24	24
Landscaping	40	25	25
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16	10
Litter Control	40	26	27
Tidiness	20	11	10
Residential Areas	30	21	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	24	21
General Impression	10	6	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>169</b>

## **Ballisodare, County Sligo**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Thank you for your completed questionnaire and map which were very helpful. The Work Programme demonstrates a thoughtful approach to developing the village and its environment, with achievable targets in the various areas of the competition. The fund raising ventures and community involvement, along with your continued co-operation with the County Council, other interested bodies was again noted, and the benefits of these partnerships will continue to enhance and enrich the village and its community. The Committee openly uses word like enjoyable and fun in the context of their Tidy Towns work, and it is encouraging to encounter such enthusiasm. The results achieved to date are a good advertisement for the hard work of the Committee and the community.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

Ballisodare Village presents a welcoming impression with some very attractive features in its important river estuary location. The overall presentation of both commercial and private premises in the village, was again very good on the day of adjudication, with the brightly painted premises, flower features and smart footpaths and road surfaces all contributing to a pleasant first impression. It is good to see that appropriate development continues in the centre of the village, which can only add to the streetscape. Gerard Clarke's is now finished and looks well. The Post Office, Sherlock Meats, Hogg's and adjoining building, Toolin's, O Connor's with their new shop front, The Dun Maeve and The Thatch, all looked well maintained and presented. The Church of Ireland and grounds were nicely maintained and tidy. Some major construction work is taking place around the primary school area and on its completion this area will hopefully be tidied up and nicely presented.. The Mercy Convent looked well, but the untidy grass area adjoining could be tidied or developed as a wild meadow area. The waterworks also playing pitch also looked clean and tidy. As noted in last years report, there are still many plastic signs throughout the village that should be replaced with signs that are more sympathetic to the traditional signs and shopfronts evident in the main street.

### **LANDSCAPING**

Congratulations to all those who took part in the Teagasc Horticultural Course. This pro-active approach to your landscaping bodes well for all the future plans you have outlined, which will certainly enhance the village further on their completion. Once again the landscape features and the many tubs and baskets, throughout the village looked very well, along with the individual efforts of many of the

businesses in the village. They provided a great splash of colour and enhanced the whole streetscape. It is important to keep your hanging baskets fed and watered; some baskets needed a little attention on the day of adjudication. A nicely painted pump was also noted on the road out to the old railway line, and it is now a lovely feature in itself. The Grotto area looks very well in its important focal position, and the bi-lingual signs were noted here. It is good to see that you are getting professional advice on your future choice of plants and trees for the village. Ensure that you gets plants that are suitable for your coastal location, that are easy to maintain, and that provide colour and content for all to enjoy throughout the year. There are still some opportunities for further tree planting (do include native species) around the village, judicious planting of appropriate trees, can provide roosts, cover, and food for wildlife, in addition to enhancing the village environment.

### **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

The Committee has an important role in preserving and suitably enhancing the natural environment within their community. Ballisodare is enviable in having so many natural resources in its environment, with such a wide range of opportunities for development under this heading. It is good to note that you are linking this important area of the competition with other projects taking place in the community. Your association with the Lissduff Preservation Group, and utilising the Sli na Slainte route as an exploratory nature walk are good ideas of using inherent resources within the community. There are also other opportunities for enhancing and conserving wildlife habitats and the environment within the village. Wild flower meadows / grass areas, nesting boxes, pond/water features, trees and hedgerows offer additional opportunities. The local children and their school and grounds are an option for developing some of these opportunities. When choosing appropriate signs for projects ensure the enhance rather than detract form the environment you are promoting and preserving. Work in conjunction with relevant local bodies, ENFO, or a local wildlife expert, which you are fortunate to have, to develop this area. We look forward to seeing some tangible results in this section of the competition next year.

### **LITTER CONTROL**

There was some litter on the main street on the day of adjudication, and two bins in this area were full to the point of overflowing. However, it is good to see that you are continuing the education programme in the local schools, and your voluntary clean up sessions, as stated last year these projects reinforce the whole communities responsibility in this very important area. Participation in the National Spring Clean Campaign, children's

competitions, publicity campaigns all contribute to your Litter Awareness Programme and along with appropriately maintained and sited bins, and reduced litter incidences, contribute to the marks in this section of the competition. The committee and community must remain vigilant in this very important area at all times.

## **TIDINESS**

The well maintained premises, good road and footpath finish and some colourful landscaping all contributed to a generally tidy appearance in the village. However there are some areas that need attention as they continue to detract from the overall picture. The old mill area is discussed elsewhere and it goes without saying its effect on the village. The galvanised sheds seen from the old railway road need to be tidied up. An open area adjoining the secondary school also needs to be tidied, or screened, or properly developed as a wildflower area. It is important that all areas of the village are appropriately maintained and kept tidy and litter / weed free, including forecourts, back yards, kerb edges, all open spaces, and areas between properties. Back alleys/yards, should be appropriately screened particularly in areas that will attract rubbish or dumping.

Some shops have a shop goods and display signs out on the footpath. The committee must discourage this as it can look both unsightly and interfere with access for those with disabilities in the community.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

The majority of houses throughout the village, in the housing developments and on the approach roads, were generally well presented. The attractive hedges, lawns and colourful flowers in some individual gardens were noted, as were some attractive tubs and hanging baskets, in some of the town houses, well done for the hard work to all those responsible. However the nicely maintained homes highlight those that need attention or their paint work refreshed both in the village, the housing developments and on the approach roads. The Teeling Gardens development looked very well again this year with its shrub beds maturing nicely. Woodbrook Heights also looked well, with some with tidy common areas and some nice flower features noted again. The footpaths and kerbing still need attention in Stella Maris. The Cloondara estate looks well, with some attractive landscaping, tidy grass areas, its lovely sculpture piece and a nice stone wall. Hopefully, this standard will be maintained as the development continues in this area. Some attractive cottages were also noted on the small lane by the back of the secondary school.

## **ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS**

Attractive signage, nicely faced hedges and tidy verges that did not compromise the flora and fauna were noted on some of the approach roads. The Dublin road looked very well with some tidy footpaths, weed free stone walls, and a lovely little garden noted opposite the Thatch Pub. The work continues up to the bridge and will look very well on completion. The overall appearance of the road around the back of the secondary school has improved, with some tidy walls and premises. It is good to note that the road to the graveyard will be resurfaced, as this area is an important heritage site within the village. The Committee's approach to FAS presents an opportunity to get some work started on the many fine stone walls on the approach roads to the village. The stone walls on the Ballina road are a prime example, if they were repaired and tidied they would certainly enhance this approach. The road to the railway looks much better this year with some new footpaths, improved road surface and tidy verges. The Sligo road has some new footpaths and a good road surface, and the area around the C.O.I. looks very well as does the small garden in front of a private dwelling. However the large derelict mill buildings on both sides of the road remain an eyesore on this approach to the village. This adjudicator hopes you reach a successful conclusion with your approaches to the mill owners.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

Last year's comments still apply, the approach roads, and tidiness remain very important issues for the committee. Build on your success to date, the successful completion of your work programme, application and attention to detail will help realise the full potential of your village. A good effort again by Ballisodare is rewarded with an increase in marks, the growing enthusiasm of the community is commendable, well done and keep up the hard work.