

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **BALLYMOTE**  
County : **SLIGO**  
Category : **C**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 22-06-1999

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	28	28
The Built Environment	40	25	24
Landscaping	40	22	22
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15	15
Litter Control	40	29	28
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	19	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	18	18
General Impression	10	6	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>171</b>

## **Ballymote, County Sligo**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

The completed questionnaire and map were very helpful. A copy of your development plan would have been helpful again this year just to get a clear picture of the plans for the town and put them into context for this year's adjudication. The concise 3/5 year Tidy Towns work plan using competition categories as a guide, is required in this section of the adjudication and is useful in outlining achievable targets for the committee and will help focus your work in the future. It also provides the adjudicator with an opportunity to measure your progress. Publication of the development plan or presenting it in an accessible location, may be of interest to local people, who will appreciate the ideas and work your committee are involved with. It is good to see that the Committee are continuing their partnership with local statutory bodies and organisations. The dividends are already being realised.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

Ballymote with its market tradition has many features that reflect its commercial and historical heritage. Its Castle, Railway Station, Court House and Church buildings and wide streets all contribute to this overall picture of the town. The restoration of Ballymote Castle continues and should look very well on completion. The demolished nursing home space adjoining it, should provide some interesting opportunities for appropriate development in this area. The Railway Station looked very well again this year, and continues to provide a lovely first impression to the town for rail travellers. The landscaping in the Car Park is now complete and looks very well, as did the screening fence in the utilities yard. On the day of adjudication, both Churches and the Abbey Pastoral Centre, looked very well, with attractively maintained features and grounds. The Schools also looked well, with attractive window boxes noted in the Primary School and some nice flower beds at Corran College. Loftus Hall is an imposing corner building and looked well, but the old Church and graveyard on the Colloney approach stills looks untidy although the grass cutting had started, it deserves attention. The new gates to the proposed park area look very impressive, and certainly sets the standard for the work and development within the park itself. The Mart also looked well, but needs to tidy its rear forecourt and the Fire Station needs its paint work refreshed. The hall/cinema building still needs attention before it degenerates further and falls victim to vandalism. The Keash Inn and the waste ground area close by still looks unsightly. Cawleys yard also remains a dreadful eyesore, but the tidy derelict house nearby was noted again this year. The main streets look very well, with many brightly painted premises, and attractive flower features,

that highlight the few premises that need some maintenance or simple flower features to improve their presentation. Buildings that caught the eye for all the right reasons include L Hayden, The Picnic Basket, Hodgins, Doddy's Scanlon's and the Bank of Ireland. Scanlon's also has some attractive flower's and creates a pleasant focal impression at this junction, and an interesting window display was noted at Cawley's. The Garda Station, Credit Union, Post Office, Perry's Funeral Home, Library/ Court House, and Community Enterprise Centre The Old Standand the Ulster Bank all looked well on the day. As mentioned last year, a number of premises including Cryans, Cassidy's and Perry's still have materials on the footpath. Gas Cylinders, free standing signs, displays, all interfere with free access for those in the community with disabilities. The Committee should try to discourage businesses continuing this unsightly practice.

## **LANDSCAPING**

Some improvements were noted in this category in Ballymote, but there is still some work to be done. Landscaping features should enhance the town all year round, providing enjoyment for visitors and the local residents alike. Proper maintenance of all the sites already developed through out the town is very important. The attractive shrub bed and stone wall at the river on the Kenahan Road is a good example of effective planting, with colour and content all year round, but it highlights the neglected bed at the focal junction just down the road from it. It was good to see the improvements in front of the Library, it looked tidy and the street furniture was well maintained. The landscaping features also looked well at Loftus Hall and at the Railway Station Car Park. A perennial bed was also noted at the new entrance to the Park and there was some attractive planting around the Castle Area. Once again, the individual efforts of the property owners in the town deserve praise, for their many colourful flower features which enhance the streetscape. Some residents on the approach roads are also to be commended for tidying and planting the areas outside and around the homes, this was noted in the area opposite the Hillview entrance and on the road past the mill. Street furnishing also comes under this category, and it was noted that many of the benches in the town were painted this year, some litter bins, and the many attractive and intact old water pumps, should have their paint refreshed and presentation improved. As suggested last year, a standard or attractive colour throughout the town might be considered, and may indeed focus people's attention on using the litter bins in the town. Some of the young trees need to have their stakes repaired, and for further developments ensure that you get appropriate advice about the choice of trees, including the use of native trees, and low maintenance planting that provides colour and content throughout the year.

## **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

Ballymote is very fortunate indeed to have the opportunity to develop a sympathetic wildlife and natural amenity on a "green field site", so close to the town. The T.T.C. has an important role to play in the appropriate development and conservation of the natural environment. There are many other opportunities for enhancing and conserving wildlife habitats and the environment within the park and indeed town area. Wild flower meadows / grass areas, nesting boxes, pond/water features, trees and hedgerows offer additional opportunities. Continue to work closely with all the relevant public bodies, local experts, the ENFO, and your local schools, (who will be the future beneficiaries,) to get this right and to optimise this excellent opportunity. Choose and locate your signs and information boards wisely, so that they enhance the project and do not detract from the environment you are trying to preserve and promote. We look forward to the completion of this project which should be an example to many.

## **LITTER CONTROL**

Some litter was evident on the approach roads, and in sporadic areas throughout the town, litter was also noted beside the bridge mentioned earlier, and the old barrel has not yet been removed from the river. Untidy flower beds in themselves can attract litter. Congratulations to your school on the All Ireland Community Game Litter Project win. This is another facet of they continuing successful relationship with the local schools and your Litter Awareness Project. Continue to work closely with your local County Council, it is good to see you were successful in getting some extra new bins. As stated last year, The Committee and the whole community must remain vigilant in this very important area, the town has to stay on top of this problem, now that you have made inroads in tackling it.

## **TIDINESS**

As for last year some of the issues raised in the above categories affect the overall appearance of tidiness of the town. It is important that all areas of the town are maintained, kept tidy and 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. The Tennis Court Area still looks untidy when viewed from the street, and some graffiti was still evident in the back street down from the Corran College. The recycling bins and the area around them were both clean and tidy.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

Many of the houses in and on the approaches to the town were generally well presented and maintained. Some tidy hedges and boundary walls, flowers, tubs and hanging baskets were noted. Also a number of brightly painted, well presented houses were noted in the town centre, Marion Park and Hill View Estate, highlighting those in their vicinity that need attention. The grass area in Marron Park, was tidy, and deserves some attractive landscape feature. It was good to see the work in progress on the Hill View Estate, footpaths, fences and boundary walls all need attention in this area. The estate behind the Nursing Home Site looked tidy and well maintained. The new housing development, Castle View will look well on completion, its tree planting was noted, as was the retention of the mature trees on the site. Property owners must always give due consideration to repairing and maintaining their boundary walls, forecourts fences, and gates, and that any untidy side or back yards must be adequately screened with a gate or fence.

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

The approach roads set the scene for the visitor and deserve particular consideration. Some of the approach roads and smaller roads, still need some work in order to achieve a consistent standard of presentation. Some footpaths, fences, walls, grass verges and road surfaces need attention. Some nice hedges and footpaths were noted on the road out to N.C.F., as was the thoughtful hedge cutting allowing a good view in to the Castle opposite the Railway Station. You state that plans for this heading are highlighted in your Town Development Plan, which I do not have this year, but I assume these will correct any outstanding problems.

### **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

Last years comments still apply in that, any positive development enhances and enriches both the town and community and, increases the attraction for people to visit, stop and enjoy what is on offer in Ballymote. The Committee must still not lose sight of the immediate issues, and problems that can be addressed with "good housekeeping" and attention to detail, without compromising any long term development plans. Good luck with your future plans.