

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **BALLYBUNION**
County : **KERRY**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 19-06-2000

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2000	Mark Awarded 1999
Overall Developmental Approach	50	40	39
The Built Environment	40	31	30
Landscaping	40	32	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	21
Litter Control	40	29	29
Tidiness	20	14	12
Residential Areas	30	22	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	26	27
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	222	219

Ballybunion, County Kerry

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

It is marvellous to see such a list of plans by a tidy towns committee as presented with the application. This shows great commitment and success will follow as these plans are implemented. The commitment also, in having professional advice, is admirable and Ballybunion will go from strength to strength in the future. The difficulties can not be hidden – or perhaps better termed challenges – the salt winds which seem to present a problem for plantings and the seasonal nature of the town with such large influxes of people to cope with in summer and for functions. Thank you for the detailed map, which made the adjudication much more fruitful.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The standard of the shops and accommodation sites is very good. The main street has many fine examples of well cared for premises, well painted and presented. As time passes the more some shops raise their standards the more obvious are those that need to move with the times. Great interest and care is noted in the colour schemes. The old Atlantic Hotel still remains awaiting an evolution, which hopefully will not be long in the future. Caravan parks by nature of the shape and materials used are not the most attractive of sites. Any screen, breaking of large blocks or planting of hedges always helps. The many new developments on the Link road need to settle in and their surrounds to be reinstated. The Cliff House Hotel and Iragh Ti Connor are well tended to and give a nice impression. The fence by the Golf is rather unsightly although the function is understandable. Work on removal of the overhead cables is well in hand and this is a great asset. The church building is very austere with its vacant surrounds and a development plan with a new initiative for this would be very welcome. Ballybunion Holiday cottages are of good quality and together with their nicely landscaped surrounds are attractive.

LANDSCAPING

As mentioned the difficulties with salt laden winds are evident. Hedging can be very effective – Escallonia, Olearia, Fuchsia and Hebes all do well. There are many varieties of these and their varied use could be helpful. The New Zealand Flax and Cordylines are very successful. Other subjects can be grown in the shelter of the former. The planting of hydrangeas to the front of the Ballybunion Holiday homes is an interesting choice. The grassed areas and well cared for cliff areas are a lovely asset. Much of the colour in Ballybunion is provided by the painted houses rather than by plants. Containers are an excellent way to introduce seasonal colour to the streets. The plantings made at the Garda station and across the street

from it were noted as well as at the other locations. The plantings at the Listowel road were noted particularly the word-patterned display. The children's swings are nicely positioned with a lovely view and well cared for surrounds. The link road will benefit from some care to the verges and some plantings when the present spate of building settles. It is good to see that in so many of your tasks for the year 2000 landscaping projects figure highly.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

With such magnificent coastline the wildlife possibilities are enormous. Encouraging people to access this and to be knowledgeable are the challenge. The more information and encouragement people get the more they can enjoy. The informative sign was noted.

LITTER CONTROL

Small amounts of litter were noted in the main street. Considering the fact that it was such a fine day with many visitors the litter was not at a serious level but it does remind us that constant vigilance is needed in this regard.

TIDINESS

The great sweeps of grassed areas at the cliffs and approaching the sea give a tidy appearance. On the other hand the clutter outside some shops gives untidiness. Permitting cars to park on double yellow lines causes much clutter and would some system of one way streets help the present situation. The link road continues to be a source of untidiness. Many of the residents are particular about the care of their homes and add to the tidiness of Ballybunion.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

As already mentioned there is a good sense of pride in homes and this shows, through well cared for paintwork and gardens. Lawns and hedges are particularly important as tree growth is difficult except for cordylines – of which there are many fine examples of mature specimens. The caravan parks can be a little unsightly unless efforts are made to absorb them into the environment.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

There is good potential in many of the side ways and rear accesses. As more and more of the main work is completed this will become more evident as has happened in so many other towns. Some nice new road surfacing is very welcome and hopefully this will extend further in the same way as the undergrounding of cables is taking place. Car parking is a

problem as is the two-way system of traffic.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

With the great planning and setting of priorities by the tidy towns committee, there is no doubt that the future is bright for Ballybunion.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (06/08/00)

Do discourage advertising hoardings as they give approach roads a rather cluttered appearance. Most buildings along the main streets were extremely fresh, although one or two were in sharp contrast and looked quite neglected. As mentioned by the first adjudicator, the church in stone looks rather bare and possibly some landscaping could be considered in this location. Another area for development in this regard would be the numerous caravan parks which could be more successfully screened from public view by means of planting some trees or hedging. The old ballroom is a fine example of its type and should be restored to its former glory once it is sold. The statue of Bill Clinton outside the extremely fresh Garda Station with its abundant floral displays was admired. Plastic curved canopies should be discouraged and replaced with more traditional fabric awnings. There was quite a lot of litter on adjudication day, not helped by the fact that it was the busy August Bank Holiday weekend. This is an ongoing problem and hopefully will be improved upon in the not too distant future. In the meantime, perhaps the Tidy Towns Committee themselves could take on board litter pick-ups and street sweeping and encourage businesses and private individuals to maintain the area immediately in front of their premises. The whitewashed wall in front of the castle should be freshened up before next year's competition. The forecourt area to the Atlantic Hotel looks quite bare and would also benefit from some form of landscaping. However the B&B's in this location were extremely freshly painted.