

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **BALLYBOY**
County : **OFFALY**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 13-06-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	30	28
The Built Environment	40	28	28
Landscaping	40	30	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16	15
Litter Control	40	35	34
Tidiness	20	13	13
Residential Areas	30	21	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	31	31
General Impression	10	8	7
TOTAL MARK	300	212	206

Ballyboy, County Offaly

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Ballyboy is welcome to the 2002 Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission and map with details of work undertaken - both facilitated adjudication greatly. Ballyboy was very difficult for this adjudicator to find and we suggest that you co-ordinate with the County Council to erect additional fingerposts and ensure that those existing are pointing the correct way. The historical plaque at the picnic area opposite the old church is informative. You might consider locating other plaques around the village highlighting the specific locations of the old mill, tanners, nailers, hotel, flower mill, flax mill, police barracks and the hatter's factory. Perhaps this could be incorporated into a walk (you could take into consideration the requirements for the Access and Interpretation of Heritage Award for this).

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The old church opposite the new picnic area is very well presented with wild flowers and wild landscaping. The gates to it are just a little bit bent and could be straightened. In addition the concrete blocks featured in all of the archways of the church should be removed as they detract from the arch features. Dan and Molly's pub is stunning once again, but the beer barrels outside should be removed. The two bog oak sculptures marking the entrance to the excellently presented and landscaped car park of the pub look fantastic. The school and, more urgently, the boundary wall could be freshened, but the grounds are well presented. A derelict building which looks like it might have been a meeting hall or cinema on the Mountbolus road, could be upgraded and the area all around it tidied, weeded and resurfaced. Are there any plans for this building? There is some planting here to the side which is quite nice but this could be extended. There are too many signs in the Hayden's shop window and exterior e.g. 'Magnum', 'HB', 'Flogas' and 'Club Orange' but the premises itself looks quite well.

LANDSCAPING

An Gorta Mór is terrific looking. Planting along the footpath opposite the school is very nice. The large graveled open space on the Clonaslee road could feature some planting to soften the effect of the grey buildings behind. A well kept incidental green area beside a house on the Mountbolus road looks well but car parking here should be discouraged. The green area to the side of the ivy – coloured derelict building at the speed limit signs has very nice planting but the grass could be a little shorter and we would suggest some seating here. You certainly have achieved a substantial amount of landscaping over the past year, congratulations.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The new picnic area opposite the old church is an achievement in itself, well done.

However it is imperative that a litter bin be placed here as soon as possible. Might there be room for an additional picnic table here? The over-hang from the trees above would, of course, have to be cut back to facilitate this. The grass here was a little long and there were a lot of weeds at the base of the wall. What are the plans for the overgrown large green field on entering the village? This is a very prominent site and its development should be carefully considered. In the meantime, the field could either be cut back or planted with colorful wildflowers and the wooden gates here and opposite could be painted to brighten things up. The wildflower planting and young trees at the base of the wall opposite this field is very attractive, though the area could just be swept a little. The riverside area looks well, though there remain a lot of loose gravel and weeds at the entrance, which detract a little, but your work here, including picnic table and bridge, is a wonderful achievement and those involved should be commended. This is now a terrific amenity. Some grass here could be re-seeded and you might consider some patio slabs or an alternative for mucky days. The barbed wire fence blocking access to the two arches at the picnic tables could be replaced as it is old and broken. The sowing of trees with berries beside the river is a good idea.

LITTER CONTROL

The village was almost litter free on adjudication day, with a small exception at the stone wall on the Kilcormac entrance to the village. As noted elsewhere, it is imperative that litter bins be placed at both picnic areas if you hope to continue this excellent standard. Well done!

TIDINESS

There are some grass cuttings blowing around the village, which are being caught in kerbs and should be swept away. The grassed area to the boundary wall of an old derelict building is well kept but there is an old 'Calor Kosangas' sign which should be removed. The village in general is quite tidy, this could be improved by sweeping, to remove a lot of loose gravel.

The derelict building at the bend in the road just before the river on entering from Mountbolus is quite well kept and looks attractive with the covering of ivy and other growth around it. Try to maintain this standard of presentation.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The house and small garden opposite Dan and Molly's is very well cared for. The house on the bend in the road just at the river is a fine house with good architectural features but could be repainted to freshen it up. The new house opposite the picnic area at the Kilcormac / Kinnitty junction looks impressive but the garden and yards of this property are very untidy with old cars, horse box, pallets, rubble, etc. Their tree planting could be extended to completely screen these gardens as they are a poor introduction to the village from the Kilcormac road.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The speed limit signs on entering the village from the Kinnitty/Kilcormac roads are clean but the grass verges here are unfinished, mucky and weedy. Most of the signs throughout the village are kept clean, with a few exceptions, such as those for the 'Offaly Way' and 'Silver River' at the river, which could be cleaned. The side area to Hayden's opposite Dan and Molly's could be tidied up a little, resurfaced and weed growth removed, but the planting here looks well. The water pump outside the school also needs to be freshened up and the sign on the litter bin reading 'Killoughey Macra Na Feirme 1990' needs to be removed or replaced. There are quite a lot of potholes throughout the village. Has any approach been made to the County Council regarding these, or indeed regarding the quite heavy wirescape in the village? All of the stone walls in the village look terrific and are very well maintained and we note the rebuilding of the stone wall on the Clonaslee road.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Ballyboy is a charming and impressive looking village with a tangible community spirit. The support you receive from residents and local authority is evident, congratulations! It was a pleasure to adjudicate Ballyboy this year and we look forward to noting your progress in the competition.