

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballon**

Ref: **34**

County: **Carlow**

Mark: **222**

Category: **B**

Date: **23/06/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	37	36
The Built Environment	40	31	29
Landscaping	40	29	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	19	19
Litter Control	40	32	30
Tidiness	20	14	13
Residential Areas	30	24	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	29	29
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	222	214

Overall Developmental Approach:

The excellent work being done by your Committee, County Council and your Local Community was to be seen in Ballon on Adjudication day. Thank you indeed for all the information and map sent with the entry form which was most useful. While Ballon is a very strung out village there are, nevertheless, opportunities for further environmental improvements which your Committee could possibly identify and catalogue in the form of a three-five year plan based on what is to be carried out annually, within your physical and financial resources. Such a plan will also be a measurement on an annual basis as to how you are progressing and, in the event, the Adjudicator would welcome seeing sight of it with your entry form for 2005. It is interesting again to read that your Community has supported you by taking out advertising on the village website.

The Built Environment:

Again this year, your many public buildings listed in last year's report were very well presented and the work which you mentioned at the School and at the Cemetery was visited on adjudication day and admired. The Millennium Monument is a lovely feature as is the magnificent Grotto opposite the Church. The Pump is also a very nice additional feature in the village. Commercial premises throughout the village are being well maintained and it is noticed that a number of them have refurbished their premises since last year. This type of support makes an important contribution to your Tidy Towns effort and all concerned are to be congratulated.

Landscaping:

Additional landscaping was noticed throughout the village and, in particular, at the Millennium Monument, at the 30mph road signs and where presented, hanging baskets, tubs of flowers and window boxes looked lovely and created a nice atmosphere particularly along the road to the Church and at commercial premises. Landscaping at Maple Lawn continues to improve each year and reflects great credit on the residents there. In general, landscaping throughout the village is being very well maintained and reflects great credit on your Committee.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It is nice to see that you are getting your school children involved in a wildlife project. Perhaps for next year they might extend this even further with the provision of nesting boxes and feeding tables in the School grounds and a wildlife board showing what can be seen locally. There may be a teacher or some person in your community who is knowledgeable on this subject or alternatively talk to Duchas or their successors.

Litter Control:

Other than odd spots of minor littering on approach roads and in the centre of the village, Ballon was practically litter free again on adjudication day. This again reflects great credit on your Committee and your Community. It is an important part of the competition and must be monitored regularly.

Tidiness:

Work in new housing estates creates a certain amount of untidiness but this will pass in time. Allowance has been made for it in the adjudication. It is important, however, to keep a watching brief on the contractors to see that they finish these estates in the manner for which they receive Planning Permission. Otherwise the village was presented in a very neat and tidy manner. A pub in the Main Street had a very nice outdoor display complete with cannon which was much admired.

Residential Areas:

Houses in Ballon are generally very well maintained and reflect great credit on their owners. Maple Lawn estate is a lovely presentation and the smaller housing estates in the village also looked well and had nicely maintained open spaces. Many garden were in full bloom on adjudication day and added greatly to the overall appearance of Ballon. Well done to all concerned.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road surfaces and footpaths are being well maintained. Approach roads were well presented with evidence of verge cutting. New railings painted with creasote were noticed throughout the village and looked very well. Some new ones still remain to be painted. Some timber fencing is in bad repair and should be considered for replacement. Walls look very well and are being looked after. All of these features add greatly to the overall appearance of the village.

General Impression:

As mentioned last year, the level of traffic is a major problem for you, but nevertheless you are coping very well. Some lovely features exist in Ballon particularly in relation to your landscaping and stone monuments and hopefully the Main road will bypass Ballon in time. The village is now reaching a high level in the competition and therefore marks, in the future, will be hard to come by. These can be achieved however through careful planning and attention to detail. At the same time,

do not fail to maintain what you already have which is the backbone of your entry. Congratulations and well done to all concerned.