

# Tidy Towns Competition 2008

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Ballyou skill** Ref: **388**  
County: **Kilkenny** Mark: **261**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **16/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	36
The Built Environment	50	33
Landscaping	50	37
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	23
Litter Control	50	42
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>261</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

It was an inspirational experience visiting Ballyou skill for the first time and to see at first hand the results of the work of this community in sustaining and enhancing the environment in which they live. Congratulations on your endeavours and your results. The village is well signposted from Castlecomer and the lush countryside and fine farms were a pleasure to see towards the end of June. In the following, features of remarkable excellence are mentioned and also those which are seen to be not quite up to standard; it may be assumed that where features are not mentioned they are satisfactory. It is good to read on your entry form how well the residents are involved – but indeed this is obvious from looking around the village.

### **The Built Environment:**

Congratulations on your National Heritage Award for the church. It was looking splendid on the date of the visit. The Community Hall was well presented: the pink valerian against the cream-coloured wall is a master-stroke: many would remove valerian as a weed. The brightly painted antique post-box was favourably noted. The prominent house on the corner could do with freshening up with paint before next year. The Abbey is most impressive, with its three-light window apertures; the surrounding graveyard with headstones of different periods was well kept. This was a very interesting place to visit.

### **Landscaping:**

Your photographs came in very useful – for example, without them we would not have known that you plant bulbs for spring flowering; many committees do not provide this kind of information and therefore miss out on marking. Several excellent and effective landscaping projects were seen, many of them allied to individual residences. The well tended shrubbery alongside the church wall impressed very much, as did the Grotto with its fine stonework, climbers, shrubs, bedding plants and tubs, and the area at the back of the Church where the priest's well is situated. The pump surroundings were also well presented.

**Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

Trees are normally considered under this heading. You state that the number planted is 300! a remarkable figure. It is encouraging to learn how well you have been supported by the County Council with donations during Tree Week. The substantial roadside hawthorn hedges provide food and shelter for bird life. It was good to see that you also recognise the importance of wild flowers.

**Litter Control:**

There was virtually no disposable litter on the date of adjudication. Congratulations for devising your own litter-collection scheme, and congratulations to the FAS worker on his or her efficiency.

**Waste Minimisation:**

The bring bank centre was seen to be well kept. From the information provided you are clearly on top of these issues.

**Tidiness:**

Ballyoussill is essentially a tidy village, so any instances of untidiness stand out as unusual. A derelict house on the Ballinakill road was seen. Overhead cables were mentioned by last year's adjudicator and it is good to read that steps are being taken to remove these. A yard next to the Abbey was a disappointment at this otherwise well-kept and dignified location.

**Residential Areas:**

A wonderfully distinctive feature of Ballyoussill is the way in which many private residences have first class gardens attached. One on the Ballinakill road has gardens opposite as well as alongside; the roses are splendid here. Another specially imaginative front garden was seen a couple of doors from the pub. These and many others contribute enormously to the charm of the village. A fine new house with first class wooden fencing was favourably noted on the Castlecomer road; it is expected that the frontage will be gravelled or grassed in due course. A first class traditional farmhouse was seen nearby with excellent field fencing opposite; the cement walls at the farm gate could be painted to advantage.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Surfaces were reasonably good. Verges were trim and neat. There appeared to be sufficient street lights. One village name sign was in need of cleaning.

**General Impression:**

Ballyoussill has been a real discovery for this adjudicator, who will be following the fortunes of this lively community with great interest in future years. What emerges most forcibly is the way in which the residents cooperate in the enhancement of their native place. Congratulations on your achievements and best wishes for further success.