

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **BALLINAKILL**  
County : **LAOIS**  
Category : **B**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 18-06-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	21
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	14
Landscaping	40	25
The Built Environment	40	22
Litter Control	40	25
Tidiness	20	12
Residential Areas	30	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	21
General Impression	10	5
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>163</b>

## Adjudicator's Comments

### OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

It is encouraging to read in the answers to the questionnaire that support both in cash and in kind is forthcoming and that there is a good co-operative relationship with the County Council. The FAS employment scheme must be particularly useful too. Nature walks and local attractions, mentioned in the questionnaire, should be signposted as part of your future planning.

### WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

An average mark is being given in this first year under this heading, to enable committees to consider priorities.

### LANDSCAPING

The grassed areas to the north of the town, with two wonderful chestnut trees, give an excellent first impression to the visitor arriving on the Abbeyleix road. (This amenity area, however, is not remarkable enough, among several hundred proposals, to be entered for the national amenity award.) Tree planting is good, but it is impossible to know how much, if any, has been done in the past year. (There can never be enough tree planting!) The FAS improvement scheme to the south of the town, with paving being laid down at the time of adjudication, should be well established next year; concentrate planting on shrubs and perennials as they give greater satisfaction over a long period and require less attention; bedding-plants do play a part of course, but are of secondary importance. This major project is not indicated on the map. Please always mark whatever improvements have been made over the last twelve months, even if they have not been completed, on the map. It is unlikely that such improvements will be missed by the adjudicator but it is in your interests to be on the safe side.

### THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The two churches make an unusual and arresting architectural statement, situated as they are side-by-side. The garden of the Church of Ireland is more attractive but weed growth on the spire needs attention. The Garda station had been very attractively painted. The school is well kept and has a nice garden. The old school, marked in orange on the map without explanation, may be a project for renovation? - if so, its completion will be looked forward to next year. The painted frontage at Delaney's gives that section of street a real 'lift'.

### LITTER CONTROL

An appreciable amount of litter was seen in the central streets on adjudication day.

### TIDINESS

The town was reasonably tidy. Where weed has been poisoned, be sure to remove the dead weeds, as they can look even more untidy than growing ones. Where there is kerbside weed, if every householder were to spend ten minutes removing it from their frontages, this problem would be gone from the entire town in ten minutes!

### RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Older street houses are generally well looked after. The small estate to the south (not marked on map) also appeared well kept. The side street to the east has pleasant roadside cottages and there is a very well-presented guest-house with a restored stone wall and neat hedging: a first class example. On this road and on the road to the west, well-kept properties alternate with not so good, giving an inconsistent effect.

#### ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Surfaces are reasonable (though poor in the lay-by on the Abbeyleix road). The long stone wall on the east side of this road is attractive and well maintained. The central square is rather bleak but is intrinsically handsome: why not, in your long-term plan, plant a certain number of trees each year, in a systematic way! You will be surprised how quickly such a project will make its mark on the townscape. The open space to the south of the town gives a poor impression; undoubtedly there are difficulties which the committee may be trying to overcome.

#### GENERAL IMPRESSION

An attractive town, gradually coming to terms with its fine potential.