Tidy Towns 1996

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **BALLINAHOWN VILLAGE**
County : **WESTMEATH**
Category : **A**

## Results

Date of Adjudication : 05-07-96

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded |
|---|---|---|
| Overall Developmental Approach | 50 | 38 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 30 | 16 |
| Landscaping | 40 | 29 |
| The Built Environment | 40 | 26 |
| Litter Control | 40 | 31 |
| Tidiness | 20 | 13 |
| Residential Areas | 30 | 17 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 40 | 28 |
| General Impression | 10 | 7 |
| **TOTAL MARK** | **300** | **205** |

# Adjudicator's Comments

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH
Another impressive performance for Ballinahown can be reported this year with continuing improvements under all headings. The level of support from the Community is of a very high order and the appearance of the village reflects this commitment. The co-operation that you have received from FAS and from the Local Authority is also reflected in the standard of presentation of stone walls and other features in the village.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES
The many mature trees in the village and its approaches are attractive wildlife habitats. The rookery in the amenity area is an example of this. Wildlife and Natural Amenities is a new section in the competition and in future plans you should make provision where possible for the conservation of natural and wildlife habitats.

LANDSCAPING
The landscaping work throughout the village is of a high order. The amenity area at the junction with its mature trees, attractive stone walls and seats is an oasis of tranquillity beside the busy road. The green painted farm and other gates throughout the village are lovely, as are the many colourful and well planted hanging baskets and flower tubs. Shrubberies, particularly at the Ferbane junction, add considerably to the overall quality of the village. The shrubbery at the entrance to the car park area on the opposite side of road to the Church is an important feature as it helps break up the size of the car park and brings it more into scale with the rest of the village.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT
The school is very well presented as are its landscaped grounds. The painted boundary wall and iron railings in the car parking area is noteworthy. The Church is satisfactory; landscaping work in progress is noted. The large colourful flower tubs and baskets help lift the Community Hall. The forecourt of Rohans Agricultural Supplies is tidy but the iron roof should be painted. In addition, the provision of a couple of large well planted flower tubs in front of the building would lift the area. The tin roof adjoining Flynns pub at the Clonmacnoise road would be improved by painting. The prefabricated Garda Station is a credit with its freshly painted boundary wall and shrubbery. The Texaco sign could be freshened up.

LITTER CONTROL
Litter control is of a high order in Ballinahown. On the day of inspection the village proper and its approaches were litter free. The overall appearance of the village is one of neatness and tidiness and indeed reflects a high standard of care by the Community.

TIDINESS
The village has a tidy and well cared for appearance. The well maintained approach roads, weed free stone walls, well presented business premises and private dwellings together create a good impression of tidiness and is a reflection of a high standard of presentation of the village.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS
The vast majority of residential properties are well maintained and presented. Several have attractive stone walls or well painted boundary walls and there are several attractive gardens. Others also maintain gravelled margins between boundary walls and road, although there is room for improvement in this respect. A number of weedy margins were noted at the Offaly sign on the Clonmacnoise road. Painting would freshen up a number of boundary walls, e.g. the National School. Here and there, hedge

maintenance could be improved.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The Athlone road is impressively presented with stone walls, mature trees, the more recently planted trees and closely cut grass. The Clonmacnoise road is also of a high order with lengthy stretches of good quality stone walls. The grass verges are well maintained on the Ferbane road. However, screening trees should be planted at stretches of concrete and rusty chain link fencing. The small flower beds on this road are colourful and well maintained but their small size reduces their impact.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Ballinahown is making great progress and the standard of presentation continues to be high. A number of areas that need to be addressed are outlined in this report. At this level of the competition greater attention to detail is expected and will be looked for more and more.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (11/08/96)

Please include details of any planned work programmes you may have for the village. We look forward to the eventual ducting of all service cables around the village. Explore the possibility of developing the field located between the rear wall of the church carpark and the residential estate as a wildlife garden. The small park located across from the Rohan premises is attractive and neatly maintained. The stream was spoiled somewhat by the presence of an old tin barrel and a loose Chippings' sign together with some other bits and pieces. This should be kept clean at all times and the stream highlighted as an amenity feature of the village. Landscaped areas approaching and throughout the village, particularly at the school, are quite magnificent. The National School is being considered for the landscape award. The beer sign which features on the Flynn premises is outdated, it should be taken down altogether or replaced with a more modern non-plastic, non-neon sign. A flower bed similar to those featured at the carpark could be located in the centre of the forecourt area of the Rohan Agri Supplies Ltd. property. The church and its grounds and particularly the grotto look exceptionally well. Litter control was very good on our second visit also. The area inside the neatly painted green gates, comprising of farm yards and animal sheds, etc. should either be tidied up further or the gates provided with some solid panels to provide additional screenage. Additional trees could be planted behind the stone walls to this farmyard area to give greater enclosure. Although the village was litter free on second adjudication, it did need a good sweeping in some areas to get rid of a build up of leaves and mud. Don't forget to remove all traces of building material from the carpark when work to the stone wall has been completed here. Some stretches of roadside, for example at the carpark, are in need of resurfacing to eliminate potholes. Well done on work achieved on footpaths and other resurfacing work. Some approach roads were overgrown to a certain extent, these should either be kept neatly trimmed or managed for wildflower displays. The projects completed by the community for this years competition leave a very favourable impression of the village with the travelling public.