

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **MOUNTBELLEW**  
County : **GALWAY**  
Category : **B**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 19-06-98

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1998	Mark Awarded 1997
Overall Developmental Approach	50	38	37
The Built Environment	40	29	28
Landscaping	40	30	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	21
Litter Control	40	28	29
Tidiness	20	16	16
Residential Areas	30	23	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	29	29
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>218</b>

## **Mountbellew, County Galway**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

The answers to the questionnaire disclose a remarkably enterprising approach by the members of this Association; the results of their forward planning are to be seen everywhere. It was a highly imaginative decision to offer to buy the derelict terrace off the Ballygar road: they are handsome old houses, and if the plan was to rehabilitate them, so much the better; it is hoped that you will be able to reactivate this brave project at a more propitious time.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

The principal buildings, including the Church, the Schools and Agricultural College, and the Community Centre, are well maintained, as usual. The Post Office is excellent. The Forge restoration is coming along well - the joinery and stonework were admired. The Shrine in the Church grounds is an inspirational addition. Most of the business premises are well presented, though there are a few disappointments such as Mullins' gable not being painted to match the frontage, and gable painting on The Last Post not being completed. Some shopfronts were photographed for consideration in the national competitions - but please remember when making nominations that the whole building - including chimney stacks, roofing, gutters and chutes, gables and upper storeys - have to be in as good condition as the shop frontage, and there must be no plastic or mass-produced signage.

### **LANDSCAPING**

Your tree-planting and tree-replacement programme is admirable. Landscaping in the Leisure Park, as well as maintenance of gardens around the Church, Schools, etc. is of a high standard. Incidental planting throughout the town is good too. It is in fact the neatness of the extensive verges, and the successful nurturing of young trees along the approach roads, which immediately attract the attention and remain in the mind as the quintessential Mountbellew.

### **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

The surrounding woodlands, the river and lake, contribute richly to the preservation and encouragement of many forms of wild life. It is good to see that the Leisure Park and environs have been declared a Wild Life Sanctuary. You might suggest a schools project on the identification and listing of trees and plant species, and also of animals and birds.

### **LITTER CONTROL**

Though the town was visited on a Friday, as requested, there was considerable kerb-side litter, especially between the Square and the County Council offices. Again, there was disposable litter in the shrubbery of the latter - one place where it should certainly not be seen! and where it would take only a minute for a staff member to remove it daily when necessary. There was also appreciable litter in the neighbourhood of The Last Post. Do not despair - your efforts will be rewarded in the fullness of time. Several well-publicised fines under the Litter Act might help to do the trick.

## **TIDINESS**

The riverside, both below and above the bridge, looked tidy this year. The entrance to Pairc an Chreagain was very weedy on adjudication day; it might be better, and easier, to increase the grassed area rather than to have to deal with so much weed growth encroaching on the road. It was good to see how well kept the commercial yard by the bridge is. The disused garage buildings in the Square are not totally unsightly, but they have that potential.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

The grassed space at Forest View is a splendid amenity for its residents; the background of conifers here and in neighbouring estates is most attractive; new estates in the process of development off the same main road are promising. Many individual homes on the outskirts are well presented.

## **ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS**

As usual, the approach roads are well maintained and give an inviting first impression. Stone walls are excellent. Unsightly 'backs' are unfortunately visible from the bridge. The 'discordant elements' of the Square mentioned by last year's adjudicator do not need pointing out again.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

Fine approaches, well kept suburban spread, and a very interestingly shaped 'Square', are the memorable features of Mountbellew. A great deal of sound activity has resulted in many improvements in recent years. The few seemingly intractable problems are certainly being addressed with vigour by this Association.

## **SECOND ADJUDICATION (10/08/98)**

The town of Mountbellew looked well on a sunny and warm August second adjudication day. However, there are still one or two problem areas which need to be tackled - these are outlined in this commentary. The rear areas and out buildings mentioned by the first adjudicator are quite unsightly, when viewed from the bridge and are in sharp contrast to the well maintained riverside area. Indeed landscaped areas throughout the town were very

well maintained with neat and ordered grass verges which were being mown on the day! Do bear in mind however, that it is easy to over prettify. Simplicity is the best option in terms of presentation and unnecessary and over enthusiastic floral displays should be discouraged. The impact will be even more dramatic with a careful use of these elements. The attractive Milestone on the bridge is a fine heritage feature which has been maintained and is commendable. Weed control was a problem on the day, in terms of the kerbs on the Tuam and Ballinasloe sides of the town. The graveyard wall should be painted before next year's competition. Litter control was also a problem. Litter was evident by the bin adjacent to the Agricultural College and indeed all along the Ballinasloe Road, to the town square by the telephone boxes and still to the County Council shrubbery mentioned by the first adjudicator. The buildings around the square looked quite colourful and cheerful on the day, in particular the Square Kitchen in a salmon pink colour. Finnertys was also very fresh and the stone church was beautifully maintained. Generally the town looked neat and well cared for.