

"Caring for our environment"

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

Results

Date of Adjudication : 03-07-2000

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2000	Mark Awarded 1999
Overall Developmental Approach	50	43	41
The Built Environment	40	29	27
Landscaping	40	33	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	19	16
Litter Control	40	32	29
Tidiness	20	16	14
Residential Areas	30	22	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	33	30
General Impression	10	8	7
TOTAL MARK	300	235	214

Ballinahown, County Westmeath

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Ballinahown is to be congratulated on many fine developments. A tremendous amount of work has been achieved for the village in the last two years and whilst Ballinahown was always beautiful, its many fine features today are testimony to the commitment of the community to their village and its natural environment. Well done on the wheelchair access to the community hall and the wonderful stone work and landscaping here. There is obviously a deep sense of community spirit in Ballinahown and we wish you well with your community development plans, i.e. social housing and the further development of the community centre. Congratulations also on the interpretation of your heritage and Ballinahown's link with the ancient pilgrim path to Clonmacnoise.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

All buildings in the village are presented to a good standard but the refurbishment of the old school as the Celtic Roots Art Studio is magnificent and enhances the quality of life in the village as well as its physical appearance and, of course, is a wonderful facility for the travelling public. Give consideration to a co-ordinated colour scheme for properties along the main street. Signposting might be considered for the Harry Clarke windows in the church.

LANDSCAPING

The view of the church framed by stands of mature trees on approaching from the Athlone road is complemented by neat grass verges and landscaping at the village entrance behind the nameplate. Landscaping in the village centre is superb also, particularly at the carpark where the sculpture piece both in the carpark and in the grounds of the school were much admired. The bog oak set amidst the landscaped areas at the perimeter of the carpark complement these areas wonderfully.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Congratulations on the development of the nature trail behind the school and on the development of the park. Do carry out a survey of the wildlife associated with the nature trail and let us have the results of this for next year's competition.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter control is excellent, well done! Keep us informed of your

activities under this heading. We would be interested to get a picture of the activities behind the actual achievements.

TIDINESS

There are no major problems under this heading. Continue to be vigilant regarding side and back areas and, of course, regarding weed growth along kerbs. It is good to note that all building materials have been removed.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Residential properties are again presented to a high standard. As noted above a co-ordinated colour scheme is suggested for the buildings along the main street. Some of which are residential properties. The small estate looks very well.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Approach roads to Ballinahown are all beautifully presented. Stretches of stone wall were weed free and mostly in an excellent state of repair. We note with interest and admiration the training you mention on stone wall construction in the traditional manner for FAS workers. Vintage lampstandards were admired also.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The general impression of Ballinahown is extremely favourable to the degree that it would encourage the travelling public to stop and spend some time in the village.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (02/08/00)

The significant increase of marks is well deserved. Most of the village was presented to a consistent high standard. The painting of all the field gates the same colour indicates co-ordination. The use of some bold paint colours on buildings is commended. A few papers were noted, this time along the road past the school. Weedy roadsides, particularly in front of residential properties on the southern approach, are a detail which becomes increasingly important as you climb to the top ranks of the competition. Another matter for consideration is the appearance of farm sheds and side walls, etc where visible across fields from approach roads; remember that the village is perceived as a three dimensional object where distant views are most relevant.