

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **BALLINAGORE**
County : **WESTMEATH**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 09-06-2001

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2001	Mark Awarded 2000
Overall Developmental Approach	50	36	35
The Built Environment	40	25	25
Landscaping	40	31	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	22	21
Litter Control	40	26	26
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	15	15
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25	25
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	199	196

Ballinagore, Co. Westmeath

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The Ballinagore Tidy Towns Committee are commended for their developmental approach. The excellent 1997 - 2001 work plan maps the progression of works undertaken and has given a fine focus to improvements carried out this year. This was this adjudicators first visit to your village and the experience was a very pleasant surprise. Particularly impressive is the ongoing development of the school wildlife project which in many ways lays the foundation for healthy appreciation of the environment.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The village streetcape is pleasantly reflective of a quiet rural community. There are no dominant structures and it is noted that problems in regard to dereliction will be addressed in the near future. It is rewarding to see some restoration work being carried out but care should be taken to ensure it does not infringe the 'old world' ambience of the village. The Tidy Town Meeting room with hanging baskets looks excellent. The post office and attached buildings are in need of painting and brightening up. Some timber windows have been replaced with plastic frames, and around the post office there is evidence of timber frames in a stressed condition. (VIVO Window). Mahons pub looks well with flora displays and traditional style fascia. The school displays flower boxes in each of its windows and is exemplary with tidy grounds, car park with its nearby flower beds, and exceptional millennium garden.

LANDSCAPING

There is evidence of a high level of maintenance work with plant renewal and trimming of lawns and hedges. Trees are maturing well, and you have maintained a good choice of shrubs etc. It was noted that work on the Slang has reached final stage but wall replacement works remain to be done.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The National School Parents' Association Millennium Wildlife garden is a highly commendable project which has given a unique community experience in flora and fauna management. As an addition to your riverside walk, and the surrounding mature trees, Ballinagore continues to develop its wildlife and natural amenities. The surrounding hedging provides a wild life habitat which is absolutely natural with wild grasses, and flowers. The millennium garden is idyllic with its array of wild flower, trees, and dew pond. Everything here is natural, from the timber mulch pathway to the rustic seat and bird feeding station.

The bridge is central to the village and the amenity areas on both sides are well presented with seating areas and walks. The Brosna riverside walk is a delight.

LITTER CONTROL

There is no evidence of a litter problem. The litter bin distribution is effective and there is an obvious civic spirit in ensuring a litter free

environment. Your management programme is working well - keep up the good work!

TIDINESS

Ballinagore was tidily presented with no displays of unwanted posters or graffiti. There was good control of kerb, wall and building weed. The prospect of overcoming the problem of dereliction must be regarded as one of a number of future successes for your committee. The water pump in front of the derelict buildings is a nice feature, but there is room for improvement here. Unfortunately the petrol pumps detract from the village landscape and the missing or broken gate at the back of the open space at this point should be replaced. Also, the heap of surface stones should be removed.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Residential areas within the village were nicely presented and surrounding housing displayed attractive and well-maintained gardens. There is a little concern for the appearance of plastic windows and the removal of plasterwork to expose cut stone facades.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Beautifully presented margins, picnic tables, planters, stone walls, at village entrances. All very well maintained. There are a number of colourful floral displays and excellent open space management particularly at the bridge, McMahons, and the east end of the village. A well-maintained grass strip with rose beds set into wall connects the school with the village.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

General impression was that Ballinagore is a delightful village with a very active tidy town community. There is an amount of work to be done which requires the support of other bodies for example the underground cabling of the wirescape and the co-operation some property owners. Some concern is expressed about the redevelopment of some properties. It is important that the old world character of the village be maintained, not changed.