

"Caring for our environment"

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

Results

Date of Adjudication : 05-08-2001

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2001	Mark Awarded 2000
Overall Developmental Approach	50	43	43
The Built Environment	40	30	29
Landscaping	40	33	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	19	19
Litter Control	40	32	32
Tidiness	20	17	16
Residential Areas	30	22	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	33	33
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	237	235

Ballinahown, Co. Westmeath

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The 'Welcome to Litter free school' sign at Ballinahown reflects the community spirit. The village is bright and cheery and has an ambience of lively community activity and interest. The stone work and presentation of the car park and the community hall is excellent. Your planning document schedules the range of works to be addressed in a very uncomplicated fashion. Well done, keep up the work.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The built environment looks very attractive with pastel colour scheme and numerous hanging baskets. The school buildings are freshly presented in white colour and within the school grounds are pieces of sculpture set in shrubs. The maturing trees are growing nicely in the school grounds. The Garda station looks well, painted yellow with large window box floral display.

The back of the community hall is painted grey but the windows may need replacing. To the front of the hall is a well kept small lawn and in this area, an array of stone planters of flowers and shrubs. The Church with its chestnut trees and lawns is very attractively presented.

LANDSCAPING

To the left of the school entrance is a piece of sculpture nestling under a group of trees. The school grounds are presented very well, the basketball pitch perfectly clean, and as it is holiday time, the grass playing field at the rear of the school has returned to wildflower and grasses.

The entrance to the park from the Clonmacnoise Road has a little weed at its entrance along its left-hand boundary of hedge and link fence. On the right hand side, timber screening dressed with hanging flowers presents the boundary with the Garda Station. Generally the park is well presented. There is a recently planted flowerbed which camouflages the septic tank covers very well with its shrubs, flowers and stone 'pieces'. Screening has been placed at the back of the community hall. There is a stone 'piece' on top of a mound in the park which needs explanation and maintenance. The community hall frontage is clean and colourful with hanging baskets at the entrance door and the ramp access for the disabled is excellent with its sidewall topped with flowers. There are three nice planters of colourful flowers set at the entrance and floral boxes in the community hall windows. At the footpath is a most unusual water pump feature set in stone dressed with plants and flowers.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Entrance to the Nature Trail is through the Ballinahown Sports Park. Construction work was ongoing at the entrance gate and there was an amount of builders materials and debris in evidence. Delighted to see work continuing on this school related project.

LITTER CONTROL

No litter what so ever in the school environs. There is a litterbin at the school entrance and a row of recycling facilities at one end of the car park.

Within the village there was little evidence of litter and an adequate supply of litterbins. Your litter management programme is working well.

TIDINESS

Wiring has been ducted so there is no overhead wirescape problem in Ballinahown. The car park and its water sculpture are most attractive and well presented. The cobblestone surround is very attractively laid out. It is questionable that the 'Welcome to Westmeath' sign should be placed in the planter outside the Community Hall. There seems to be some cabling work yet to be completed at the pillar entrance to the community hall.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The small residential cottages on and off the Clonmacnoise Road are very well presented with colourful and well-kept gardens.. Celtic Roots looks really well as do the terrace of houses adjacent to the shop with their shrub planters and 'patio' lights. There is a beautifully presented private white house beside the community hall with a wonderful garden of plants and flowers. Weed should be removed from chimney stack.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The entrance to Ballinahown from the Athlone side is very attractive with well-maintained walls, and on one side, the walls are topped with plants. The verges are trimmed and within this area is an amenity park with seating etc. The Ballinahown sign is set in a planter with shrub at its base.

The entrance from the Clonmacnoise side, has its tilted verges cut back. Small incidence of broken footpath/road surface opposite Flynns and also near the Church. From the Ferbane side there are nicely cut verges.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Ballinahown is a delightful village in which its many attractions are well displayed. It suffers somewhat from heavy traffic movements through its main street but has never the less maintained a most attractive village ambience.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (05/08/2001)

The Church grounds and carpark opposite form a central feature of the village. The water feature and sculpture is beautiful and creates a great focal point within the village - forming an atmosphere equivalent to a village square. The picnic area is a refreshing area with a calm provided by the greenness of the surrounds. The planting of small dry place plants on top of the wall is a good idea. The Pilgrim wood sculpture and the sculptures at the school add character to the village. The internal garden within the school building is wonderful. Litter was being picked up through the village on this Sunday morning which was very encouraging. Weeds are

developing fast in the shrub borders by the entrance to the school.
The large copper beech tree in the Church grounds is beautiful and it
is good to see its successor planted in the field across the road.