

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **BALLACOLLA**  
County : **LAOIS**  
Category : **A**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 07-08-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	43	42
The Built Environment	40	33	32
Landscaping	40	34	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	22	21
Litter Control	40	34	33
Tidiness	20	17	18
Residential Areas	30	24	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	36	36
General Impression	10	8	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>248</b>

# **Ballacolla, Co Laois**

## **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Well done on your funding through weekly lotto and for bringing all sections of the community, young and old, into playing their part in Tidy towns. Ballacolla presents itself to a high standard each year and this year was no exception. Approaches to the village, and the cross roads landscaping are most attractive indeed.

## **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

The church is freshly presented with well kept frontage. The Old School Hall with its new roof, window boxes, and tidy lawns looks well. Within the village there is an attractive mix of modern bungalow and the more traditional two storey buildings. Most are well presented, Caoch O'Learys, the Post Office, McDermotts, and Katies caught the eye. The fascia board over Mahers Food Store could be improved with more traditional sign painting. The Garda Station in particular was beautifully dressed with shrubs and cut lawns. The School looked tidy with well maintained garden and shrubs. There is a nice run of plants along the stretch in front of a new bungalow and the Caoch O'Leary pub. Opposite the church a new house and garage are under construction and the gardens here have yet to be developed. The Hawthorn Community centre looks fine with access for wheelchairs. There was excellent signposting for community centre, and wildlife park.

## **LANDSCAPING**

The centrepiece of the village display is the landscaping of the pedestrian amenity which runs from the Durrow corner up the Rathdowney Road. From a colourful flowerbed on the corner to the circular planter, it continues past the blue village pump displayed among a planter of flowers, with period standard lamp, seats and plants. On the opposite side Katie's Corner has a simple but nice display of potted flowers and newly planted tree.

## **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

Wildlife Sanctuary is excellent. The wild grasses, traditional trees and hedging, breeding pens, nesting facilities etc. are all very impressive. The 'Visit to the Hawthorn Wild Life Park' manual is an outstanding publication and gives a wonderful synopsis of all there is to see in the park. It was nice to see wheelchair accessible pathways.

## **LITTER CONTROL**

Litter seems to be well managed although there was a full to overflowing litter bin outside McDermotts Shop on adjudication day. Recycling bins were noted at the side of Community Centre.

## **TIDINESS**

Apart from a house on the Durrow Road which had part boarded up windows and generally poorly presented yards and outbuildings, Ballacolla was generally tidy. The Road surface to community centre needs resurfacing as it is quite pot holed.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

St. Fergals Park looks well with its open green area well maintained with trees around the peripheral wall. The estate itself is fairly good but the large garage sheds at the end of the estate are out of proportion for a residential area. Road needs resurfacing. A house on corner of Fergal park is falling into disrepair. Nice little feature in this area is the thatched cottage, with yellow door and recent thatch. Frontage could be improved through tidying up beds to the front

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

The approach from Rathdowney side was fine with trimmed verges etc. While the approach from Durrow is delightful with cut verges and fine variety of trees with concrete fencing well screened with hedging. The stone village sign is cleanly displayed and leads to the amenity layby with its stone planters of colourful flowers and shrubs, picnic tables and seats. Walls are generally complete. Approach from Borris side has Tidy towns sign to the left and a well presented roadside amenity area with blossoms, maturing trees, seats and tables. This is a top class presentation. To the right a further amenity with about 5 stone planters of roses and flowers along with interesting stone picnic table, seating and refuse bin. There was nice shrubbery display at wall close to bend in road. The approach from Abbeyleix close to the village is an amenity well presented with cut verges and new trees and fine hedgeing. Planters with rose display and some maturing trees. Road in from the 'Farmhouse Hostel' has cut verges and planter display.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

Ballacolla presents in the top section of Tidy Towns. The committee's enthusiasm is well expressed at various levels not only in improving the appearance of the village but in taking time to consider the needs of the handicapped. Well done!

## **SECOND ADJUDICATION (07/08/2002)**

Your extensive submission together with the entry form made most interesting reading, especially the school project. In general, the village again had a very tidy appearance. Regrettably however a few kerbside weeds did persist. You obviously have been busy landscaping but permanent planting is preferred to the bedding type. There are still several yards and outbuildings which are visible from the public domain and should, at your level in the competition, be improved. When carrying out improvements to old

buildings it is generally recommended that salvaged materials be used; eg, natural quarry slates suit old stone buildings very much better than manmade fibre cement slates. The extent of grass verge mowing, particularly on the Durrow Road was overwhelming. We wish you well with the Ploughing Championship.