

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **BALTINGLASS**
County : **WICKLOW**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 23-06-2002

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2002 | Mark Awarded 2001 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Overall Developmental Approach | 50 | 29 | 29 |
| The Built Environment | 40 | 29 | 29 |
| Landscaping | 40 | 25 | 25 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 30 | 19 | 18 |
| Litter Control | 40 | 18 | 20 |
| Tidiness | 20 | 12 | 12 |
| Residential Areas | 30 | 19 | 18 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 40 | 29 | 29 |
| General Impression | 10 | 6 | 6 |
| TOTAL MARK | 300 | 186 | 186 |

Baltinglass, County Wicklow

OVERALL DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

The five year plan submitted last year will continue to be functional and as targets are met these achievements can be ticked off the list. A committee of 8 people will have a great deal of work to do and the more cooperation that can be gained from other public or private groups, the more progress will be made. Residents associations and business premises associations work well in other towns and this should be one of the ways forward for Baltinglass. There is some building development taking place on the Kiltegan road by the Teagasc building and beyond and when all of this is complete normality will resume. The river setting creates a lovely ambience to the town and this aspect can be built on as has already been done with the picnic area.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The central triangle of buildings dominates the town and this is an unusual situation. This triangle of buildings is not making the positive impact that it could. This aspect could be an important feature making Baltinglass an unique town. There is a need for some imagination to be applied. There are many stone walls and buildings in the town which give a nice character. In the area of Belan street there are nice stone buildings and walls being constructed. The business premises within the town seem a little dull in places and a programme to assess all buildings in the town, consult with colour consultants and develop a way forward is needed. The absence of even one tree in the entire area towards the Kiltegan side is, in itself, a great loss. The schools are in good condition and the new school buildings were noted. It is good to see new stone walls being built as at the new building on the Kiltegan Road. The Catholic church is the finest building in the town. The Church of Ireland and adjoining abbey remains are also attractive features.

LANDSCAPING

Under this heading there is the greatest opportunity of changing Baltinglass. Street planting in particular would make a huge difference. The spaces are so enormous that as well as single tree, groups of trees or even a central park area could be made within the village. The Catholic church grounds and the adjoining Lalor centre have an outstanding landscape display and contribute well to the town. Individual gardens make a very positive contribution to the overall landscape of the town and their owners are to be commended. Some industrial buildings on the Dublin road need a better presentation to the roadside. The industrial buildings on the Kiltegan road offer a better appearance. The cemetery is well maintained with well kept grass. Tree

planting to the sides of the cemetery either inside or outside would give a more attractive appearance from a distance. The copper beech and ash trees by Timmon's Lane help in this regard, but more tree planting on all sides would help. The riverside project with well kept grass and seating near the abbey ruins is a great project, great for use and great to view from the Dublin road.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Both the Golf Course area and the riverside areas are good examples of places where projects outlining the range of plants and animals inhabiting these areas can be seen. These types of projects make ideal school group work and the possibilities of increasing the range of wild life, be it by plantings or otherwise, could be investigated and implemented.

LITTER CONTROL

The litter control situation is particularly disappointing. Litter was prevalent in almost every situation on the town from the main streets to Timmon's Lane. There needs to be an urgent litter management plan developed and put in place, as the level of street litter is way above the norm seen in towns and village of Ireland.

TIDINESS

Because of the litter problems an untidiness results. There are many buildings needing attention, The Petrol station on the Kiltegan road surrounds look untidy. A management plan that would examine all the areas of untidiness is needed followed by an action plan.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

There is a good level of presentation of the housing estates on the Kiltegan Road. People are caring for their properties and gardens reasonably well. Open spaces within housing estates offer opportunities for tree planting and where such exist, the planting of beech, oak, willow and chestnut should be considered rather than smaller ornamental garden trees. Attention to entrances to housing estates plays a major part in their general appearance.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The approach from Tullow is very pleasant with good roadside verges and walls in places. The Dublin Road has the benefit of the river view. The Kiltegan road is very built upon with the estates, schools and industrial area. For this reason extra attention to the landscape element of the road frontage is needed. The main streets have already been referred to.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Baltinglass is a fine town with very good potential for developing its amenity aspects. The river, background

tress and unique streetscape could be harnessed to produce a very interesting and novel town.