

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballinahown Village**

Ref: **585**

County: **Westmeath**

Mark: **250**

Category: **A**

Date: **27/07/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	45	44
The Built Environment	40	32	31
Landscaping	40	34	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	19
Litter Control	40	36	34
Tidiness	20	17	17
Residential Areas	30	24	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	34	33
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	250	242

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for your application form, map and comprehensive plan. It is always a pleasure to read a plan that has given careful consideration to all aspects of the "Tidy Towns" initiative. The considerable involvement of the local National School and wider community is highly commendable. As your current plan draws to completion the adjudication panel look forward to receiving the committee's objectives and vision for the next 5 years.

The Built Environment:

This is a particularly good category for the village. The immaculate Church grounds and artistic Carpark, the eye catching Community Centre and the impressive Celtic Roots Studio are fine examples of presentation at this level in the competition. The school and its grounds are exemplary. The addition of the wall flora and rock plants will further enhance the attractiveness of the stone wall feature. As you travel through the centre of the village, the wonderful contrast of the flowering baskets, window boxes and ornamental pots and the attractively painted buildings is striking - well done.

Landscaping:

The landscaping throughout Ballinahown of a very high standard. The finely maintained shrubs and

the use of ornamental floral presentations in strong and complementary colours is particularly effective. The Nature Trail is a wonderful addition to the village and the care taken in relation to the choice of landscaping is impressive. It is good to see areas of the stone walls planted with suitable flora. The creative combination of village sculptures, decorative artwork and thoughtful landscaping, visible in features like the Sculpture Trail and Weather Vane are what truly set Ballinahown apart in this competition. Well done to all involved!

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Again congratulations to the Committee - the Nature Trail is a lovely addition to the already attractive park area. No doubt the thought given to both the choice of landscaping and future maintenance plans will ensure both wildlife and ourselves benefit. We look forward to this project's completion and maturation. We wish you every success with your commendable wildlife endeavours as detailed in the plan and await further feedback. It is hoped that the newly constructed house, visible from the trail will be adequately screened to ensure the peaceful atmosphere prevails. The level of involvement with school children in this area is notable and will no doubt pay long term dividends to the Community.

Litter Control:

Very good - there was no litter present on the day of inspection. The Recycling area was also very neat.

Tidiness:

The centre of the village is very tidy. The Sports Park had been mowed but grass needed collection. The area around the Club House had some over growth and will undoubtedly look neater when painted and landscaped. While efforts have been made to screen the area at the back of the Community Centre, again, at this level in the competition, more attention is needed here. Perhaps additional wooden panels to screen the Polenthene mounds?

Residential Areas:

Generally very good, some lovely landscaping and very well presented gardens. Local pride is clearly evident. Well done!

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Speed signs on both Athlone and Clonmacnoise approach roads need replacing. Athlone approach road looks well. Nice to see the railings of the Courthouse being painted and to hear the gate lodge is to be renovated. The Ferbane approach road is still a little bare looking and the blue/gey colour perhaps a bit sombre? A change of colour and some additional landscaping on this approach would greatly enhance it. The Clonmacnoise approach is very pleasant.

General Impression:

A very tidy and well presented rural village. Ballinahown is improving every year. At this high level in the competition additional marks can prove more difficult to obtain. Continued good luck to all involved...keep up the good work!

Second Round Adjudication:

Ballinahown is indeed making great progress. The well mown verges with stone walls and trees along the Athlone approach created a good first impression. However, please do remember that views across fields to sheds must also be considered. Several road signs needed attention as well as

one or two side areas. The righthand side of the Birr approach, just before the Church, was a little overgrown. On the other hand, the very neat Church carpark was noteworthy. The mature ambiance of the Clonmacnoise Road with its new as well as original stone walls was admired. The presentation of the school was truly exceptional. Regrettably there was litter around the litter bin at the junction. The most natural picnic area is exemplary.