

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **ATHENRY**  
County : **GALWAY**  
Category : **C**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 08-07-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20
Landscaping	40	25
The Built Environment	40	24
Litter Control	40	25
Tidiness	20	15
Residential Areas	30	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	20
General Impression	10	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>185</b>

## Adjudicator's Comments

### OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for submitting details of your Five Year Action Plan. As you obviously appreciate, without such a Plan the essential needs and priorities for the protection of your local environment can, at best, be only haphazard. You are commended for outlining reasonable project targets on a year to year basis. The success of the Island Development at Prospect will be further enhanced by your plans for a dwarf stone wall at Kenny G.A.A. Park. The new stone flower beds proposed for The Arch will be a further enhancement. Having enjoyed our walk along the River Bank, any further development will be much appreciated by local and visitors alike. Your co-operation with the County Council, FAS and the local schools, is bound to pay dividends and preserve the character of your Town.

### WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Nature conservation is now an important part of the Tidy Towns Competition. The provision of a pigeon loft in a derelict building is a first and commendable step. Why not invite the Area Environmental Officer, or some other competent person, to advise you on the gathering of information on the habitats of animals and birds in your area, also the identification of wild flowers. This is a project that may well be undertaken by Teachers and pupils in the Schools. Another suggestion would be when considering the planting of shrubs, to purchase some native berry producing varieties that would be a source of food for birds. The river will prove a rich source of wildlife.

### LANDSCAPING

Congratulations on the completion of the work at the Island at Prospect. It is a great enhancement to the area. Also, the work at the Railway Embankment is so tastefully developed. The stone wall restoration is excellent and the planting of shrubs will look even better when fully mature. The River Walk is a marvellous amenity and so well presented. On entering the gate it was good to see shrubs planted along the concrete wall on the left hand side to camouflage the bareness. How awful concrete is when compared with the opposite stone wall! Areas worthy of consideration for flower and shrub planting are signs - town signs, directional signs and nameplates for residential estates. Such floral decoration enhances the environment considerably. The Lady Well complex is a credit to all concerned and should be highlighted for visitors. The walls, gates, shrubs and flowers as so well presented. Works appears to be ongoing on the nearby stream and it is lovely to see stone again in use. Congratulations on your use of stone. Finally a word about the Cemetery. This is important for both residents and visitors. The gates still await painting. On the day of adjudication there was a skip in the centre of the Cemetery. Yet inside the main gate and close to the entrance of the new section there was a pile of discarded wreaths and other rubbish. Here again the stone wall on the boundary is hidden by high grass.

### THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Court Lane approach to the Castle with the stone wall, free of weeds or other growth, is delightful. The planting of shrubs in Castle Park near the bridge is delightful and compliments the Castle. The use of stone wall, the landscaping and the well manicured lawns are most attractive. On the day of adjudication further work was in progress around the stone flower bed. At the entrance to the Dominican Priory the grass had been cut over an area at both sides. However, the grounds are overgrown and high grass is almost covering the ancient Headstones. We note your plans for the Arch. Barrack Street was litter free with some well maintained houses and neat gardens. Two derelict houses in Barrack Street need brightening up. In Cross Street, Gibbons Bar was nicely painted but could do with some floral decoration. Incidentally, the door of the Telephone Box was missing! Iggys Lounge, Frank Sweeneys, The Post Office, New Park Hotel (and the private house next door) North Gate Pub, Glynn's Lounge Bar deserve special mention. Blathanna was very attractive. Hanberrys had two nice flower tubs. Pity the provision already in place for hanging baskets was not utilised. The Credit Union and Community Hall looked very well. Both Schools and the Church were very well presented. Special credit is due to the Maryfield Nursing Home for the marvellous care given to both buildings and grounds. Keep in mind the

necessity to eradicate all plastic signs from shopfronts. An opportunity may arise when business premises are taken over or when re-construction work is undertaken.

#### LITTER CONTROL

On the day of adjudication there was evidence of litter on the grass margin fronting the G.A.A. Pitch. Also on the road from Cemetery Cross to Mid-West co-op. The control of litter is an education problem. Get the support of the school children by talks in the classroom of civic pride and care for the environment. There was litter on the road to the Mart. How about a bin at the Mart entrance.

#### TIDINESS

It was most encouraging to see the Recycling facilities at the Arch Car Park. Congratulations on the production of you outline proposals for Home Composting and the Civic Amenity Site. It is the way forward and you deserve the support of the entire community in this important venture. Flyposting seems to be an accepted means of communication in the West generally. Discourage it! It was particularly noticeable around Cemetery Cross....two signs for Athenry Show, a poster for Sparkles Nite Club in Ballyfa and an event in Esker.

#### RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The concentration of work in improving the environment in the Caherroyn district is certainly paying dividends. A key factor in the Adjudication Criteria is evidence that the whole community is involved in improving the local environment. Constant encouragement to homeowners to present their properties in the best possible light is a way forward. If every house had but ONE hanging basket or window box the transformation would be striking. At Caherroyn Crescent, the entrance is nicely planted but only one house had floral decoration. The Doctors Surgery would be improved with a few flower tubs. At Caherroyn Drive, the landscaping with trees and flowers was excellent and some residents having made a big effort. Keep an eye on open areas. Caherroyn Park has some very well maintained houses. The shrubbery inside the wall is impressive. Clarin Crescent was also neat and tidy. Although these areas were easily identifiable maybe future plans could include nameplates in Stone (provided by the residents).

#### ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

You have some excellent stone walls in the Athenry areas but so many lose their effectiveness by being covered (disfigured is a better description) with ivy, weeds or long grass. The bridges near the Clarin River Sign need to be shown with their fine stone walls. It is tragic that the stone walls are so covered in weeds. In an age of concrete blocks it is a pity that so much natural beauty is defaced. Attention must be given to all approach roads. The Town Signs and Directional Signs are important and should be well presented. At the Athenry Chamber of Commerce sign at Cemetery Cross the other big sign was lying by the wall. The Car Park opposite the Sacred Heart School (The Arch) was very well presented and because of its location provides extra safety for users. The condition of poles carrying signs should be constantly monitored. The painting of the poles is not a big task and may event be undertaken by volunteers.

#### GENERAL IMPRESSION

Athenry is a Town on the move and you are to be commended for your achievements so far. We realise that you largely depend on voluntary help and cannot put matters right overnight. Your overall Plan is the way forward. Keep encouraging your residents to play their vital part in enhancing the Town. Please let us enjoy your stones walls. Encourage those with stone walls boarding their properties to keep them weed free. You have to keep up the pressure on the owners of derelict buildings. If there is no response ask the County Council to pursue the matter through implementation of the Dereliction Act. We trust our comments will be of some help to you. Remember the adjudicator sees through the eyes of a visitor - even though the looking is more critical. We enjoyed Athenry. You are doing a fine job and will be well

rewarded for your efforts