

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **ATHY**
County : **KILDARE**
Category : **E**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 15-07-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21
Landscaping	40	24
The Built Environment	40	26
Litter Control	40	18
Tidiness	20	10
Residential Areas	30	17
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	20
General Impression	10	5
TOTAL MARK	300	175

Adjudicator's Comments

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Welcome to the new format of the 1996 Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your completed questionnaire and detailed map which was very helpful during the course of adjudication. The adjudicators look forward to the submission of your five year work programme. You have some very attractive buildings in Athy complimented by a number of amenities including the River Barrow and the canal. Outlying areas are particularly weak in the presentation of roads and residential areas, in that litter and weeds tend to be a problem pointing to lack of attention, or lack of effort. The adjudicators look forward to continued participation and improvements in this competition.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Athy is fortunate in having a number of natural amenities that provide opportunities for enhanced wildlife habitats, including the River Barrow and the canal. There is potential for greater nature conservation, a good starting point would be to identify wildlife habitats in your catchment area and see what type of birds, animals and fish etc. these attract. You could invite local environmental experts and groups to advise you and provide you with specialist information you require.

LANDSCAPING

The Peoples Park was well presented this year and is a valuable amenity area. The car park by the river opposite the Church was very good this year - well done, as was the grotto area, but try to fix the seating here. Tree planting was noted outside Teagasc. The junction with Tonaglee Guesthouse was improved. The river, near Emilys Square was well presented. Unfortunately, there were some beer cans noted in the river, but otherwise it was not too bad. This is a very nice area - the river bank is an important amenity area and, in general, could benefit from additional efforts. Try, perhaps, to form a sub-committee to develop and enhance all this area. The presentation of the dry dock was very disappointing this year with dumping of earth in the area and roughly cut grass creating a very untidy appearance. Overall, there is room for improvement in this section.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

As already stated, Athy is fortunate in having significant attractive buildings, for example, in Emily Square with the Town Hall and Court House, as well as schools, model farm and churches etc. Also, in the Main Street there are some very nice presentations, some of those noted by the adjudicators include F. OBrien; E. Duthie; it is potentially a very attractive building but would benefit from cleaning or painting at time of adjudication; T. R. Brennans was very nice; King Fireplaces; Slatterys; AIB (nice shrubbery); Baronessa; Mullins; Robert Redmond; Bridge House; News Stand; the new development noted at Langans; the Grove Cinema had been painted up as had the Railway Station House; the Model School is a very important building and was well presented. The Castle Inn was being renovated at time of adjudication. Whites Castle was also noted as a very important building. Try to repaint the yellow window boards on the mill buildings - this produced a very positive affect a number of years ago and would greatly enhance this area. St. Vincents Hospital grounds were very nicely presented but weeds outside were a bit of a problem. D. Doyle was nicely presented and Whites Castle is nicely situated at the bridge over the River Barrow. There is still room for improvement particularly along Leinster Street down towards the Station.

LITTER CONTROL

The adjudicators were disappointed with the level of litter control management in Athy this year. It definitely took from the overall appearance and lessened the positive impression of other areas where the town had performed well. It is a very serious problem and you are going to have to take a serious approach in order to tackle this. This can only happen in co-operation with the UDC, the Tidy Towns Committee, the various Residents Associations and most importantly the children. Some serious

problems were noted in the following areas - on some side streets, e.g. Mount Hawkins, at the railway crossing, beer cans were noted in the river by Emily Square and further outbursts were noted in a number of areas also, .e.g. residential areas. As mentioned, an improved street cleaning programme is essential in the new format of this competition as 20% of the entire marks go towards litter control and tidiness.

TIDINESS

There are some nice areas throughout Athy. But there are also a number of areas that take from the overall appearance. Firstly, on the approaches, weeds were a problem in some cases and this took from the overall appearance. It was very disappointing to note graffiti at the Courthouse, otherwise the square was well presented. It was very disappointing to see the presentation outside the railway station also. Graffiti was also noted in the handball alley. Generally, it is disappointing to see a potentially very attractive town presented to this standard and unfortunately, it is probably a reflection of the lack of ability to get the involvement of all sectors. This is obviously the key to success in Athy as it is too large an area for one individual group to maintain.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Generally, there is a varied presentation under this category with both good and bad examples. It is impossible to visit all residential areas in the town but some nice efforts were noted at St. Patricks Avenue, Manse and Ashville. The Orchard was quite well presented but unfortunately weeds were beginning to grow. Some areas which could be improved include St. Dominics Park at the entrance, where it was very bad - and at Chanterlands, there is little evidence of works done. It was nice to note a new housing development taking place at the handball alley. The majority of houses on the road out to the Tonaglee guesthouse were well presented as were those on the road to Carlow.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

On the approach road from the south, the Welcome Junior Chamber sign needs to be replaced, on the left hand side weeds were evident at the 40 mph sign, closer in it was nice to see that the shrubbery was well presented on the turn off to Tonaglee Guesthouse. The approach road from Naas was well maintained with shrubbery noted. Further planting should be considered here to further enhance this approach. The approach road from Tonaglee was not too bad, while approaching Athy from Kilkea it was not great, a lot more attention is needed on this side road. On Stanhope Street, past the grotto, curbing needs to be replaced. On this approach itself there was an excellent presentation. Further out it was litter-free and well maintained. There is a need to avoid the dumping of gravel and to try to tackle the wall opposite Whitecastle Lawns as this area needs to be cleared. It is good to know that improvements were evident. Generally the Main Street was litter-free and well maintained, and Emily Square was beautifully presented with cobble locking, tree planting and flower beds.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The general impression is that the adjudicator honestly feel that Athy could be an excellent presentation. It has a number of major problem areas that need to be tackled including litter control and tidiness. More of a co-ordinated effort is needed, as you have shown in the past - you could improve the presentation, for example, through the use of flower tubs on premises - why was this discontinued as it enhanced the main street greatly. The adjudicator honestly wish the committee the best of luck in their efforts to attract additional support from all sectors including residential areas. Good luck for 1997.