

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **MONASTEREVIN**
County : **KILDARE**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 23-07-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	27
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	19
Landscaping	40	26
The Built Environment	40	21
Litter Control	40	15
Tidiness	20	8
Residential Areas	30	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	18
General Impression	10	4
TOTAL MARK	300	157

Adjudicator's Comments

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Welcome to the 1996 Tidy Towns Competition. It is timely that you joined the competition at the beginning of the new format, which places a greater emphasis on litter control and on wildlife and nature conservation. The adjudicators hope that this will be the first of many years in the competition, and that Monasterevin will see continued improvements as a result of its participation. For next year, the adjudicators look forward to the submission of a detailed five year work programme. In this, please include a map with street names highlighting areas of improvement over the past year. In your work programme, look at the long term, but try to achieve one project at a time. You have already shown the successes you can achieve in the development of the Riverside Park, which is an excellent presentation. Well done. Try to get as many residents, commercial owners and locals to link in with the efforts. The adjudicators recognise that Monasterevin is located on a very busy national route. Obviously, that presents major challenge.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Monasterevin is fortunate in having a number of natural amenities that offer potential for nature conservation and wildlife, including the River Barrow and its banks. The Canal, although manmade, provides another unique natural wildlife resource, as do other landscaped areas with mature trees and the area down to the stream located on the Rathangan Road. There is potential for increased nature conservation throughout Monasterevin. A good starting point would be to identify the wildlife habitats in your catchment areas and see what species of animals, fish, plants etc. these attract. Why not get involved with your local environmental experts and groups who could advise you and provide you with the specialist information you require.

LANDSCAPING

The adjudicators were particularly impressed with the large number of landscaped areas throughout Monasterevin, although greater attention could be paid to the approach roads. Having said that, the adjudicators would like to congratulate the residents and those involved in the creation of the magnificent Riverside Park, which was looking magnificent on the day of adjudication. Its shrubs, colourful flowers and tree planting are an example of what can be achieved. The grassed area outside the cemetery on the approach from Kildangan, could have been neater and it also offers an opportunity for a very attractive landscaped area, particularly in light of the mature oak trees. Try to cut the grass regularly and consider the planting of flowers to enhance the area. The pump opposite needed to be painted up and straightened. The castle style entrance, could be another beautiful feature; however the door needs to be painted. Flower tubs would enhance the area; also try to straighten up the bollards and ensure that grass is neatly cut at regular intervals. Try to clean up the wall and sign on the bridge crossing over the River Barrow. The monument in the square is a nice feature; could this be complimented by some flowers? The river areas are all very well presented - congratulations in this regard. At the Gerard Manley Hopkins monument flower tubs might enhance this area also - try to use attractive and sympathetic containers in this regard. The area by the drawbridge near the canal was very well presented, congratulations, some litter was noted by one of the picnic areas, which was otherwise a very attractive feature with its aqueduct. An overgrown area was noted at the Historical Trail No.5 signpost near the monument; try to improve this. The adjudicators would like to commend the presentation of Moore Abbey, a magnificent presentation which takes a lot of effort. The open space to the left of the entrance to Moore Abbey should be upgraded. Overall, a good performance in this section.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Monasterevin possesses a number of important and prominent buildings. Moore Abbey was very well presented. Well done. The adjudicators enjoyed a very attractive vista of the river, bridge and church in the background. The majority of the schools were well presented on the day of adjudication. There were some very attractive buildings on the wide street by the fire brigade. The Shell Station was very well

presented. Try to avoid the overuse of signage in many shop windows, particularly on the main road. With regard to what appear to be former mill buildings, try to perhaps work on these. Other premises looking well at time of adjudication included The Snug/Mooneys; Jacquelyn Sexton; Bank of Ireland and G. Finley. The grounds of the Hazel Hotel were also very well presented, try however to reduce the signage. The Branch Library could be painted. Gahans/GM Hopkins Pub had a very nice presentation. Well done. The Post Office was well presented and was very bright and welcoming, and nice new shopfronts were noted on its left hand side. The Catholic Church is also a very attractive building as is the Church of Ireland with nice stained glass area over the door. Try to screen garage area opposite Samuel Homes which was untidy, and very negative visually on the approach from Kildare. Try to remove the 7UP sign from the Takeaway; it is not in-keeping with the size of the premises. Other premises that could be improved include the Nags Head Inn with its signage; Brennans (plastic signage should be removed and building should be painted) Luigis; the fire station (requires painting). Frawleys (plastic sign); the Fiat/Finleys garage, (excessive signage). Earleys and Monasterevin House were both very nice presentations. Overall, quite a reasonable performance but there is room for improvement .

LITTER CONTROL

Overall, a lack of litter bins was noted throughout Monasterevin and is something that must be tackled. If you do intend to install litter bins, try to come up with a traditional design. Litter unfortunately was quite bad and is something that Monasterevin will have to come to terms with, especially in light of the fact that 20% of the entire marks now go towards litter and tidiness. Particularly bad litter problems were noted on the Rathangan road (opposite Jacquelyn Sextons), at gate entrances on the Portlaoise Road, Cullens Factory Shop and in the Square area some litter was also noted by the seats on the road by the Gerard Manley Hopkins monument. It was nice to see the recycling collection point at St. Pauls School. Overall, you are going to have to work on combating litter both in terms of education and enforcement.

TIDINESS

Potentially, Monasterevin could be a very neat and tidy town - it is however very disappointing to see the high level of weeds by the kerbs. Try to work on this. Paint the finger post signs - in a lot of cases these were particularly bad, e.g. the Rathangan sign and Nurney signs, to name but a few. Gravel and grit along by kerbside also detracted from an otherwise attractive appearance. Try to ensure regular street cleaning in conjunction with the County Council. Other points that detract from the tidy appearance include seating that is in need of painting. The telephone kiosk in the main square was painted up, as were the premises behind it which left a positive impression in this area, apart from the litter nearby. It was nice to see old street lamps as well. The adjudicators would like to point out also that outside the T. Boland was very wellpresented, it was extremely neat and tidy outside and is an example to other commercial premises of what can be achieved. Obviously in this regard, the concept of adopting a spot and undertaking to maintain it is the only way you can make improvements in this regard.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The adjudicators noted two thatched cottages - one on the road to Kildangan and the other on the road to Rathangan. There were some very good residential efforts; for example, the residential house next to Gahans on the Kildangan Road, e.g. Woodview and Abbeyview. Try to watch the weeds where kerbing meets the main road. The terrace of houses on the Portlaoise road were very well presented. However at St. Evians Park, you could try to paint up the seating and perhaps more tree planting would benefit the area. The neatly cut state of the grass at the time of adjudication was noted but watch the weeds. A very attractive new development was noted on the Rathangan road (yellow) and also the next park out along this road was well presented with tree planting noted. A well presented park was noted on the street near the Catholic Church. Good individual efforts were noted also with two premises which have attractive railings at their entrances. An excellent presentation was also noted at the house opposite the Catholic Church with its use of roses. Well done. Overall, there is not a bad performance under this section, Try to encourage more individual owners to ensure that their premises are freshly painted and that they make use of flowers.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

On the approach road from Kildangan, weeds were noted by kerbs, particularly on the right hand side. Signs need to be either re-painted or replaced, e.g. the Limerick-Cork-Dublin finger post signs and the pole at Nurney junction. Litter unfortunately was evident here, which suggests the need for bins. Coming in along this road, nice stone walls were noted at Rosewood and Shanderry. On the Nurney road, a nice stone wall was evident but again weeds were a problem. Approaching from Kildare, there was a better appearance on the left hand side, with no weeds by the kerb but they were evident on the footpaths. The trees are nice along here also but grass was in need of a cutting. Further in along the right hand side was very bad and needs attention. On the approach road from Portlaoise, try to paint the bollards and railings on the bridge area over the canal. The grass verges needed more attention. Try to perhaps make a feature at the sign of Monasterevin. Unauthorised signage is a bit of a problem here also. A better appearance was evident further in at the 40MPH sign with tree planting noted. Again, try to remove weeds from the walls and also try to rebuild these walls where they are broken - this might be one of your long term projects. Weeds were also quite bad on the approach road from Rathangan. The road by the Gerard Manley Hopkins monument is potentially very attractive; all that is needed is to paint up the seats and pay attention to the litter. Riverside Park, has enhanced its surrounding area immensely. There are other attractive tree lined roads where the Catholic Church is located. Try to get the appropriate authorities to paint up the bridge on the Canal approaches.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

There are a number of problems in Monasterevin this year but none are insurmountable. The adjudicators feel that Monasterevin could do particularly well in this competition, with your attractive natural and architectural features complemented by a number of open spaces. If you can work at this then there is no reason why you can't do well. Good luck in the future years of the competition. The adjudicators look forward to their visit in 1997.