

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **THOMASTOWN**
County : **KILKENNY**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 16-07-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15
Landscaping	40	26
The Built Environment	40	26
Litter Control	40	30
Tidiness	20	13
Residential Areas	30	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	31
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	300	197

Adjudicator's Comments

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

It is very good to read in your application form that a 5-year Plan is now under way; a copy of this would be much appreciated before the judging of next year's competition. It is equally good to read of your successful fund-raising, and the local support, and that you are co-operating with local and national bodies. The FAS scheme is of great value too. This adjudicator had been in Thomastown on many occasions as a visitor, but it is only when systematically walking through the town as adjudicator that it is possible to appreciate the amount of work which is being done, and also to note the amount of work which is still to be done. What is curious about Thomastown is the way in which some very fine buildings or developments stand cheek-by-jowl with less prepossessing ones - such as the fine Community Centre and the ramshackle corrugated iron structure opposite. Your map was helpful; please include more detail - such as street names and locations of sites which you would like brought to particular attention - next year, and indicate which projects which are ongoing or have been completed in the previous twelve months; for example, this year's map does not show the Town Wall project. It would seem that the Association is trying to create a consistency in the townscape while retaining the essential quality of a centre which has developed over many centuries; and it is clear that this aim is gradually being achieved. This has been an interesting and instructive visit.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

A nominal mark is being given in the first year under this heading where committees have not had time to put ideas into action. Nature trails might be incorporated into the fabric of the History Trail outlined in the excellent brochure; bird life might be conserved in an integrated way - for example, ducks introduced to suitable sites.

LANDSCAPING

Lawns and municipal flowerbeds are not the strong-point of Thomastown, though open areas on the outskirts are trim. Some flowerbeds were poorly attended to. Work on the New Ross road was admired, and its completion will be looked forward to. Opportunities for tree-planting, particularly on the more open approaches to the north, should be considered.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The old church in the centre of the town is, curiously enough, more prominent than several much larger industrial buildings; some renovation is obviously needed, including restoration of windows. It is wonderful to note that an old warehouse has been successfully adapted as a guest house - possibly some time ago. Progress on the restoration of the Castle by the bridge will be eagerly watched. The R.C. Church and the Convent are very well looked after. The buildings at the Community Centre are interestingly laid out - a pity to see graffiti in the archway. Of the business premises, Barrett's Pharmacy was the most admired, and was photographed for the national award. Of particular interest is Ryan's corner shop, which appears to be abandoned but is full of character and should not be allowed to deteriorate. (Traffic at this corner is appalling - a by-pass with a new bridge should have been a priority years ago, and not only because of the detrimental effect of heavy traffic on the built environment).

LITTER CONTROL

There was very little litter in the central area on adjudication day, but litter was fairly prevalent by the river, on Marsh's Road, and on the Carlow road.

TIDINESS

There were kerbside weeds in many places, including on the Waterford and Carlow roads. Try to discourage post-and-wire fencing, plastic or mass-produced signage, concrete-block walls.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Older street houses are generally well kept. The estate at the junction of New Ross and Graiguenamanagh roads was well presented, with several fine individual gardens. Railings are badly in need of painting in the estate between the Kilkenny and Carlow roads. Clonbrody Heights has potential.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Market Street was being resurfaced at the time of adjudication, and the result will no doubt be excellent. Verges of approach roads were unexceptional. The junction of the New Ross and Graiguenamanagh roads was far from trim, with weedy verges and rusty railings. Many very fine stone walls noted everywhere, some of them obviously completed recently. The car park at the Convent, with its rustic fence, looked very trim indeed. The new car park opposite the Super Valu store was also favourably noted - but there are unappealing spaces opening off the same street, and in general there are a number of rather unappetising entries throughout the town - one example only: just before the bridge on the right coming from Waterford.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

A fascinating old town, now coming to recognise its special qualities, and to build upon them.