

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **MOUNTRATH**
County : **LAOIS**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 16-06-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	20
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15
Landscaping	40	23
The Built Environment	40	22
Litter Control	40	24
Tidiness	20	13
Residential Areas	30	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	23
General Impression	10	5
TOTAL MARK	300	163

Adjudicator's Comments

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Fund raising and sponsorship activities are impressive. It is good to read on the answers to the questionnaire that you are in constant touch with the Local Authority and that you have access to a FAS scheme. When sending your map next year, please be sure to name all the streets and to mark all the locations where projects have been undertaken over the previous twelve months. For example, you planted trees during the past year, but you did not mark the planting on the map and it was difficult to identify which trees these were.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The picnic and riverside areas are pleasant and well signposted. In future years you might consider the creation of further walks and nature trails.

LANDSCAPING

The pleasantly laid out amenity area at the junction of the Portlaoise and Ballyfinn roads was spoiled by weed on the paths and litter and torn plastic sheeting in the forecourt. Some public-spirited citizens must have gone to tremendous trouble to establish this garden, but it has not been well tended. The riverside area, however, was looking very good indeed and a credit to those who supervise it. The bedding in the central roundabout was scrappy on adjudication day and not helped by excessive planting of signage. Young dead trees should be removed from verges elsewhere and perhaps the reason for their death enquired into.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Church of Ireland is picturesque and well maintained. The splendid Catholic Church suffers from its rather bleak forecourt. (It would be wonderful if car-parking could be transferred elsewhere, the concrete taken up and a double avenue of trees planted - but this would be a long term expensive project!) The Allied Irish Bank was well presented. The Funeral Home had pleasant planting. The town lacks a central architectural focus - the roundabout does not remotely serve this purpose. The roof of the foundry needs attention.

LITTER CONTROL

There was a lot of disposable litter in the street running from the Church of Ireland to the central square and a light scattering of litter in several other places.

TIDINESS

Litter, as well as a considerable amount of kerbside weed in some areas and some dirty directional signs, contribute to a generally untidy look which could be cured without much expense. There are also several unattractive plastic and mass-produced shop signs.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The main approach roads are good but not exceptional; there are nice grassed spaces as you enter the town from Portlaoise and verges are trim on the Castletown road - but not really trim until Castletown is reached. The approach from Ballyfin was inconsistent, with some well kept sections and some quite untidy ones. The new stone walls on both sides of the road to Abbeyleix were looking very fine on adjudication day - congratulations to those who built them. Handsome wooden fences were noted appropriately enough at the Saw Mills; one factory premises on the same road had trim verges, the other factory frontage was neglected.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

There are several very pleasant 19th century street houses and terraces in the town, mostly kept to a high standard. The Georgian guest house and most (but not all) of the other large houses nearby, were smartly presented. There are some charming small houses with delightful country gardens on the Abbeyleix road. St. Fintan's Terrace is well looked after and had excellently mown lawns, but unfortunately there was a lot of kerbside weed - it could have been removed with one hour's work, or, better still, not allowed to grow at all.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

An agreeable town which is improving steadily every year.