

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **CASTLECONNELL**
County : **LIMERICK**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 15-06-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20
Landscaping	40	28
The Built Environment	40	28
Litter Control	40	26
Tidiness	20	13
Residential Areas	30	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	27
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	300	202

Adjudicator's Comments

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Your re-constituted committee has achieved great results this year in terms of the increase in Castleconnell's marks. However, a strategy for developing the town's strong points and, indeed tackling problem areas is important for next year's competition. This should be based on the constructive remarks made in this report and the formulation of a 3/5 year plan of action for the town. The enthusiasm is obviously there, and your established relationship with Limerick County Council and future associations with both Iaranrod Eireann and the ESB will, hopefully, be of great benefit to the community as a whole.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The actions of the local gun club in relation to the release of ducks and geese into the river is to be commended. There is potential for greater conservation in this area. Perhaps the local schoolchildren could participate in identification of the wildlife habitats in your environs in order to establish the various species of animals, birds, fish, wild flowers etc. Local environmental groups should be able to advise you in this regard.

LANDSCAPING

The standard in this category was quite high on adjudication day. The village pump was simply presented, with its simple metal railing. The permanent planting from Main Street to The Village Gate Antique Shop was admired as was the very attractive open space further along. However, the grass had yet to be removed from the front of the green space to the housing estate, and the laneway adjacent to Sloan's Pharmacy could be quite charming if sensitively landscaped.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Both the public and commercial buildings of Castleconnell looked well on Adjudication Day. The attractive small church on the approach from the main Limerick/Dublin road was greatly admired, although it did show some evidence of rust staining. The Post Office is a charming building with its original windows and brass post box. The Catholic church was well maintained, with its new stone wall and freshly cut grass. The Hall could have been presented to a higher standard. The coping and canopy over the door were both quite stained and some dead weeds were noted to its frontage. The old National School is another charming building in stone with a steeply pitched roof. The Garda Station was very fresh but could be improved by some sensitive landscaping to the forecourt area and some weeds were noted to the base of the kerb at the roadside. The side garden was rather overgrown. Perhaps the concrete post and metal fence acting as boundary with the adjacent house could be replaced with a stone wall or hedge. The Telecom Eireann substation looked very fresh in blue. The modern mono-pitch roofed National School was very fresh and had immaculately maintained grounds. The Village Gate Antiques looked well, although the grille and sign could be freshened. The Credit Union was also very fresh, although the boundary wall could be painted before next year's competition. Bradshaws is an attractive traditional front.

LITTER CONTROL

The standard in this category could have been better, as in a town of Castleconnell's neat appearance, litter is even more obvious. Quite a lot was evident along Main Street, especially outside the Post Office. The yellow plastic battered litter bin in front of the same building should be replaced. Some more litter was noted opposite the school.

TIDINESS

On first impressions Castleconnell looked very neat and tidy. However, closer inspection revealed some problem areas. The car park area to the castle ruins and the river had well maintained grounds. The wire

fence could perhaps be replaced/removed. Some weeds were noted to the charming level crossing, and to the embankment area adjacent to the railway track. The station house is a very charming building, although the rear wall could be repainted. The corrugated iron gate near the "children crossing" sign looked quite unsightly as did the battered concrete post and chainlink fence directly opposite with strangle-weed climbing it.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The standard in this category was quite high with many residents showing great pride in their properties. The lush looking garden with roses opposite the Post Office and that to St. Benedict's House near the railway track were particularly admired. As was the garden to the old school house which extended out to the roadside, with lush Virginia Creeper climbing over the boundary. Although the colourful floral displays and hanging baskets filled with geraniums and pansies to the house adjacent to the Post Office were admired, the boundary wall sported some unattractive green mould. Some of the houses by the Antique Shop could also be freshened up. The plastered boundary walls along the road to the Railway Station should be painted. The attractive stone wall on the same road looked magnificent. The bare concrete block boundary walls opposite the school, should be plastered and painted. An extremely fresh house was noted diagonally opposite the pottery, although its boundary wall had yet to be painted.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The main Limerick/Dublin road is a most attractive one approaching as one does via the river and the field full of magnificent yellow flag irises opposite. The large stone entrance area to the Hermitage looked quite bare and weedy to the base of the boundary wall. The caution children crossing sign was quite grubby and faded. On-going road works were taking place. The signage within the town itself was also rather faded. The "children crossing" sign by the Railway Station was rather grubby and virtually obscured by overhanging trees. The level crossing itself was bright and cheerful in red and white.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The town of Castleconnell is one of great character with an abundance of delightful stone walls and charming buildings. The heritage of the castle ruins and the natural amenity of the river are two great assets to the town. However, you should try to achieve a greater consistency through the active participation of the whole community.