

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **THURLES**
County : **TIPPERARY NORTH**
Category : **E**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 15-07-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	19
Landscaping	40	24
The Built Environment	40	25
Litter Control	40	25
Tidiness	20	13
Residential Areas	30	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	24
General Impression	10	6
TOTAL MARK	300	190

Adjudicator's Comments

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thurles is improving and the town, although extremely busy on the day of adjudication, obviously is benefiting from the various schemes and projects which have been initiated by the Tidy Towns Committee and the UDC. The local Tidy Towns Competitions and awards night, the awareness campaign in the local media and in the Schools together with the practical area clean-up projects have generated increasing community support for the Tidy Towns effort. The Thurles Tidy Towns Membership Card scheme is unique and can only help to promote the ideals of the Competition and a greater awareness of local environmental issues, especially in the younger members of the community. The improvement plan which was prepared in 1994 for the town by Josephine Plattenberg is also influencing developments. From 1997, the new format of the Competition and criteria for adjudication and marking will require each Centre entering the Competition to prepare its own development plan taking in a period of 3-5 years. This should be accompanied by a work programme for each year of the plan, with clear objectives and targets set for each year. Thurles has its plan and the Tidy Towns Committee, with the UDC and other involved groups should set out work programmes for each of the next number of years.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Tidy Towns Committees can have an important role to play in protecting, enhancing and improving the wildlife value of their local environment and nature conservation should be part of their development plans. Local environmental experts and groups like the Irish Wildlife Conservancy could be invited to advise on identifying wildlife habitats which can be part of your nature conservation programme. The projects along the riverside walk which are encouraging the proliferation of wildlife along the river and the game sanctuary in the river at the bridge end of Liberty Square are two very commendable projects.

LANDSCAPING

Landscaping and treatment of open spaces generally throughout the town is good, particularly in the vicinity of the swimming pool, along the river bank and also on some approach roads. Tree planting and the interest generated by your Gardens Competition have contributed to improvements throughout the town. Individual projects like the presentation of the old water pump at the end of Cathedral Street and along the Moyne road opposite the cemetery are to be commended.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The standard of presentation of public and commercial/business premises is generally good. The Churches and Schools are again very good, with some excellent examples like the grounds of St. Patricks College, the Presentation Convent, the UDC offices and St. Marys Church of Ireland and Famine Museum. Also, the grounds of the Hospital of the Assumption and nearby ACOT offices. The standard of shopfronts is improving throughout the town and more premises are replacing shopfronts with a more traditional style. The new GAA museum is an interesting project.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter control is somewhat inconsistent with some areas good and others, particularly in the town centre and Liberty Square, not so good. More litter bins could be suggested but the problem seems one of a lack of awareness. The fact that the Square is so congested with traffic, parked cars and a busy shopping area means that litter tends to be hidden to a certain extent but is there nonetheless. Hopefully, the continued efforts of the Tidy Towns Committee and the UDC will prevail and a greater awareness will generate a cleaner environment in these areas.

TIDINESS

In visiting the various residential areas and housing estates and around the town generally, despite litter problem around Liberty Square, the overall impression is good as regards tidiness.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The standard of individual houses, residential developments and Local Authority housing estates is generally good. Individual houses are obviously conscious of the contribution that they can make with attractive front gardens and lawns and maintaining open spaces and green areas around their properties and estates. Schemes like the Gardens Competition will encourage more activity in this area and will also encourage more householders to get involved.

ROADS STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The approach roads could be improved. For instance, along the Roscrea road the maintenance of amenity areas and grassed verges is mixed, around the area in front of Dwans and along the side opposite. The same situation obtains along the Cashel road, with weeds along footpaths, grass verges not cut on both sides and in the vicinity of the river/bridge. Planting of trees and shrubs have improved other roads such as along the Nenagh road, as has landscaping on the Moynes and Dublin roads. Stone work in some areas such as Relig Breide and St. Bridgets Terrace along the Cashel road is also to be complimented.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The overall impression is that the town is improving and the efforts of the Tidy Towns Committee, the UDC and others involved are having a positive effect. The various schemes and initiatives deserve the support of the whole community and the suggestions and proposals included in the Plattenberg plan should be acted upon, particularly with regard to the town centre/congestion and other problems in Liberty Square; a re-development plan for this area should be prepared and acted on without delay.