

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **ROCKCHAPEL**
County : **CORK**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 03-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	25	25
The Built Environment	40	25	24
Landscaping	40	16	15
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	11	11
Litter Control	40	24	24
Tidiness	20	11	12
Residential Areas	30	19	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	23	23
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	160	158

Rockchapel, Co. Cork

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

A fine effort from a very small population. It is good to see co-operation with the local authority, and that you are making use of the FÁS scheme, with benefit to the community and to the young people employed. A three to five year Development Plan would undoubtedly help you to identify projects which need to be undertaken and allow each one to be scheduled for completion in specific years rather than trying to achieve everything at once. When filling in the questionnaire, please clearly differentiate between work which has been completed for the current summer's competition and work which is proposed for the future, and please be sure to mark the former on your map.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The stone church is a truly fine building which gives heart to the village centre and should never be altered. It is very well maintained, in itself and in its surroundings, though the gate was in need of painting on adjudication day. The school is also well maintained. A handsome group of old farm buildings, the centre one including an arch, most visible from the school road, require attention to bring them up to the local standard. Next time the Community Hall is painted, a stronger colour should be considered, as at present the building does not make much of a statement. A pity that there are some plastic and mass-produced signs on business premises. Congratulations on having a derelict building removed - its replacement will be eagerly looked forward to.

LANDSCAPING

The corner of the main road and the road to the school calls out for the planting of trees and shrubs: there is a real challenge for a major scheme here. The landscaping of the hill below the grotto is excellent, though some of the plants did not look entirely happy on adjudication day; the wall-building (referred to last year) is first class, and one would like to see more of this on the other approaches to the village.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Rockchapel is unusually well placed between field and forest for the development of an active awareness of the natural environment. The notes in the Tidy Towns booklet should be helpful, as well as the information sheet from Conservation Volunteers Ireland.

LITTER CONTROL

On adjudication day there was a surprising amount of disposable litter for a village which does not have the problem of a large population or a substantial throughput of tourists. Litter was particularly noted near the grotto, near the monument and here and there on kerbsides.

TIDINESS

The only area which stood out as unduly untidy was around the monument, which seemed unworthily neglected. Weeds along its frontage could have been removed in a very few minutes, and the spaces on each side were unkept; the railings needed painting. (It might be advantageous to remove the dull concrete inside the railings and plant evergreens). Weeding was needed at the Community Hall car park. By contrast, the forecourt of Curtin's Bar was spruce. The area where building is in progress cannot be judged till next year.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Private houses are well looked after in Rockchapel. Older houses were nicely painted at the time of adjudication. Most of the houses in the small estate above the grotto looked well, though some front boundaries needed attention, and there was some kerbside weed (clearance or prevention of weed would take no more than a few minutes of householders' time). The grassed area here was excellent, but the County Council should attend to the road surface here. It is very encouraging to learn that the Council will be building new houses within the village.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Surfaces, except at the point mentioned above, are good. The lane to the left of the monument needs weed clearance. The grass verges had been trimmed on the Newmarket road but the hay had not been removed. The plain solid fence being erected on the road to the school is quite attractive; ultimately this whole stretch would benefit enormously from a hedge (hawthorn or fuschia or anything that grows well in local soil) in front of this fence. The cemetery wall needs freshening up with paint. The cul-de-sac to the right as you approach the grotto from the village was weedy. Signs mentioned last year remained unpainted.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Rockchapel seems to be on the verge of expressing itself in a vibrant and attractive way. A little extra effort from some householders and attention to details such as weed prevention will help enormously. Next year should show the fruition of a number of important developments.