

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **KILMEAGUE**
County : **KILDARE**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 18-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	23	22
The Built Environment	40	21	20
Landscaping	40	24	22
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15	15
Litter Control	40	21	22
Tidiness	20	10	9
Residential Areas	30	15	14
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	20	19
General Impression	10	5	5
TOTAL MARK	300	154	148

Kilmeague, Co. Kildare

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for your entry form. The adjudicators would have welcomed the submission of your 3 - 5 year plan together with a map outlining the problem areas or improved areas. This plan should be simple and realistic, covering 3 - 5 pages, together with a map outlining areas for improvement or particular problem areas. Try to get greater input from your local authority, business community, residents and schools. Also, try to incorporate historical and cultural uniqueness of the village and area, and include bilingualism and accessibility for the elderly and disabled into your overall plans.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Every town in Ireland is different - each has its own unique history, topography, buildings and even use of building materials - but the most important town in Ireland is your own. Much of the overall impression of any town is dictated by its buildings. Each building is unique in its own way and collectively these buildings contribute to the unique character of the town. The best approach is for a good mix of commercial and residential enhance by sympathetic landscaping of open spaces and appropriate use of building materials. In considering the main aspects of buildings, there are two factors to be kept in mind, one is the quality of the individual structure, i.e., its presentation and materials used and secondly is the building in its overall context. Insensitive changes to individual buildings can destroy the overall character of the street. Buildings on corners, or at the end of streets assume greater civic design importance because of their location. Where such buildings are modified insensitively, or allowed to fall into disrepair, it can have serious visual implications. An example is the derelict house on the Prosperous road which you should try to paint. The the telephone kiosk also needs to be painted. Moores was well presented. The new school development is noted. The hall near Allen National School really does need to be painted and is unsightly in its present form. The church was well presented, although litter was noted in the car park.

LANDSCAPING

The appearance, maintenance and presentation of the public spaces (including amenity areas, open spaces, footpaths and streams etc.) are a vital aspect of civic design quality. Poor presentation of public areas can take away from high standards achieved by individual properties. In this regard, it was good to see that the area by the Robertstown junction is very well presented this year, much improved from last year. Freshly painted black and white kerbing, neatly trimmed grass and the flower bed at Allenwood/Newbridge sign were noted. Overall, a good level of maintenance. The shrubberys and seating opposite Moore's and along this hill were also well presented, as was the junction at the corner on the approach from Prosperous.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Conserving nature is a new venture for many towns and can appear daunting at first. The adjudicators recognise that environmental programmes can take time to get up and running and even longer to assess their success. This section of the competition requires an involvement of all groups, including schools in the village. The emphasis is on the conservation and enhancement of wildlife habitats and the environment. Woodlands, rivers, ponds, hedgerows, open spaces, graveyards and walls are important habitats. The committee needs to identify the habitats in their area and then determine the appropriate actions to conserve and enhance these habitats. Guidelines in the Tidy Towns book offer other suggestions as to the type of initiatives you might undertake. Is there a local wildlife expert, or a member of the community with experience in this area, that your committee can draw on? In preparing an environmental programme for the village, there should be a year-round emphasis on environmental protection and promotion involving all members of the community and providing access for all. The next step is to identify what habitats are in your area - are there woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, or other habitats such as urban spaces, cemeteries, walls etc. Prepare a survey and map, showing the areas of wildlife importance and areas of future importance, e.g. school grounds and gardens, derelict sites etc. Other steps involved in the preparation of the environmental programme for Kilmeague would include identification of species list of the flora and fauna in the area, preparation of a wildlife management plan as part of the area development plan and identification of tasks to be carried out including conservation projects, wildlife gardens, areas of conservation, access, tree planting, information areas etc. This must be carried out in sympathy with the local landscape and must not be overwhelming visually, or environmentally.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter was evident along the grass by the junction to Robertstown and along by the hill on the left hand side opposite Moore's. Sprinklings were also noted outside Mullaney's. Litter was quite bad in the church car park and on the roadside opposite the church entrance. Overall, litter this year was quite bad and the adjudicators were disappointed to see this - try to tackle this for next year.

TIDINESS

At the junction to Prosperous, try to clean or paint the finger post signs. the area around the Leap Inn could be tidier. Weeds and litter were noted around the boundary wall of the church grounds. All these factors tend to detract. Improved kerbing would also improve tidiness.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

An excellent effort was noted with the green house on the right hand side coming from the church to the village. At Oaklands, try to replace the signs. New tree planting was noted but litter was evident - the adjudicators suggest the need for bins. Try also to

consider planting more trees as some of them were broken. It was also disappointing to see lamps broken. However, the grassed area was well trimmed and well presented on day of adjudication. A good effort was noted with a white house to the right of the entrance to Oaklands. The front of the park was very well presented again this year, with nice flowers noted; congratulations to those involved. An excellent effort was noted with the house on the corner to the Prosperous road.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Approaching from Robertstown, a very good presentation was noted at the junction with grass verges also cut back. However, small sprinklings of litter were noted where grass had been cut back on the left hand side. Approaching from Prosperous, the left hand side verge had not been cut back, and the right hand side was only barely presentable through the individual efforts of residents taking care of the front of their premises, e.g. Greenacres and the house next to it. Approaching from Naas, grass had only a rough cut and didn't have a very neat or tidy appearance. However, improvements have been noted. For example, it is nice to see attention to detail on the approach from Robertstown at the junction, with the kerbs painted. Try to expand on this in other areas.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

This section looks at the overall integrated presentation of the village and the overall impression was reasonable on the day of adjudication. It also allows for the opportunity to reward exceptional effort in overcoming a difficult problem. While the adjudicators recognise that problems exist, marks are not available for aspirations or complaints, they are awarded for achievements. While some limited improvements were noted throughout the village, plus the fact that there is good individual effort by residents, further improvements must be brought about. The adjudicators feel that more can be done. Ask the local authority what steps they are taking in relation the recently launched Action Against Litter Campaign. Good luck for 1998.