

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **NAAS**
County : **KILDARE**
Category : **F**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 18-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	31	30
The Built Environment	40	32	30
Landscaping	40	27	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	20
Litter Control	40	22	22
Tidiness	20	11	11
Residential Areas	30	24	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	21	23
General Impression	10	5	5
TOTAL MARK	300	194	191

Naas, Co. Kildare

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for your detailed form and map which was very helpful during the course of adjudication. The adjudicators still look forward to the submission of your 3 - 5 year plan. It is good to see the varied support that exists and the initiative you are undertaking to promote awareness of the competition including the estates competition, garden competition, shop front competition, and even a heritage competition - well done in this regard. There are some strong heritage features in Naas with St. David's Church, Jigginstown Castle and the moat - could more be made of these features. It is also encouraging to see the town trail booklet; well done. It is good to see that you have increased support, particularly from Naas UDC. The adjudicators look forward to further improvements in this regard. On the Main Street, there is a good variety in the built environment; however, the adjudicators feel that there is an overemphasis pseudo-traditional shop fronts.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

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. A number of very good buildings and shop fronts were noted throughout Naas this year, which is good to see. There are many examples of well presented premises; these include Butt Mullin', The Popular Drapery (good use of flowers), The Paddocks (flowers), Ferris O'Reilly, Nolan's Butchers, Browne's, Hynes Shoes, Bank of Ireland, Kinsella's, Colm McEvoy's, Wm. McCormack's, AIB, Ulster Bank, St. David's Church, Bretts, Time House, Cold Stores (well landscaped), James Morrin's, F. Dunne's, Lane's, Merrin's (nice murals) and Swan Dowling's. There was an overuse of signage at Brennan's Hardware. Try to use paint rather than varnish, as varnish weathers. Naas Courthouse was newly renovated; well done. The Court Hotel was also well presented as was Anne O'Gorman's. The newly renovated Kildare County Council building was noted. The adjudicators also noted the new Church of the Irish Martyrs near Craddockstown Road was very neat and tidy. The Centra opposite this church was also well presented. The Garda Station was good as was the Nas na Riogh Bookshop where it is good to see the use of Irish. Try to perhaps extend more tree planting along the Main Street in years to come as this could create a very attractive visual feature. Good flowers were noted at the Manor Inn. Try also to consider planting one or two

trees outside the UDC. Sarah Flood's Pub also made good use of the Irish language. Try to replace the signage at the Town House Hotel but good efforts were noted with flowers. The area by Madison Clothing had a nice pedestrian area. There is room for improvement also. Try to encourage property owners to paint up their premises regularly; for example, Abbey Electrical, Tom Clancy's, Taxi and Gogarty Hardware would benefit from painting. The Ivy Inn has overuse of signage. There are several other premises that still have plastic signage; perhaps these might be encouraged to improve this situation (e.g. ETV and Auto Parts & Accessories). The tennis courts by Sarto Road were particularly bad and the car park area at the rear of the UDC was very untidy. Work needs to be carried out to this area to improve its appearance and make it more welcoming.

LANDSCAPING

Flower baskets were noted on the poles throughout the town. Well done in this regard. The sculpture, (perpetual motion) was admired on the approach. A newly landscaped area was noted at the entrance to Lakelands Park' congratulations on this. However, it was disappointing to see litter alongside the river again this year. Tree planting was noted on a much improved Craddockstown Road. Try to paint the seats on the grassed area opposite the Garda Station - litter was evident here also. Try to also paint the swing and roundabout in the playground on Sarto Road. There is considerable need for more grass cutting in open spaces throughout Naas, particularly on approach roads.

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 town. 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 town, 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 Naas would include identification of the flora and fauna in the area, preparation of a wildlife management plan as part of the

area development plan and identification of the 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. In this regard, it is good to see the amenity and lakeside area was much improved this year. Try to minimise the use of weed killer. It was good to see swans and ducks evident. The canal is also an important habitat for wildlife.

LITTER CONTROL

It was very encouraging to see new litter bins added. The adjudicators commend your efforts in making visits to schools. Litter was noted near the junction to the Blessington road and litter was also bad outside the Farm Development Services and on the Sallins Road. There is a need for bins. The area at the stream at the entrance to Lakelands Park was particularly bad. Try to replace bins near the lake area with closed top bins as birds were causing scattering of litter. Litter was also noted on the green to the right of the Harbour View Hotel where it was quite bad. Litter was also noted outside Naas Library and along Sarto Road - there is a need for bins here. Pacelli Road was bad also. Overall, the adjudicators recognise that there is a large area to cover, but increase vigilance is needed.

TIDINESS

The adjudicators commend your efforts in relation to bottle banks (one was noted at Quinnsnorth). More regular street cleaning is needed, particularly, on footpaths where gravel has collected and takes from the overall tidy appearance. The area outside TSB Bank looked very well. A "No Dumping" sign was noted on the Ballymore Eustace Road. It would be nice if more traditional lamp posts could be put in place on the Main Street. Undergrounding of wires would also be desirable. In general, the Main Street, was okay - try to work on some of the suggestions in this report. There is also a need to replace footpaths in places; the adjudicators noted sporadic cases of cracked pavements, which does not exactly help in terms of accessibility for the disabled or for the elderly.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The adjudicators commend your efforts in running Estate and Garden competitions. Overall, a very good presentation was noted throughout Naas this year; well done to all those involved. During the course of adjudication, the adjudicators noted Sundays Well Park was very good - it was good to see Irish incorporated onto the name; well done. Elm wood was good as was Roseville. A new development, The Gallops, was noted adjacent to Naas Racecourse. Ashgrove was good, as was King Furze Avenue. St. Corbans Place could be improved. The Sycamores was good but try to watch the weeds. Hollywood Park was also good, as was Cherry Grove. Try to put name plates on some of the new developments, and try to incorporate Irish into the signage. Patrician Crescent could be improved. Lakelands Estate was very neat and tidy. Craddockstown is a new development with

landscaping noted. Hazlemere is also very good, as is Alderwood Park, with a very nice entrance noted. St. Conleth's Place was also looking well on the day of adjudication with an area opposite well maintained. Rathasker Park is also very good. A new wall was noted at Jigginstown Park. Also noted were the Harbour View apartments with nice use of flowers. Overall, a very good performance under this category;, congratulations.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

On the approach from Blessington, at the 30 MPH sign, grass was overgrown. Weeds were noted by the wall and by kerbing, and there was a need for cutting at the time of adjudication. The approach from Dublin could be better; weeds etc. were noted. Try to paint the poles and cut the grass. It was also noted that work was going on at time of adjudication on a stone wall. Some landscaping has taken place at the sculpture but this was not yet complete. Approaching from Sallins, long grass was noted and some weeds were noted at the kerbs. The new residential developments, new road and new boundary walls have helped improved the overall appearance on this approach. Litter was noted along this road, especially on the right hand side - maybe due in part to the lack of bins. Approaching Naas from Ballymore Eustace, a positive impression is created by the wildlife and lakelands amenity area to the right, which was well maintained. While approaching from Kilcullen, it was quite bad with overgrown verges. Closer in was much neater, particularly near the Garda Station. On the approach from Newbridge, litter was noted on the left hand side. Weeds had been cleared from the kerbs and a new wall was noted at Jigginstown Park (this helped the appearance). Overall, improvements are needed in this category.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

For the size of Naas, the adjudicators were impressed with a number of areas this year, particularly, the presentation of residential areas and the built environment. Roads need to be improved and litter was somewhat disappointing in places - try to work through schools. The adjudicators also commend the effort through flower tubs and baskets. Try to maintain grassed areas better. Overall, a good presentation apart from roads and litter - try to work on these two areas for next year.