

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **ATHEA VILLAGE**
County : **LIMERICK**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 17-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33	33
The Built Environment	40	30	30
Landscaping	40	30	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	25	25
Litter Control	40	29	29
Tidiness	20	13	13
Residential Areas	30	25	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	30	30
General Impression	10	8	7
TOTAL MARK	300	223	220

Athea, Co. Limerick

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The committee are to be commended for the approach they have taken in this category. The submission of a three year plan, inclusive of a village map , historical resume of Athea and photographic evidence of ongoing developments was very much welcomed by the adjudicator. The body of the plan outlines the proposed developments and the implementation of these over the stated period. The interaction between the committee the local community council, local authority and other public sector agencies is noteworthy.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The standard of presentation of commercial premises, civic buildings and monuments and private residences in the village was in this adjudicators estimation extremely high. There seems a great sense of unity of purpose amongst the people of Athea to endeavour to put the village to the forefront. The treatment of derelict areas, of which there are few, is an example to other centres. The Giants Garden , graveyard and adjacent car park with boundary wall, vibrant with shrubs and flowers, were in excellent condition and are examples of good development that can be seen around the village. Synans Gate and its Whiteboy commemorative plaque is another imposing feature as you approach from Glin. Indeed the Glin road approach with the new stonewall on the right as you enter is very impressive. The Carnegie Free Library, one of a few in the west of County Limerick , was well presented as was the Garda Station. The Church and grounds were in a very presentable state, as was the school with its well maintained grounds. Athea has a number of famous sons and daughters none more than the Ahearne brothers who were Olympians of note at the beginning of this century. The bronze commemorative sculpture is a fitting tribute to both brothers and indeed is a centre of attraction as there were a few overseas visitors taking photographs of the sculpture on adjudication day. The following commercial premises deserve mention for the standard of presentation. The Bridge End Filling Station, Brownes (be careful not display too many window stickers), The Dug Out, E O Connor , PO, J.P. Collins and Athea Credit Union. O'Concubhair and Woulfes are examples of nice traditional shop fronts and should be retained as such. Harnetts would be far more attractive if it dispensed with the plastic signs , these remind this adjudicator of the showband days when you were likely to encounter gems like the El Ponderosa in neon and plastic out in the middle of nowhere. The Old Thatch School is a link with Atheas rich past. The bridge over the River Gale is a focal point in the village and could be the ideal starting point for a wildlife project.

LANDSCAPING

The standard this year was very high and judging by the section

on landscaping in the plan, further interesting initiatives will take place this autumn. The mix of shrubs and flowers in the stonewall beds on the Glin Road were very attractive. The planting at the Giants Garden (Christy O Halloran) was also of the highest order. Overall the encouragement given by the committee to the community to enhance their properties with floral arrangements has been responded to.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Good to see proposed developments in this category especially as Athea has a natural focal point in the River Gale. The involvement of schoolchildren is to be welcomed as they will bring a natural enthusiasm to any proposed project and with proper direction will contribute immensely to the initiative

LITTER CONTROL

There was very little evidence of litter which is indicative of a good litter control programme. The committee are to be complimented on securing the services of the litter warden to visit the school and introduce the children to the benefits of litter control.

TIDINESS

The overall appearance of the village was one of neatness and tidiness. Weed control was good with a few minor exceptions, the committee are very conscious of the importance of this sector and in general the response of the community to encouragement has been very positive. One or two areas need to be addressed, the roofless house as one approaches from Abbeyfeale is an eyesore. The car park between the "Top Of The Town" and the funeral parlour is still weedy. The GAA Grounds could be improved upon, as could the Creamery Yard which was that bit untidy on adjudication day.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

This adjudicator felt that the standard in this category was excellent, even looking at the aerial picture of the village one can see that premises in the village and its environs were very well maintained. At ground level this is even more evident and all residents are to be commended. This adjudicator was impressed with a number of residences most notably those in Markivicz Park and St Bartholomews Villas. The cottage type residence on the Moyvane Road with gold gates was excellent as was the imposing Georgian residence on the right as one approaches from Abbeyfeale Rd. This residence had a beautiful shrub garden. The houses along the Lane were once again in top condition.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The approach roads were impressive, it is good to see that Athea is fostering the Irish Language by provision of attractive Failte signs. The roads from Ardagh/NCW, Listowel, Moyvane, Listowel and Abbeyfeale were excellent with grass margins cut and where relevant, hedgerows trimmed. The Glin Road entrance is probably the most impressive although it shows that a number of sheds at the back areas of premises in the village need painting at least.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The village is extremely attractive and it is no surprise that it has achieved quite high marks in past Tidy Towns Competitions. The efforts of the committee to get all sections on board are commendable and in fairness the response from residents has been first class.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (12/8/97)

One can readily see there is a tremendous effort to progress the development of this town and the many projects undertaken confirm this. The stonework and landscaping around the town is especially attractive. The Giants garden is a lovely feature and nicely linked to the cemetery. The riverside to each side of the bridge offers opportunities for further development. The ball alley could be concealed by planting. The area around the creamery would benefit from attention and litter at the Goid monument is unwelcome.