

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **RATHKEALE**  
County : **LIMERICK**  
Category : **C**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 03-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33	32
The Built Environment	40	27	26
Landscaping	40	33	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	18
Litter Control	40	21	21
Tidiness	20	12	11
Residential Areas	30	21	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28	28
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>196</b>

## **Rathkeale, Co. Limerick**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Thank you for returning your completed entry form. You still need to formulate an agreed development plan that will chart progress over the next three to five years. Since the by-pass took effect the traffic has been reduced significantly and the main streets in particular have added potential for further improvement. Ideally, you need to involve a wide representation from the community and select ten or twelve items that you could tackle for 1998. Much of the environmental improvements of recent years are being kept to a high standard and this is commendable.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

Rathkeale has many fine buildings stretching back over the centuries. The abbey and environs are well presented, but the Tennis Courts need weeding. Some garages are not playing their part and the forecourt of Jim Roche farm machinery should be improved. The Fire Station is well presented and weed control here is good. The dispensary is poor in presentation. D. McMahon has potential to be quite attractive. The Golden Vale mart environs are in need of improvement and should be tackled for next year. Rathkeale House Hotel is magnificent and the car park and environs are well laid out and maintained. Peoples Bakery is one of your best shopfronts in this strategic location. Churches and Schools are well presented again this year. Colaiste na Trionoide is also well presented and should further improve with the passing of time. The visitor centre at the old railway station is excellent and provides a valuable service.

### **LANDSCAPING**

You have worked hard in this section and the flower bed treatment on the Ballingarry approach is excellent. Work was in progress here during adjudication day. The major landscaping treatment at the roundabout is praiseworthy. You have done well in linking the new road with the town and the Rath Caola flower display is effective. As usual the grotto is excellent and free of litter - well done. Throughout the town there is evidence of some excellent individual effort and some commercial outlets have worked hard to achieve such a high standard.

### **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

You have a part to play in this respect and the river bank area offers scope for promoting wildlife. Also, when planting new shrubs or hedgerows, select a variety that will benefit wildlife in autumn and winter. You might also consider a wildlife project in the schools that could raise the interest generally.

### **LITTER CONTROL**

There are pockets of litter in several areas throughout the town and this will need to be tackled if you are to raise your standards. The town centre is almost litter free but some of the housing

estates are not playing their part. Food Stores have a responsibility to supply adequate litter bins and assist in litter control.

## **TIDINESS**

For the most part the town looked tidy. Most of the problems are associated with commercial traders. Some lane ways are very untidy and need attention. Public buildings are well presented and look tidy. The access to the river at the Golden Vale shop is very overgrown and untidy and not at all encouraging for a river walk as the stile suggests. One evening with a small work group would improve this black spot. There is a good deal of weed growth in the gutters - these should be sprayed in May.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

Abbey Court and Ballywilliam need improvement and the area where many of the houses are protected with wire mesh have a multitude of environmental problems. Private houses in the town centre and on the link roads between the new and old roads are for the most part very well presented. The terraced houses opposite Rathkeale Motors are excellent with generous bright colours. Developers of new houses should be encouraged to finish well and landscape if possible before leaving the site. Court Villas is a gem and really improves this area. The derelict and unoccupied houses opposite are ideal for urban infill.

## **ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS**

The road surface on the main street is well up to standard and the footpaths are well kept. Signage for the most part is good. The new black/gold metal signs are attractive in design. Further signs should be bilingual. You also need to identify the housing estates with proper bilingual signs. Many side and rear entrances need improvement and weed control in particular.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

The town looked attractive on adjudication day and you have done well to maintain the standards of previous developments. With the reduction in traffic you have potential for improvement. Continue with landscape development, add as much colour as is feasible to your approach roads - similar to the Ballingarry approach. Good luck for 1998.