

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **ARDAGH**
County : **LONGFORD**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 16-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	45	44
The Built Environment	40	32	32
Landscaping	40	33	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	24	24
Litter Control	40	36	36
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	24	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	33	33
General Impression	10	9	9
TOTAL MARK	300	248	247

Ardagh, County Longford

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The village is a joy to visit and walk through. There is an air of tranquillity which is appreciated. The questionnaire was filled out in detail and the map was most useful to the adjudicators. The work to maintain the village to such a high standard must be tremendous - well done. The three year plan simply is set out in points that are achievable. The evidence of much of the work in 1997 will be viewed in the Summer of 1998.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Lyons premises was excellently presented. The adjudicators welcome the ongoing restoration of the pub front. The Carpark was well maintained and enhanced by some nice planting. There was some building material in the carpark area that required removal. The information sign on Ardagh looked well. The school will require a coat of paint before next year. The church was magnificent in presentation though the stressed/dying tree in front of it should be replaced. The Garda Station was excellent. The stone walls which are a feature have been allowed some plant growth which gives them a sense of naturalness. A mistake by some villages is to clear them totally of vegetation which gives them a stark and bare appearance. The Heritage Centre and surrounding park was well presented - well done. Best of luck with your endeavours with the cuisine/restaurant. This type of entrepreneurialship is to be applauded. St. Brigid's Training Centre was well painted and clean. The coachyard was well presented though it seemed a bit isolated. The area around the well could possibly benefit from some red flowering plants to complement the greyness of the stone.

LANDSCAPING

The village is well landscaped, with more formal planting in the village proper complementing the rural landscape beyond. The use of exotic plants should be considered more carefully though (eg Cordyline at the church and centre carpark); native species really enhance the village better. It was wonderful to see the impact made by using the one colour (red) planting in the centre beds in the village. However, maybe hanging baskets could be a more complementary colour rather than purple - the adjudicators noted that the village is being planted to a plan for the Entente Florale - best of luck with your entry.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The Neighbourhood Park is a fine amenity to have developed and has some nice descriptive information boards. There were, however, a few items of litter in the long grass and some grassy areas which had been cut back required clearing. The adjudicators presume that expert advice is on hand to deal with the thinning of trees when required and the maintenance of those left to grow. The planned upgrading of the park is welcome,

though is important that it retains its wildlife aspects. Tree maintenance should be carried out on all planted trees throughout the village and those in the park of the heritage centre. The development of the wildflower meadow (which includes cross border co-operation) is commendable. A nice wooden information board/sign would look well indicating to species of flower present. There are a number of posters on wildflowers available or local artistic talent could help out - the Ardagh Wildflower Collection.

LITTER CONTROL

This was very good with no litter seen in the village. The litterbins were well paced and well maintained.

TIDINESS

The village was tidy on the day of adjudication. Long grass in the graveyard of St. Mel's was being cut and will give a neater appearance when complete.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The architecture and planned nature of this village is its greatest asset. You have enhanced this by the presentation of the houses. New houses are sympathetically constructed and fit in well with the rest of the village. Exterior walls, hedges and front gardens were all very well presented and featured many examples of floral display. Ardken looked well with its new garden area.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Approach roads were all very well presented with some lovely stone walls, hedges etc. Is there a need to have the two approach signs to the village. The back roads and areas were well kept including the farm gates/yards.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Congratulations again in an excellent presentation and the adjudicators wish you well with the Entente Florale.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (9/8/97)

The maintenance in the village is exemplary and demonstrates a very clear understanding that simple presentation combined with easily managed spaces is attainable at a high standard. This programme has allowed the Committee to focus on a very high standard of finishes and weed control to such elements as grass kerbs, grass cutting beside walls and effective floral displays. The floral displays must be complimented as they match the atmosphere of the village and are not too loud. The new plantings along the entry road are in sympathy with the surrounding countryside and one looks forward to the maturing hedgerows. The Committee must be complimented on the overall image that a visitor leaves with.

