

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **CASTLEBAR**
County : **MAYO**
Category : **E**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 11-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	40	38
The Built Environment	40	28	27
Landscaping	40	26	25
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	14	13
Litter Control	40	19	19
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	19	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	20	21
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	186	181

Castlebar, County Mayo

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Many thanks for your very comprehensive Development Plan and progress report in your efforts to date. Your Plan clearly shows that you have successfully obtained the willing support and co-operation of the County and Urban Councils, FÁS, the Gardai, etc. and the local community. In particular, you are to be complimented on your success with sponsorship of projects. Having clearly identified the work to be completed you must now implement the programme and get the work done in a manner as to assist easy maintenance thereafter.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Most of your important buildings look well - the Catholic church and grounds and the Family Centre looked very well. The Council building, Library, Fire Station, Marsh House and the Garda Station are all well maintained. Michael Davitt House looks drab and the grounds need landscaping and improved car parking facilities. Hurst Heating & plumbing was in very poor condition with the yard area cluttered with litter. Many of the commercial buildings are of a high standard - Tolsters, Hanleys, Crean Mosaics, An Carraig, The Olde Town Mall, Coxs, McGoldricks, McCarthys, Hynes Jeweller and The Irish House are some examples. All use traditional shop-fronts which should always be encouraged as should the removal of plastic signs and plastic window advertisements. Castle Travel and the Tweed Centre are examples of main street premises that should be improved upon. The refurbishment of the old Hat Factory premises is a welcome addition. There is much potential to redevelop the derelict buildings to be seen off the walkway from Linenhall Street to the car park behind Main Street. This whole area needs more planning and attention. Your plans to redevelop the Market Square area are most commendable. The hospitals and RTC buildings were well presented save for the presence of a small amount of litter in the car park areas.

LANDSCAPING

The mall, as usual, looked most attractive. The programme of work underway at Lough Lannagh is progressing well - the new litter bins, bird tables and seating are welcome. However, there is evidence of parties in this area, with much litter around the benches and in the stream adjacent to the car park. The landscaping on the N5 and that sponsored on the roundabouts is most commendable and very attractive. These routes are exemplary and give an examples of what should be done on the other approach roads. The Railway Station deserves special mention - the flowers and tubs are most attractive, as was the Station itself. Many of the commercial premises and ESB poles in

the town are decked with hanging baskets and flower tubs which are most attractive and this practise should be encouraged. In the industrial areas try and have the resident industries sponsor landscaping programmes for their area.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The town river has been cleaned, although litter and some plastic cones have recently been dumped. The lake area is also receiving attention though there is little evidence of a concerted wildlife programme. We would like you to develop a wildlife amenity, e.g. a signed walkway and information panels on flora and fauna of the area should be considered. Try to involve a local environmentalist in your work programme for this category of the Competition. The Lough Lannagh development will be a welcome, managed visitor attraction and should assist you to properly manage the whole Lough Lannagh area. Consideration should be given to the removal of the old diving platform if it is not to be repaired.

LITTER CONTROL

Your own anti-litter plan and programme is very comprehensive and hopefully will succeed in time. On adjudication day there was however ample evidence of litter on most streets and back areas. The following all had varying amounts of litter in full view, the river, Lough Lannagh car park and pathways, McHale Park area, outside the Milebush GAA park and on most of the approach roads. A litter free zone is a basic requirement of the Tidy Towns Competition and you must therefore redouble your efforts in this regard.

TIDINESS

In general, Castlebar gives the impression of a tidy, busy commercial centre. The newly landscaped N5 gives a very good impression. However, problem areas include poorly maintained boundary walls, overgrown grass verges, abandoned block work outside Tara Court and rubble in areas like An Sportlann and McHale Park.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Lakeshore Drive presents a very good impression with their attractive sign and well landscaped grounds and walkway to the lake nearby. Maryland was attractive and well presented but watch out for the litter thrown over the wall on the Balla approach road. McHale Road presents a mixed bag with some homes needing major refurbishment while others make some effort to present a good appearance. The back areas here are very poorly maintained. Oak Park and Castlehill Park are further examples of well presented and tidy estates, others such as those in the area of the NCF Co-op and on the Pontoon road are in need of proper landscaping, lighting and amenity areas. Try to encourage the erection of proper name plates/signs like those at

Rowan Drive and Chestnut Grove should be encouraged and builders should be encouraged to remove signs, articulated trailers and evidence of building when no longer building in the estates. No. 116 Chestnut Grove is a prime example of an extremely unkempt residence with overgrown gardens, litter strewn about and even the wreck of an old car at the side of the house.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The N5 approach road is exemplary, particularly for the landscaping of the route between the entry roundabouts to the town. The sponsored roundabouts are most attractive. The other approach roads need similar attention - more tree and shrub planting, watch out for broken walls, poorly maintained gateways, overgrown grass verges and weeds at the base of walls and on pathways. The route over the railway bridge requires some attention and the old railway tracks/girders used as fencing should be removed and replaced with stone walls. The new stone wall adjacent to the Council Offices car park should be extended to the landscaped area beyond the hospital car park. Back areas like those on McHale road, at the An Sportlann car park and the area from Linenhall street to the car park should be cleaned and tidied.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Your programme of work, the development Plan and the co-operation received to date all auger well for your committee and the town of Castlebar. You do however have a major task at hand particularly with the outlying approach roads to the town.