

Tidy Towns 1997

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **ATHBOY**
County : **MEATH**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 30-06-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	29	28
The Built Environment	40	29	27
Landscaping	40	24	23
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15	15
Litter Control	40	22	23
Tidiness	20	11	11
Residential Areas	30	18	17
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	23	23
General Impression	10	5	5
TOTAL MARK	300	176	172

Athboy, County Meath

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for the detailed questionnaire and map that were submitted with the application. They were very useful. Athboy is a busy town and has significantly improved over the last number of years with investment evident in many areas. The adjudicators would appreciate a simple document outlining a 3/5 year work programme submitted with your entry next year.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Shop fronts in Athboy have come on tremendously in the last couple of years. Flowers by Pauline was very floriferous indeed. Tool Hire required some work, but McCann and Byrne was well presented. There were also some nice window boxes presented by a number of shops. More trees are needed in Upper Bridge Street. The derelict site will hopefully be attended to in the future. Collectors Den, Staunton's Pharmacy, Inn Moderation, the Credit Union, the Bank, Wine and Spirits Store, the Darnley Lodge Hotel, Falkner Fashions and McIlhenny's premises were all well presented. A more traditional approach to signage could be considered by Green Scene, P.O'Callaghan, Presto Cleaners, Italian Fast Food and Wong's Take Away. Although expensive, it stands the test of time and looks well. Perhaps a change to this could be considered over the next few years. Cosy Corner was nicely painted and had nice hanging baskets. The petrol station on the Trim Road was well looked after and had some nice planting - which required some watering. The school beside Diana's was well looked after as was the school on the Navan road. The old tin corrugated roof beside the church required repainting. The church looked well though some colour would be nice - a few tubs/shrubs. Diana's had a lot of materials outside - care should be taken to facilitate those using the footpath. The disused building on Connaught St. was an eyesore and will hopefully be let soon.

LANDSCAPING

On the Navan road there is nice planting of flowers in stones troughs. Attention to detail is required with weeds around tree bases and around poles. Flower bed planting can be seen on St. Paul's Avenue, though a litter bin required repainting as did the bench. There is some lovely planting and landscaping at St. Joseph's Villas. However, knowing how much time it must take to maintain, perhaps a lower maintenance planting scheme could be considered with the use of more shrubby herbaceous perennials. The carpark beside the church required some weeding and perhaps some planting. Previously planted containers required maintenance or removal. The use of native trees and shrubs would enhance the area. Examples such as Buddliaea would encourage butterflies, or Cotoneaster could provide winter food for birds.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

There are several green areas in and around Athboy including Fair Green and the river beside the Old Railway Station. These are most suitable for the development of Wildlife areas. Even in residential areas such as Parkview, perhaps a small wildflower meadow area could be developed for use in an educational manner for children. The existent native hedging could be used as a backdrop for an information board on wildlife. The entrance to the river beside the old creamery needs to be tidied. The area beside river is very pleasant and has great potential as a wildlife habitat. However, there was a lot of litter through the grass - once it has been developed/managed, it requires signposting from the main road. Fair Green is well looked after. Could more use be made of it as common amenity areas?

LITTER CONTROL

Litter was a bad problem in Athboy on the day of adjudication, not only on the main street but in the Church carpark and the grassy areas beside the river. Litter bins badly needed emptying. The bin opposite the Kildalkey road was jammed with litter. Perhaps a competition sponsored by a local company/shop would help to raise the profile of litter awareness.

TIDINESS

Although litter did create an untidy look to the town, it was otherwise reasonably tidy. Attention to detail is required with grass needing to be cut away from the bases of trees and around the edges of poles.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Parkview was nicely kept. While the signpost requires cleaning, there were nice hanging baskets and plants. Perhaps something more permanent could be considered, giving presence and colour at different times of the year. Some litter in evidence also. St. Joseph's Villas were varied in presentation; some required their exterior walls painted. Castlelawns had some nice planting and this has matured well. Perhaps the amenity area at the end could be used to attract birds with a few bird tables or a small arboretum of native trees. New landscaping will presumably be completed for housing development on Navan road. Beechgrove was well kept with people working on their gardens and quite a number of hanging baskets. However, dead trees should be removed and attention should be paid to litter. The basketball area needs to be repaired. If children and families helped to plant trees and look after the area it might give them more incentive.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Cloran road was well cut back but would benefit from additional trees. The Athboy sign had been painted. The graveyard was well looked after. The planting in front gardens improved the road. The houses along the road were well presented. St Brigids Court on Connaught Street was well presented but again would benefit from the planting of native trees. The Oldcastle approach road was

reasonable. The Trim road had trees planted, was tidy, with Athboy well signposted. However, the hedges needed to be cut back better and the 30mph sign needs to be replaced. Close to the Fair Green, the road gutters were weedy. The Delvin road well kept; the Rockery is a nice idea and will mature well. The houses were well kept though some litter was evident. The grassy area in front of the houses needs attention to detail, particularly the grass around trees. Another suggestion would be to manage this as a wildflower meadow, encouraging the growth of wildflowers, rather than weeds. On the Kildalkey road, bollard bases required weeding. The base at the stretch of wall was very well maintained. The wall at the gate at Athboy United required repair. Houses were well maintained on Kildalkey road.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Athboy has improved especially with regards to the built environment. However, the problem of litter still has to be addressed. It is a slow process and with problems such as overflowing litter bins, it is difficult. Well done on the work that has been done and maintained. The adjudicators look forward to your working document next year.