

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **WHITEGATE-CLARE**
County : **CLARE**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 30-06-98

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1998	Mark Awarded 1997
Overall Developmental Approach	50	27	--
The Built Environment	40	25	--
Landscaping	40	15	--
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15	--
Litter Control	40	25	--
Tidiness	20	15	--
Residential Areas	30	20	--
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	20	--
General Impression	10	6	--
TOTAL MARK	300	168	--

Whitegate, County Clare

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Welcome back to the Competition and well done on the progress made to date. The detailed entry form and map received were very useful to the adjudicator on the day. You should now draw up a simple 3/5 year plan, setting out targets, action items required to achieve same and put a time- frame on each project. This need only be a simple 3 to 4 page document. It would also be important to take on board the recommendations made in this adjudication and undertake the work during the year, not leaving it until the last minute to get started. We note that you have a good working relationship with FAS and have a student summer scheme in operation but, of course, the most important people to get involved are all the residents of Whitegate and it is good to see that you already have their support in the areas of day- to- day maintenance and fund raising.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Whitegate is a very attractive rural Irish village, enhanced by the proximity of Lough Derg. The public buildings such as the new Church and the old creamery are well presented with good planting adjacent. The Lakyle National School is nicely painted but here the playground was rather weedy and some of the chutes needed painting. The GAA clubhouse is well presented but some work would be needed on the grounds. Business premises in general are well kept - the building advertising Boats for Hire was being painted on the day of adjudication and McDermotts Foodmarket /P.O is very well presented. Other premises with good decor are Solons, Treacys, Lucas Lounge Bar and the Drapery shop at the top of the village. Throughout the village it would be recommended that plastic signs are replaced with more traditional signage. The old Church could do with some attention in regard to decor and general appearance. The Nightingale Pub near the Creamery is well presented but again signage here needs attention. The funeral home on the Portumna road is neat and well painted. However, the surrounds here are rather stark and perhaps some planting could be undertaken. Unfortunately, like most villages you do have a number of derelict sites and vacant premises and these need to be addressed in the long term. We note that you are in consultation with Clare Council regarding same. In some cases it is possible to successfully camouflage these buildings until a long term solution is found. The excellent rebuilding of stone walls by FAS was noted.

LANDSCAPING

The use of flowers and shrubs throughout the village is very pleasant. The most impressive display was situated at the triangular road junction. On the Scarriff approach road there is very good planting of shrubs and trees and the planting near the telephone boxes and around the store opposite were noted. At the estate of

four new houses off the main street no doubt the green area at the end will be landscaped in due course and the raised bed areas at either side on the way in will be planted up. Also, perhaps some flower planter boxes could be situated on the ledges over the doors of the houses in the estate facing the street. The GAA playground area is imaginative - however, the raised beds here needed attention and the area should be sprayed for weeds early in the season. On the Portumna approach, the mature pines with planting of shrubs and flowers nearby is good. The Adjudicator visited the Rent and Irish Cottage complex and Williamstown Harbour. As these are not strictly in the village these areas were not taken in for marking purposes this year. However, as they are important to the development of the village the following comments are included: The lake area adjacent to the Rent and Irish Cottage complex appears to be in the process of the development of an amenity area and this should be encouraged as a nicely planted area here with seating would obviously be good for the visitors to the Cottages. The pier area nearest to the complex was rather overgrown on the day of adjudication. At Williamstown Harbour the marina is well developed - however all the planting here was rather overgrown and needed attention.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

This is quite a new category in the competition and encourages Committees to remember that any developments should take account of the natural environment and strive to be sympathetic to local flora and fauna. A good way to start is to do a survey, with expert advice, of the local wildlife and their natural habitats around the village and then endeavour to enhance and preserve these. For instance the green area on the Portumna road could be planted with wild flowers and berry bushes could be planted in appropriate areas to encourage birdlife.

LITTER CONTROL

The village was fairly litter free on the day of adjudication with only a sprinkling of papers to be seen. Obviously the clean up organised with the National School is successful. Whilst there were a number of litter bins in evidence, more could be situated in strategic positions around the village.

TIDINESS

The town was mostly neat and tidy throughout with fairly good weed control.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Ninety per cent of private houses in the village are well presented including Alston House and the house beside the Post Office. The two housing estates are well kept including the surround walls. The new development of houses on the main street are attractive and will add colour to the village. The vacant thatched house needs to be well kept as it is in a central position and the sycamore plants and

grass on the roof should be removed for a start.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The new informational Display sign was noted and also the second one near the Post Office. Some gateways and visible back yards could be improved.

GENERAL IMPRESSION.

The Whitegate Community Council have made a very good start in developing the village as an attractive place for locals and visitors alike. There is much to be built upon and we look forward to seeing progress in the years ahead.