

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **CROOKEDWOOD**
County : **WESTMEATH**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 11-07-98

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1998	Mark Awarded 1997
Overall Developmental Approach	50	25	--
The Built Environment	40	18	--
Landscaping	40	25	--
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	--
Litter Control	40	20	--
Tidiness	20	10	--
Residential Areas	30	14	--
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	17	--
General Impression	10	5	--
TOTAL MARK	300	154	--

Crookedwood, County Westmeath

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Welcome to the competition. Thank you for the map and explanatory notes - they were a great help to the adjudicators. You have made a great start in the competition. You seem to have a great committee with a good number involved. There has been thought in your development and where you would like to see the village in the future. It is a wonderful nameplace and is part of its uniqueness. The photographs before developments took place were also useful. A simple 3-5 year plan is required for the competition. This is really to set out in points and to prioritise future developments in the village. It should have input from all the community and take into account the role of all involved in the different aspects. It is really an expansion of what you have included with this application. Well done on work carried out so far.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The village is small so every detail is taken into account. The Post Office which holds a prominent position could be brightened by some brightly coloured geraniums or other flowers. 'The Wood' was well painted and was well presented as was the adjoining carpark area. The Telecom exchange was well maintained.

LANDSCAPING

The tree planting in the village is excellent. You are obviously knowledgeable and enthusiastic about trees and the part they play in this landscape is important. It is good to see young trees planted with adequate 'breathing space' around their trunks. Congratulations on the choice of species - they will be magnificent when mature. Do take into consideration though, the size of the area being planted and that similar species/tree type will have great impact e.g. using several of the *Betula pendula* 'Tristis' which has happened at the road corner of the carpark.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The area down by Lough Derravarragh, although some way from the village is very pleasant. Ensure through input that the area is not overlandscaped as development takes place. The value of the area should be assessed e.g. type of flora. Certainly above this in Knockeyon is an area of scientific interest from the point of view of its flora. Perhaps this area could be investigated, though all work should be carried out in conjunction with the relevant authorities and experts (wildlife wardens based in Mullingar) Otherwise there are several other habitats that could be assessed and directions to how they could be managed e.g. hedgerows, meadow and woodland. Wildflowers should also be encouraged too, in parts of the approach road and hedgerows, though this is difficult as cutting and trimming has to be done selectively.

LITTER CONTROL

There were a couple of pieces of litter evident on the day of adjudication . In a village as small as Crookedwood, litter should be non-existent, though problems may occur with passing motorists throwing litter out car windows. The adjudicators could not see any litterbins. There should at least be one outside the Post Office.

TIDINESS

The village was reasonably tidy though uncut grass on the Castlepollard road and areas that require reseeding create a less than total tidy village.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

There are new houses on the Multyfarnham road and these will be landscaped as time goes on. Cars in a residence should be screened if possible as this seems to be a commercial venture which detracts from the village itself. There are some well presented gardens and well done to those involved.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The approach roads were not that good in presentation. Each approach road should have the following; a good clear, clean name sign of the village, clean clear speed signs, cut hedges though allowing some wildflowers through at intervals and cut verges - again allowing areas of wildflowers, usually to the back of the verge area. Each of the roads in to Castlepollard required attention in one of these areas. The picnic area over Lough Derravaragh is very nice, however, gravel should be removed when work is completed.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The information furnished showed that the Committee have recognised many of the problems and areas of potential to be realised. Information available from the Tidy Towns Section, Dept. Of Environment and Local Government is of great use to villages who are new to the competition. Although the village is long, and the application has attempted to set out boundaries for judging, other areas outside these that may have a grave negative impact on the village cannot be ruled out or ignored. If you look at many of the winning villages, their boundaries stretch far beyond the designated area of speed sign/name signs. Perhaps the village could develop an image, adopt a particular wildflower that could be encouraged to grow throughout the village - maybe a climber such as honeysuckle or foxgloves ? Well done on work so far and good luck with your development plans and work in future.