

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **RATHOWEN**  
County : **WESTMEATH**  
Category : **A**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 13-07-98

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1998	Mark Awarded 1997
Overall Developmental Approach	50	29	28
The Built Environment	40	25	23
Landscaping	40	27	27
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	11	11
Litter Control	40	28	27
Tidiness	20	13	13
Residential Areas	30	19	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	20	20
General Impression	10	6	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>174</b>

## **Rathowen, County Westmeath**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Do not get too disheartened - once the roadworks are complete further progress will ensue. It is evident that work that has been carried out by the committee is having an impact - well done. A 3/5 year plan is required. This can be set out in points if you wish will give a sense of direction and of satisfaction as objectives are achieved. Look at your resources both in terms of the environment and manpower and take into account limitations be it in the short term such as the road works or others (perhaps funding ) in the longer term Good luck with the plan.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

The buildings in Rathowen were presented to a very high standard in general. The Rathowen Inn and Richie's looked well. The carpark beside Richie's was neat and tidy There were also some fine hanging baskets. The doorway and old lamps on the Village Inn were particularly admired. The school was satisfactory and the Garda station looked well. It was good to see the anti litter campaign in the school yard and the sign. The Foodstore was satisfactory, though the front was quite cluttered with advertising. This happens as it is also the Post Office and advertising has to be carried out for this purpose. The area beside the old church could be considered as a wildlife habitat area to be assessed for future management. The pump on Church road looked well and there were some fine stone walls on this road too.

### **LANDSCAPING**

Understandably, landscaping has been curtailed due to roadworks. The green area in front of the houses was well kept and landscaped. Trees are maturing well on the Mullingar side - take care to remove weeds and grass from the bases of trees as they compete for nutrients. Hanging baskets and other incidental planting carried out by premises must be commended as it made a good impact.

### **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

There are several habitats evident in Rathowen, notably meadow and hedgerow. As mentioned previously, the church could be a good project area or else the wooded area up near the school if this was possible. Consult those knowledgeable in the field and assess these habitats. The objective is to enhance and manage rather than change. The opportunity of new landscaping of approach roads could incorporate some wildflower areas on the approach which would look well.

### **LITTER CONTROL**

The village was essentially litter free except for a few pieces by the school. The adjudicators do take circumstances into consideration and it is possible to be aware of litter even though there may be ongoing roadworks.

## **TIDINESS**

The village itself, was tidy considering the situation with the roadworks. Do keep up the standard - once they are complete then progress will be easier to achieve.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

The houses up to the school varied considerably in presentation. There were totally unkempt premises and also exceptionally well kept premises - quite a contrast. The derelict houses on the main street were very well presented with newly painted doors. There were also several well presented houses on the main street notably a yellow house opposite Richies and a stone house beside it.

## **ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS**

Under the circumstances the main approach roads could not be judged. Church road was neat and tidy. Once the roadworks have been completed, signs and landscaping will be carried out. Enquire also about traffic calming which is successful in other villages - though this presumably is part of the plans for the village.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

As mentioned to you before, a plan needs to be drawn up. What is required is something that is simple and to the point. Draw up a set of objectives - with a time-frame and work on them. They should have input from the community and focus on where they see their village and community in 5 years time. Think of how good the approach roads will look when roadworks are complete. Look forward to the day and good luck with the plan.