

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **BLACKROCK**
County : **DUBLIN**
Category : **F**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 07-07-1999

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	37	33
The Built Environment	40	30	26
Landscaping	40	30	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	20
Litter Control	40	25	24
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	22	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	24	24
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	207	198

Blackrock, Co. Dublin

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

There is excellent strategic planning and great enthusiasm shown by the Blackrock Tidy Towns Committee and great efforts are being made to include the various sections of the community in the committee. Since last year we have noticed great improvements due to the introduction of the Blackrock initiative; it seems to have been a great success as an urban pilot project.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Blackrock initiative has brought about significant improvements on the central urban areas of the Main Street. The office blocks on Temple Road, especially the TSB Corporate Building looked very well and added greatly to the main access route through the village. Canada Life and Temple House also added to this, although the flower boxes on the AIG Europe building needed replacing. The building works of St. Anne's Square take from the very pleasant streetscape but we look forward to their completion next year. Jack O'Rourke's Pub and Conway's on the Main Street looked very well and we were very impressed by the efforts made by the latter to brightly paint and decorate both the main and side entrance to the pub. The addition of some nice new restaurants with pleasing frontages along the Main Street has also added to the streetscape. The Missing Swan is a colourful addition to the corner of Carysfort Avenue and Frascati Road. Wonderful developments have been made to improve disabled access facilities in the village, such as dish pavements, adapted pedestrian crossings and A.T.M machines, and you have set a great example to other urban villages throughout Ireland. The addition of street furniture and attractive lighting has also much improved the streetscape.

LANDSCAPING

Blackrock Main Street looked colourful and bright on the day of our visit. We commend your decision to seek the advice of a horticulturist in the selection of trees that are suitable for the specific environment of Blackrock. Perhaps a discreet sign to prevent people from locking bicycles to the railings around the trees would be advisable. The bottoms on the metal railings surrounding the trees along the Main Street and by the Dart Station seem to attract a lot of litter which is difficult to remove thereby detracting from their overall effect. The flower planters along the island in the centre of Frascati Road are a welcoming feature. Blackrock Park was in wonderful condition on the day of our visit and congratulations on the superb maintenance evident throughout. It was disappointing however to see the graffiti, and a number of beer cans inside and around the chalet there. The landscaping around the DART Station by the pupils of St. Augustines is a positive example of what community involvement can achieve.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The involvement of schools in the preservation and development of wildlife is to be commended and further development would be welcome. Blackrock Park continues to be a well maintained habitat for wildlife within your urban village; however we would like to see the introduction of an environmental programme within your overall development plan next year. The stream flowing from Blackrock Park towards the DART line was in terrible condition near to the end, with potentially dangerous, broken, rusty railings as well as unsightly weed growth and a lot of rubbish, beer cans etc. This area detracts from the lovely wildlife facility you have in Blackrock Park and is deserving of your attention as soon as possible.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter Control in Blackrock, especially along the main street, seems to have improved since last year and the introduction of litter bins has obviously contributed to this. We would, however, draw your attention to a number of black spots, such as the base of the newly planted trees along the main street, the DART Station opposite Hill Motors, Brookfield Avenue and Sweetmans Avenue. There was an overflowing litter bin at the back of Canada Life and rubbish evident at the corner of Convent Road and Carysfort Avenue. The issue of dumping outside some of the gates on the right as you head up Sweetmans Avenue should be addressed. On-going implementation of the Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council Plan and the continuance of the annual litter campaigns throughout the community should however yield further results in the coming year.

TIDINESS

The number of recycling facilities around the village shows your vigilance in this area and we are very happy to see your two voluntary labour projects, namely Operation Weed Company and Operation Graffiti control, continuing this year. Fly-posting and graffiti on ESB Boxes throughout the town needs attention and it was a shame to see graffiti in prominent locations such as Idrone Lane, the DART Station and McCabes on Merrion Avenue. Some weed control is still required in areas such as Sweetmans Avenue and Green Road.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

We were delighted to see many keen gardeners around the residential areas of Blackrock where by and large the gardens were well kept and colourful, particularly Barclay Court, Sydney Avenue, Idrone Terrace, Maritimo Gardens and Waltham Terrace. Some litter control is necessary however on Avoca Avenue. The house at Frascati Court is also in need of painting as this creates a bad impression from the Main Road.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Given the high standard of the main road, more attention and focus must now be given to side streets and connecting laneways around

Blackrock. We noted the high standard of the car parks with regard to litter control and tidiness and particularly noted the attractive shrubbery at the entrance to Blackrock Car Park. The provision of disabled friendly pedestrian crossings around the village is excellent.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

We were very impressed with the improvements that have been brought about as a result of the Blackrock Initiative and other such projects and hope to see further developments of this nature continued in coming years. The investment in facilities for the disabled throughout the village is highly commendable, but please ensure high priority is still given to litter and tidiness in the area. Well done on your results to date.