

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **ATHENRY**
County : **GALWAY**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 29-06-1999

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	34	34
The Built Environment	40	27	26
Landscaping	40	26	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	20
Litter Control	40	26	26
Tidiness	20	16	17
Residential Areas	30	21	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	21	21
General Impression	10	8	7
TOTAL MARK	300	200	198

Athenry, County Galway

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Athenry is a delightful and interesting town. Your committee's three year plan is well researched and takes a pragmatic approach in both short and long term objectives. There is little doubt that this approach to the presentation of a town with a surprisingly high number of historic and cultural qualities will ensure an excellent future in Tidy Towns and, more importantly, for your community.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The narrow streets of Athenry are highlighted by the historic buildings and town walls. The Northgate, the Castle, the Dominican Abbey, and St.Marys Collegiate Church give a fine sense of history through to the modern Catholic Church of today. The 'recycling' of the Castle and St. Marys is most appropriate and well executed. The redevelopment of Northgate street is sympathetic to its old world character. The interesting 'Blathannas' flower shop provides colour and contrast. Generally, the commercial and residential buildings are presented well and their size and scale contribute to the intimacy of the town's character.

LANDSCAPING

The lawn around the castle was a little disappointing as there was weed in the central pathway and over growth coming in from the right hand side. The oval planter in the adjoining park is unkempt and displays withered remains of plants and shrubs. The grave yard around the Priory was not well maintained. Glynn's Corner, the millennium project, is yet to be completed. The adjudicator was a little disappointed with the tiered planter and the murals have yet to be painted. On the positive side the flower beds at the Galway entrance to the town, and the flowers at the base of Northgate were excellent. The school gardens close to the road junction to Ladywell are very well maintained and displayed. At Ladywell, landscaping work was ongoing.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The development of the wild life park below the castle walls promises to be a most interesting feature. Its location is ideal with natural protection from unwanted intrusion the flora and fauna generation should prosper unhindered. The river looked clean and free flowing but there was a fair amount of debris lying just below the waterfall. The newly planted trees were noted. Your overall programme for wildlife and natural amenities looks very comprehensive indeed.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter control was reasonably successful. There were incidents noted at the Castle Park, the flower bed at the corner of the park and the Loughrea approach, and in the grave yard surrounding the priory.

TIDINESS

Generally the town is tidy but could be improved. Your work at Maddens house looks really well and gives a bright welcome to travellers approaching from the Loughrea side. There is a particularly bad example of dereliction positioned, unfortunately, beside the priory, one of your main points of interest. Some wirescape was noted particularly at the top of Bridge Street. Some of the shop signage within the town is placed above the shop fascias and this gives an impression of untidiness.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The residential areas in and around the town appeared well presented and displayed some beautifully maintained gardens. The housing estate at Aobhinn Road is quite attractive with its central green focussed with trees.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Roads and streets were in good condition. The town suffers from traffic congestion due to the narrow streets and both one way systems and pedestrianisation should be considered. There are some untidy back areas but no more prevalent than in similar towns in the country.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Athenry is a town of exceptional character and charm. The long term planning for the town might consider the creation of a heritage triangle between the Castle, Abbey and St.Mary's Collegiate Church. This would involve opening access and amenity area through Court Lane which would certainly improve the existing views of back entrances.