

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **LEIXLIP**
County : **KILDARE**
Category : **F**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 18-07-1999

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	28	32
The Built Environment	40	24	24
Landscaping	40	25	24
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	19	18
Litter Control	40	22	22
Tidiness	20	13	12
Residential Areas	30	22	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25	25
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	184	184

Leixlip, County Kildare

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for the entry form, it was a bit light in the contents in describing exactly what was being done during the past year and what issues the Tidy Towns are having to deal with. The committee size is slightly small for the size of population and as such must be commended for the amount of work that is done around the town. In general the entry form should have a bit more information and definitely be provided with a supporting map. However, the reason for the drop in the mark is that no overall development plan has been provided and as such this must be submitted in the next year as it clearly defines the role of the Tidy Towns and illustrates the extent or limit of works; (as it is unfair to expect the Tidy Towns to be responsible for all forms of maintenance). When this report is submitted it should also include maps to highlight where the adjudicator must visit during the particular year of adjudication.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The two large new industrial developments have made a good presentation at the entry into the town and their maintenance is exceptional. However, entry into the main street area is a rather mixed set of events and perhaps this needs to be examined so as to bring further improvement to the main street image. At present many of the signs from the shops overhang the pavement and reduce the importance the shops add to the street. There is no consistency as to their design or presentation and yet they are perhaps the most important visual item that has been added to the street in recent years. All the shops are well cared for however it could be that a very strong colour scheme may provide a very special image to this main street. Such an example is to be seen at the Rye Vale Tavern where a series of colours have made the place an individual character. The Hitchin Post pub needs clear definition for separation from the road as the car park is quite extensive and such treatment might continue the general theme that is associated with the entry roads into the town. The cycle path near Leixlip Manor is in very poor shape more as a result of poor maintenance as they are nearly completely covered in loose gravel in some areas.

LANDSCAPING

The town is developing a very green image throughout the extensive areas of nature verge and large park areas within the housing estates. With respect to the main street, the new sculpture at the centre of the street could perhaps do with better setting such as shrubs and it is a pity to see that

the mature tree was removed. Again, there are other opportunities along this main street to see further street trees introduced. The hanging baskets that are used are effective but perhaps a simple colour theme to all baskets and use of larger flowers would have greater benefit to the main street. The entry areas to the industrial sites have very good massing of planting and in some cases this is carried through into the residential areas such as at the berm at the bus stop beside Rockingham where the planting displays are very effective. The canal walk at Louis Bridge has a very poor sense of entry given the sense of importance to this amenity. Marks are not taken off as a result of the halting site, however, serious consideration should be given to the screening of this space as it is a permanent car parking space. In some areas there have been shortcuts taken to the maintenance of the grass spaces such as the benches beside Rye Vale where the grass is not cut underneath them and growing up through the seats.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

This category requires a very strong statement and should have an influence on all types of trees being selected for planting in both estates and amenity areas. Though native plants are being used there are also plants such as the variegated poplar which really do not add to the wildlife component in the town. Squirrel Wood has an excellent sign with good information on it and the plantings around it and the adjoining spaces is very well carried out. Native plants throughout Rye Vale are well selected.

LITTER CONTROL

This aspect could do with better attendance as it is very poor at the bus stops even though bins are provided. Litter control outside the shops also is poor and the bins again were not being used. The area down around the fire station, particularly at the entrance of the road, is very poor and again it would seem to be an easy issue to control as it does not spread too far along the street. Overall, the general urban renewal improvements have allowed for the town to be more easily maintained and perhaps a stronger strategy on litter bin placement might ensure that some areas would not get the litter that is happening. A certain amount of it seems to be associated with take away food.

TIDINESS

The litter in general detracts from the overall setting of the town. Perhaps it is more in the very small pieces of litter that seem to get squeezed to services rather than large pieces that can be easily removed. Colour would greatly assist the main street in having its own clear identity. The shops at Oaklawn have fairly poor control over litter sources

and signs should be cleaned up near Rye Vale.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Rockingham as with some other residential areas has a good entry sign which is colourful; the Rye Vale Lawns are very well cared for and the gardens greatly assist in developing a whole character to this area of housing. Perhaps the new planter with the yellow petunias could be replaced with more permanent plantings particularly to screen the wall, as long term plantings require less maintenance. The Rye Vale sign was very well presented and the colour was very effective. Litter bins near Cedar Park need to be repainted and perhaps damaged ones replaced. The Castletown Estate sign was very powerful and the nature strips well maintained. It is evident that in many of the housing estates, prunis trees have been used and these are short lived. Perhaps longer life trees of greater scale could be considered in the road verges as there are so few trees planted in many of the gardens.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

In general the traffic volume impacts beyond the scope of what the Tidy Town committee can provide for, but there is a very strong sense that the roads are not maintained as well as the private spaces. Entry areas into the town are very poorly defined as there is not much space to allow for improvements. The sign at the bridge entrance over the Liffey must be straightened up and more clearly seen as this is a dangerous junction.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

There have been significant improvements in Leixlip over recent years and the overall setting for the town is improving as the landscape works mature. Reconsider the use of proper tree ties for all recent plantings in the amenity areas as current ones may cut and possibly kill the trees. The drop in marks for the three to five year plan should only be seen as a temporary deduction and best of luck in preparing a plan for next year.