

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **ASHBOURNE**
County : **MEATH**
Category : **D**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 01-07-1999

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33	--
The Built Environment	40	27	--
Landscaping	40	25	--
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	14	--
Litter Control	40	20	--
Tidiness	20	11	--
Residential Areas	30	22	--
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	23	--
General Impression	10	6	--
TOTAL MARK	300	181	--

Ashbourne, County Meath

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Ashbourne's location near Dublin on the N2 does cause difficulties, not least of which is the growing volume of traffic and the rapidly expanding population.

However in many respects you have a good foundation on which to build with attractively maintained housing estates and many fine public buildings. You are very welcome into the Competition and we will follow with interest your progress in the years ahead. The various points in your entry form were noted. The simple and well laid out sketch map was much appreciated and a similar type map should be submitted each year with your entry. A priority should be the preparation of a 3/5 year Development Plan which would set out your objectives for Ashbourne and also include a work programme. A plan has many advantages some of which include informing and generating support in the wider community as well as assisting you in your discussions with the various State agencies. The Tidy Town handbook should be of great assistance in the preparation of this plan.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

There are several fine well presented public buildings in the town including the Church, the Schools, Community Centre, Garda Station. The A.I.B. is an interesting modern building. The Credit Union also looks well. There are several good quality business premises and shop fronts in the town e.g. the Fox's Den, Sean Kelly's Pub, the Shopping Centre, the Hotel and others. However, there are also several unsuitable frontages and signage not in keeping with the streetscape. The roofs of the Dardis and Dunne sheds require cleaning.

LANDSCAPING

The contribution that mature and maturing trees make to the urban environment is well demonstrated at the Church, on the Dublin road in the vicinity of the bus shelter and at several housing estates, e.g. Tudor Grove. There is scope to plant additional suitable trees throughout Ashbourne especially lengthy stretches of the Derry road. Trees could also help screen security fences at several industrial premises on the Derry road. Several of these fences, even though in good condition, are rather unattractive. There is also room for additional trees in the Main Street, on the opposite side of the road to the Hotel, in the grassed parking areas of the Community Centre and School and at some of the housing estates. A major tree planting programme would in due course help transform the

appearance of the town. The trees and planting in front of the shopping centre and at the car-park are very attractive as is the landscaping at the entrances to and in the various housing estates. The flower beds that have been planted look well as do hanging baskets, window boxes etc. and more should be encouraged.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Much more of an amenity feature could be made of the stream. A walk for example would be an attractive facility for the people of Ashbourne. The river is also an important wild life habitat. Native trees, berried shrubs and well planted gardens are also important in this respect.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter control is inadequate and needs to be considerably improved. Excessive quantities of litter are visible on the main street and in parking areas. Litter in gaps and wind-trap areas is especially noticeable. Better litter control must be one of your top priorities.

TIDINESS

While litter is a serious problem, the well presented housing estates and other buildings help, as do the maintained verges on the approach roads. Weeds are noticeable on several stretches of footpath kerbing and the condition of road surfaces especially margins is sub-standard in many areas.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The quality of presentation of most of the housing estates is one of the better features of Ashbourne. Ashbourne is a commuter town for Dublin and more and more housing estates are likely to be built. All the housing estates have landscaped public areas and well presented approaches. However, weeds at footpath kerbings are unsightly in a number of estates.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Comment has already been made about the condition of the approach roads, e.g. maintained grass verges, flower beds and the recommendation to plant additional trees should be a priority. The stone work on Rath Cross is weedy, the remains of a derelict large sign opposite the hotel is unsightly. The boundary and parking area at the sports field should be completed. As has been stated, road surfaces and footpaths need to be upgraded in many parts of Ashbourne.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

A planned approach will yield the best results. Don't neglect the basics, e.g. litter. Good Luck.