

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **DAINGEAN**
County : **OFFALY**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 10-07-1999

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	32	35
The Built Environment	40	27	24
Landscaping	40	27	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	20
Litter Control	40	25	26
Tidiness	20	11	9
Residential Areas	30	19	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28	28
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	195	192

Daingean, County Offaly

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for the completed entry form which is well filled out and has a helpful plan of the village. The map presented shows only about half of the town and there are therefore many important areas not mentioned on the map. It is important to present a three to five year action plan that the committee intend to undertake. This is a mandatory item within the competition and the non presentation of such a report is reflected in the drop in marks. Hopefully this is only a very temporary drop as the efforts by the committee are very effective but this category does require such a report for full adjudication purposes.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The built environment to this town is very strong and has a varied theme of buildings and street environments. The canal is perhaps the main setting for the town in that it connects the various areas. The bridge is well presented though it could do with a certain amount of spatial management through the planting of trees to connect the main street more successfully with the canal. The use of theme colours such as the pastel colours on many of the buildings is a very good connecting element as is shown on the Garda Station and many of the houses along the main street. It is good to see that the dereliction problem is being tackled; as with last year however the Courthouse needs stronger attention and perhaps this space could be improved so as to present an amenity rather than purely functional environment. The new stone walls to the cemetery are a great addition to the streetscape and add to the character that is already being built on by the National Schools which are very well presented and have fine colours. There is a very effective theme with the use of potted plants outside one of the houses on the main street and this should be built upon. The church is very pleasant and the well maintained car parking area complements this space.

LANDSCAPING

The canal is in need of landscape improvements to reinforce its amenity value. Mountain Ash trees on the entry road from Tullamore are in protective guards which could be removed as the weeds are growing up through the guards and have become quite unsightly. The entry to Fortfield Drive is very impressive with very strong colours. It is a clear example of how to use flowers in a very effective way. The committee must be complimented on these efforts. The GAA grounds are very presentable; however, the graveyard beside it does need better integration with the

road and adjacent property. An effort should be considered to marry these two spaces together. There are many dead trees on the main street even though there is a display of flowers at the base of them. The trees are perhaps much more important as there is a greater long-term benefit and these should be replaced. However, remember that a tree should always get a good planting pit so ensure that the planting pits have very good topsoil and are large enough for future root growth. The hanging baskets used throughout the town are of a very good size and bright colour which complements the colours of the buildings. The fact that they are all of the same colour increases their effect.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

This category should be explained more in the entry form as some very good ideas appear to be under consideration, within this category. The canal is an obvious environment that could be explored. However, it is in the use of the native trees throughout the town that the committee should be complimented. Again this category should be better explained in the entry form.

LITTER CONTROL

The town would seem to have a high population of children and has an extensive number of litter sources. Both of these issues instill a need to control the spread of litter, which significantly detracts from the centre of the town as it is unsightly particularly at the kerbs. More emphasis should be given to controlling the litter at the source points as this is where most of it was noted.

TIDINESS

There is great lack of consistency in presentation throughout the town and this has got to be tackled so as to establish a more unified environment. However, the many minor works that have been carried out are assisting in the repair and presentation of the many spaces that would be within the remit of the tidy towns committee. It is noted that many of the kerbs on the main street are in poor condition and though no mark was deducted for this aspect because of the extensive on-going building programme, the three to five year plan could assist in lobbying the local authorities to improve the kerbs.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

In general this category scores quite highly given the care and presentation to many of the residential areas. St. Mary's was effective in using the same theme colour throughout and has very good gardens which obviously

contribute to the overall environment. Perhaps the kerbs could be renewed. The Chestnut Estate is very pleasant; the very large Chestnut tree is obviously important and it is good to see that the seat surrounding the tree reinforces its use as an amenity item. The use of roses in many of the gardens allows continuation and unity to extend throughout the town for many of the residential areas and consideration should be given in the development plan as to how this summer colour can be more effectively used to tie in many parts of the town.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

All entry roads have very fine Ash trees associated with their edge areas; the road to Tullamore has a very fine alley of newly planted trees though under threat at present from recent utility works. The canal is particularly fine and aids in presenting both the roads and the town to an older transport system. Though there were many caravans parked alongside the canal it was noted during the adjudication that the owners kept the place quite clean. All roads within the town proper are of a very presentable standard and as with last year's comments a balance must be struck between the natural and built up areas.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

There is a diverse environment in Daingean which creates a very pleasant area for walking and it is noted that many of the major issues mentioned in the entry form are being tackled. A development plan would greatly assist in outlining the future tasks of the committee and allow a clearer adjudication process for each year. No doubt, when this document is submitted, it will greatly assist in the future development of the town.