

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **ASHFORD**  
County : **WICKLOW**  
Category : **C**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 01-07-1999

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	35	33
The Built Environment	40	17	16
Landscaping	40	28	27
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	19
Litter Control	40	29	29
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	20	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	27	25
General Impression	10	7	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>189</b>

## **Ashford, County Wicklow**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Thank you for your completed entry form, map and plan outlining your objectives and priorities over a three year period. Ashford is suffering from increased levels of traffic congestion and the proposed by-pass, will hopefully in years to come give Ashford back to its residents and restore the village atmosphere. In the meantime you will face increased pressure, increased traffic congestion and greater potential for litter etc. One of the major problems the adjudicator found on day of adjudication was difficulty in crossing the main street and there is obviously a need for a pedestrian crossing to cater for older residents as well as children; try to work on this for next year. The adjudicator has noted the improvements that are taking place in terms of traffic calming and around the roundabout.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

The new premises at Ashford House is noted this year; although not complete, it should be nice once finished and fully fitted out. New cobble locking noted outside as well which helps create a tidy appearance. An improved frontage and car - park was noted at the Woodpecker Bar, although litter was evident at the left hand side of the building. The flowers in the boxes on the building were dead and should either be removed or replaced. In relation to the derelict buildings near the garage, try to tackle this as a long term project. Outside Texaco was litter free and Chester Beattys have made an magnificent effort with flowers this year as always. The adjudicator is literally amazed at the level of signage at the Esso Service Station, which is totally unnecessary. An effort should be made to have discussions with the owner to reduce the impact of these. The Church and school grounds are also very well presented again this year, in particular well done to the school for getting the children involved, giving them an appreciation of the importance of landscaping. Cobble locking was noted near Connolly's which provided an improved appearance and was litter free. A new wall was noted at the roundabout as well and the courtyard at Mount Usher was also very well presented this year again. Overall, quite a good performance, but there is room for improvement in particular the Esso Service Station. Try to work on a colour scheme to, as the adjudicator felt that one or two premises were chose in inappropriate colouring. Typical of an Irish village.

### **LANDSCAPING**

As already mentioned landscaping at Scoil na Coroine Mhuire should be commended. Mount Usher Gardens are

magnificent feature and the adjudicator also noted that several other area have been planted and cared for, for example, at the junction of the N11 and the side road to the Woodpecker Bar. Planting of heathers were also noted at the roundabout, as well as near the chemist. It's good to see some of the premises making an effort too, for example Chester Beattys, and the Street Furniture near the Garda Station is also a nice feature.

## **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

Ashford is blessed with a unique feature right in the centre of the town, i.e., the River Vartry. The vista as one drives past is quite appealing, with a heron noted at the weir on the day of adjudication. Good luck in your plans to further enhance this natural area; however, the adjudicator noted that litter was evident in the river on day of adjudication, particularly on the upper stretches. This could quite easily be cleared out, so try to work on this. Since, the village is in close proximity to the rural countryside, try to look at these habitats as well, in terms of developing the wildlife potential and natural amenities potential of your town.

## **TIDINESS**

Generally there is a very neat and tidy appearance as one drives through the village of Ashford. The one area that could be suggested for improvement in future is overhead wires. Also the recycling facility should be relocated to an area less obtrusive. Finally, also, pay attention to weeds along kerbs; one area where this was evident was on the road near Hanleys, and the Roundwood Road where weeds were evident along the kerbs on both side.

## **LITTER CONTROL**

Local authorities are now required to prepare litter management plans every three years and you should consult Wicklow County Council in this regard to identify what is being done in relation to Ashford. One of the new litter law requirements is that premises take on responsibility for keeping their premises and frontages litter free. Please try this with the owners of one or two premises who could be encouraged to make a greater effort. Litter was noted at a number of places this year; although not bad the number of outbreaks suggest that more vigilance is needed, for example, to the left hand side of the Woodpecker Bar, where litter was evident. Litter was also evident at the seat at the Bus stop on the southern approach road. Litter was also evident on the ground outside Classic Cuts and also within one of the residential estates. However, having said this along the main street was generally litter free and you are to be commended on this in light of the high levels of traffic passing through the town.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

Generally residential areas are well presented with both good individual and combined efforts noted, for example, in Ashford Downs and Riverwalk. However, the one area that you have to work on for the coming years is the residential estate near the Woodpecker Bar. Litter was evident outside the estate. More maintenance is needed, for example, at the hedge near the ramp sign; also you have to try and tackle the problems of graffiti. In general a good effort was noted within the circular park of this estate whereas the back area was worse. Consult with the residents to tackle this.

## **ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS**

On the approach from Rathnew, new fencing was noted along the boundary wall of Mount Usher Gardens which improved the overall appearance. At the 40 mile an hour sign on the left hand side, considerable planting is taking place, but better maintenance is needed with weeds etc, tending to be winning the battle against these plants. At the Ashford sign the lay by is untidy and you might try to work on this. Approaching from Bel Air, litter was evident on the hill. Further out was, generally quite good with grass verges cut. The adjudicator noted the new roundabout which is still under construction with cobble locking and landscaping having taking place, so allowances have been made for this. The approach road from Dublin was very good with grassed areas and verges neatly cut back. Try to reinstate the footpath at the 30 mile an hour sign. Approaching from Devils Glen/Roundwood was also good, apart from weeds along footpaths as already mentioned.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

The appearance of Ashford is quite good and you are to commended for your efforts in maintaining a neat, tidy appearance, despite heavy traffic flows and road works. It's good to see that some premises have up-graded since last year. Landscaped areas tend to be well cared for, which is another sign of co-ordinated effort. Try to work on some of the comments made in the report. The adjudicator looks forward to additional improvements for next year.