

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **BAGENALSTOWN**
County : **CARLOW**
Category : **D**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 14-06-2000

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2000	Mark Awarded 1999
Overall Developmental Approach	50	36	36
The Built Environment	40	34	34
Landscaping	40	35	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	21
Litter Control	40	31	30
Tidiness	20	16	16
Residential Areas	30	23	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	30	30
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	233	230

Bagenalstown, County Carlow

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for the enclosed map which was most useful on the day of adjudication. As indicated in last year's report, it is a requirement to produce a plan which will guide your activities. The plan should be a simple, three to five page document, clearly setting out the objectives for each year. One does not need to adopt unrealistic objectives – a limited, achievable number for each year will be more likely to bring results. Most of the expertise and advice can be found in your own committee and community. As mentioned in last year's report, Bagenalstown has many strengths and the committee should build on these. It is good to see that you work with FÁS. Do liaise with the Local Authority, Regional Tourism Authority, ESB, Eircom and the NRB all of whom will be only too glad to give you whatever advice and expertise they have in preparing your plan. The plan does not have to be an elaborate one. Keep it short and simple. It is a useful guide for your committee and can be built on over the years.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The presentation of buildings in Bagenalstown is very good. The Garda Station, Courthouse and Fire Station are all well maintained. The Railway Station was extremely well presented. The rose/shrub beds were weeded and very healthy looking. The overall effect was of a well cared for and very tidy place. The churches and schools continue to be well presented. The grounds of the Daniel McGrath Hall do need attention. The industry/engineering sites will need to improve their appearance. It is something on which the committee should work on in their plan and approaches could be made to the owners/managers to improve the appearance of their properties. No doubt they will be only too glad to be of assistance to you in this matter. The presentation of shops and pubs is very good in many instances. However, some shops still carry plastic signage. These should be encouraged, when changing their shopfronts, to provide something more in keeping with the streetscape. Also, do not forget to include bi-lingual signage where appropriate and improve the provision of access for persons with disabilities.

LANDSCAPING

The management of open areas and the park is very good. Greater care is needed with the grass-cutting, especially under seats and around trees. It is essential that all furniture used in open spaces be kept in perfect condition and good repair. The picnic area was a delight but more care should be taken with the trimming of grass around the bins and

seats. The park continues to be very well maintained but care and attention is needed with weeds at the kerbs. The playground equipment needs repainting.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

As indicated in last year's report, more work is required under this heading. The river is the main existing area of wildlife importance for you. As a committee you have an important rôle to play in protecting and increasing appreciation of wildlife in your community. This aspect should be included in your 3/5 year plan. If you need help in identifying what species of birds, animals and fish the river attracts, talk to a local environmental expert who will be only too glad to give whatever advice and assistance required. Perhaps you might focus especially on school and youth groups, using the opportunity to impress upon them the importance of wildlife and natural amenities in the area. You might also examine more ways to make nature more accessible and enjoyable. Information signs or a simple brochure can be produced to help the members of the community and visitors alike to enjoy the natural amenities which you have.

LITTER CONTROL

I note from your application form that you have a litter awareness campaign and, no doubt, this is helping in the control of litter throughout the town. There was some small amounts in the picnic area and in the car park overlooking the river. In the play area of the park there were also some small amounts of litter. Measures which might help in the promotion of litter awareness would be provision of more litter bins and regular monitoring of litter in the black spots.

TIDINESS

There was an absence of fly-posting and very little graffiti throughout the town. The control of weed-growth at kerbs does need to be monitored, especially in the park area. More attention is needed to the cutting of grass around trees, under seating and at the verges.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The residential estate developments have improved their presentation since last year. Trees have been planted in the open spaces in the Fr Cummins Estate. The shrub beds contained a nice mixture of shrubs and plants but do need occasional weeding. The boundary walls of some properties need painting. Overall, the presentation of many of the properties in this estate is very good. Some very nice planting of trees has been done in the open green space in the Fr Conway Estate. The containers were in perfect condition and had lovely plants in them. Again, most of the

properties in this estate are well presented but there are a few who need their boundary wall or railing painted. In Pairc Mhuire a lovely variety of trees are maturing very well. Most of the properties were very well maintained with just a few needing their boundary walls painted. The open space in this housing estate was very well maintained and presented in a tidy and neat condition. The telephone booth, of the old style, blue and white, needs painting and repairing. The entrances to all residential housing estates were well presented and all who made the effort are to be commended. The standard of maintenance has improved and litter control was very good. The houses opposite the St Lazarus Home again had a good level of maintenance and the open spaces were neat and tidy. Individual houses and other residential areas are all maintained in a tidy and neat condition.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Both roads were well maintained, as were most of the streets. The Royal Oak Bridge looked very well and the lamps erected on the bridge do enhance it. On the other bridges the black and amber markings should be painted and weeds, etc removed from the stone. The signs generally do need to be cleaned and painted especially the name signs for the town and the 30mph signs.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

You did take on board the comments of last year's adjudicator regarding the planting of trees in the residential housing estates. Do keep up the very good work done this year. It is essential that you work on your 3/5 year plan. This will be of enormous help to you in making further progress in this competition.

Again, well done to all concerned!

SECOND ADJUDICATION (01/08/00)

For the most part Bagenalstown had a cared for appearance with well mown grass, cheerfully painted buildings and litter free streets on a sunny August day. On the other hand scruffy yards and shabby buildings where they occur had a distinct negative effect. The old stone buildings and waterside areas were particularly admired. We look forward to returning next year.