

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **RATHKEALE**
County : **LIMERICK**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 04-07-2000

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2000	Mark Awarded 1999
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33	33
The Built Environment	40	28	28
Landscaping	40	35	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	18
Litter Control	40	23	23
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	21	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	30	30
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	207	206

Rathkeale, County Limerick

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for your completed entry form and sketch map of the town, which highlighted areas not readily identifiable to this adjudicator.

The advent of the bye pass has freed up the town significantly in terms of traffic but in terms of vibrancy Rathkeale has suffered, as there has been very little development since this adjudicator visited some years back. I am aware that there are proposals being put forward for an ambitious development plan for the town that could double the population over the next 15 years.

It is good to see that the Committee of 8 has developed strong links with the Community Council and the Local Authority this will allow it to have an input into any proposed future plans.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The public buildings in the town were presented to a high standard the Palatine Heritage Centre on the outskirts and the Fire Station impressed this adjudicator.

The new Rathkeale House Hotel complex is a positive addition to the town and indeed it was commercial necessity, as the catchment area had no similar facility for years.

The Community School on the Ballingarry Road is a fine educational facility well maintained.

There is still too much dereliction in the town hopefully this will be addressed and progress made in the years ahead.

It is a pity to see such a fine building like the old cinema in a state of disrepair.

Quite a number of business premises were presented to very high standard, both the Bank of Ireland and AIB buildings looked well on the day.

Kathleen's Bar ,PBR and the Rathkeale Post Office have made great efforts to present their respective premises to a high standard

LANDSCAPING

Once again the landscaping at the roundabout off the bypass was excellent and credit is due to those responsible for its upkeep.

The Anderson manufacturing company have pleasant and inviting shrub beds in their car park and the amenity area on the Ballingarry Road was once again in top condition

The bridge has some nice floral hanging baskets but the riverside walk could be revitalised with some imaginative planting.

Credit must be given to those locals who had made efforts

to have individual gardens looking so well on the day.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The River walk is an ideal location for a starter wildlife project.

Encouragement should be given to the schools to become involved in initiating a worthwhile project that would reflect local wildlife species.

LITTER CONTROL

To be honest there was far too much litter evident on the day that the town was adjudicated especially in the centre.

The Committee is making ongoing concerted efforts to spread the message of anti-litter and it is up to local business people and private citizens alike help keep street areas free of papers and wrappers.

After all the County Council can only provide a clean up service once a week.

Some bins were too full and overflowing which suggest that a few additional ones would help to alleviate this problem

TIDINESS

Tidiness or lack of it is a problem in the town, let me add that you are not alone in this, make sure that weed growth is kept under control, that public and private back areas are kept well.

There was evidence of broken post fencing ,fly posting and such like, these are major contributors to untidiness.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The standard in some areas was very good while in others it left a lot to be desired.

The established St Mary's Park was presented to a high standard with green areas well maintained and individual premises well kept.

Abbey Court ,which has potential as a residential area ,was a little mixed mainly because there was too much litter around the open spaces.

If this is improved upon the area will look better, this should be worked on for next years competition.

The Roches Road/Fairhill area has the added problem of having a transient population and it is indeed a mystery how the Planning Authorities allowed some of these houses, now boarded up, to be built.

One has to accept that this transient population make up 30% of the overall population of the town and possess a different culture to the remainder of the townspeople.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The entrances to the town off the bypass were in tip top condition as was the entrance from Ballingarry.

The other entrances were not of the same high standard of these two but were acceptable with grass margins trimmed back and hedgerows well-maintained taking into account wildlife preservation.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The proposed ambitious development plan would be a major asset to the Rathkeale a town that has a rich history.

In the meantime it is important that the Committee focus in on the positives as well as trying to get to grips with the negatives such as dereliction.

It also has to be accepted that a section of the Community given their transient culture may not see Tidy Towns in the same light as long-term residents.

If the town is to make progress in the Competition this something that has to be addressed