

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **BLACKROCK-LOUTH**
County : **LOUTH**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 05-07-2000

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2000	Mark Awarded 1999
Overall Developmental Approach	50	30	30
The Built Environment	40	23	23
Landscaping	40	24	23
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	18
Litter Control	40	28	27
Tidiness	20	13	12
Residential Areas	30	25	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	23	23
General Impression	10	5	5
TOTAL MARK	300	189	185

Blackrock, County Louth

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for your entry form and map. As highlighted in last year's report, the problem area for the village remains the seafront section and this is where you should concentrate your efforts. You need to produce a 3/5 year work plan to prioritise the projects you wish to undertake each year. With this type of planned approach you should be able to make steady progress in the competition and to gain extra points for your hard work.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Church was again looking splendid. The Violet Pub would benefit from a new colour scheme and having weed growth removed from its front and side areas. The Brand Store has a very run down appearance, which gives a poor impression on entering the village, after a very fine approach. The weeds growing at the front and sides of the site should be removed at the very least. As noted in last years report, there are several very well kept premises along the seafront, but the entire street needs to adopt a more pro-active approach to achieve its full potential. Perhaps a co-ordinating colour scheme could be agreed upon to give the seafront more visual impact. Information on the new development taking place on the promenade should be included with next years entry.

LANDSCAPING

The rosebeds at the Violet look wonderful. The planting in the carpark beside the Brand Store is developing well. The large gravelled bed on the Rock Road is attractively maintained. The plants along the seafront do not seem to be thriving and may need some extra attention. A more extensive planting programme in this area would be of considerable benefit. The grassed areas at the junction of Seafield Road and the Rock Road require attention and need to be generally tidied up. Removal of the telephone pole from here should be considered as a long-term objective.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Unfortunately no information was provided on work carried out under this heading. In a seaside location there are wonderful opportunities to get the local school children involved in projects to explore the various wildlife habitats of the area; perhaps they could start with the bird sanctuary/marsh. The development of sign-posted walks,

along the beachfront or around the back lanes of the village, e.g. taking in the lovely old graveyard, would also be a worthwhile project.

LITTER CONTROL

Some litter was noted on the verges of the Dundalk approach road and scattered along the Main Street. The new bins on the seafront and anti-litter signs were noted, but vigilance is always required in a busy seaside village.

TIDINESS

Considerable weed growth in various locations detracts from an appearance of tidiness. As already mentioned, weeds were evident at the front and sides of the Violet, around The Brand Store, and also along the kerbs in parts of the Main Street. Too many instances of unsuitable plastic signage in the small seafront area, is another issue to be addressed. Sections of broken and uneven footpath along parts of the Main Street require attention.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Blackrock boasts a very fine collection of charming houses and gardens on the approach roads and in its expanding residential areas. The colourful gardens of these houses make a very important contribution to the overall appearance of the village. There are also many attractive new developments such as The Ferns, Clermont Manor and Blackrock Cove, but kerbside weed is already evident in some areas and needs to be treated. Of the more mature (named) estates, Beech Park is beautifully maintained with a wonderful shrub bed at the entrance and neatly kept green. Ard na Mara is also presented to a very high standard. St. Furseys Terrace, with its well tended greens, flower beds and seating, is a credit to the residents who look after it.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

All approach roads to Blackrock are attractive and some have splendid views of Dundalk Bay and the Cooley Mountains in the distance. Verges have been cut on some approaches, but not at all on others, giving an uneven presentation. The neatly cut grassed banks and the Blackrock Fáilte Sign at the Greengates junction on the Dublin Road, create a very favourable impressive. The old stone bridge and new Blackrock entrance stone are other pleasant features of this approach. Better weed control is needed in some back areas e.g. the area to the side of the VIVO Shop on Sandy Lane. The fence at the back of the Legion of Mary Hall should be mended. The surface of Seafield Road is in poor condition, but hopefully will be upgraded when the new development here is completed.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Blackrock enjoys a lovely coastal setting with spectacular views. Concentrate on improvements to the core seafront area of the village and you should make steady progress in the coming years.