

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **WHITEGATE-CLARE**
County : **CLARE**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 05-07-2000

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2000	Mark Awarded 1999
Overall Developmental Approach	50	29	28
The Built Environment	40	26	26
Landscaping	40	17	16
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15	15
Litter Control	40	25	25
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	22	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	20	20
General Impression	10	6	5
TOTAL MARK	300	174	170

Whitegate, County Clare

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for completed entry form and good map which were helpful. You mention the date of judging as too early – Whitegate was judged on the 5th June last year. However, as there are second and third rounds of adjudication, where necessary, and these have to be carried out before the end of August, the first round has to be carried out in June/early July. Therefore you should gear your planting accordingly – it is possible to have well planted hanging baskets in early June, as we have seen same during adjudication.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The National School is in the process of refurbishment and is looking very well. The Church and the GAA premises are also well presented as are most of the business premises including the Post Office in the village. However, there is a problem in regard to derelict buildings, the most obvious being the unoccupied Pub and the thatched house at the Portumna intersection – which is now falling down (see your Tidy Towns manual for some advice regarding action on dereliction). Other buildings such as the Petrol Pumps for sale at present and the Old Church are also bringing the village down. Hopefully, when the Petrol Station is purchased this area will improve and perhaps the owners of the old Church can also be persuaded to bring this premises up to the standard in the rest of the village. The funeral home is well presented but rather stark looking – some flowers here would soften the appearance considerably. On the loop road the Nightingale Pub looks well but the owner might consider whether the blue sign advertising snacks and soup (which the Pub does not now provide) should be removed. A nice stone wall was being built in the car park here.

LANDSCAPING

The cobblelock area with good planting at the Portumna intersection is very impressive. We would suggest that plastic containers not be used for planting - more environmentally friendly containers such as wood or terracotta are more appropriate. There are a considerable amount of quite small plant containers throughout the village which are not making a huge impact - these consist of plastic containers or what appear to be painted metal wheel hubs. You might consider replacing these with a number of larger appropriate containers which could be filled to overflowing with flowers for colour and impact. In fact, the small containers near the new cobblelock

development rather detract from the raised flower bed here. The raised flower beds at the GAA premises contained very few flowers and were very weedy. The pump feature near the new housing estate is good and it was noted that two of three of the flower beds on the way into this estate were nicely planted - it appeared the other one was being prepared at the time. The tree planting undertaken, which is maturing nicely, was noted and also the nice planted beds near the telephone box. Where the agricultural machinery is displayed on the loop road the grass was nicely cut and the planting on the Mountshannon approach was noted. However, the seat here needed to be repainted or restrained.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The planted areas contribute under this category.

LITTER CONTROL

Except for one rather poor litter bin there did not appear to be any throughout the village. There was litter at the cobblelock development and a small sprinkling throughout the village and approach roads.

TIDINESS

Because of the derelict buildings, unfortunately Whitegate does not present an overall tidy appearance and there are also certain pockets that need attention such as at the end of the new housing estate road where the grass is long and overgrown; at the barbecue area of the Nightingale Pub where a row of empty beer cans was in situ on top of the promotional feature in the car park; at the car park and play area at the GAA grounds, at the yard at the back of the Pub facing down the village street and on the Portumna road where there were bits of timber thrown around and untidy heaps of gravel. Kerbs and wall bases were mostly weed free except in the new housing estate.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Most houses in and around Whitegate are contributing fully to the Tidy Towns effort. The new houses in the village have a pleasing colour scheme and are well presented. At the older housing scheme, the houses here are also mostly well presented with some lovely gardens but it should be remembered that gates and surround walls are as important as the premises itself. There are some new houses being built and no doubt these will be encouraged to become involved in the Tidy Towns endeavours also.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Approach roads were well cut back but ivy should not be allowed to take hold on walls. The markings on the road at the Portumna intersection are rather faint and could be a danger to motorists. Outbuildings and gables that are visible to the public need attention. On the Portumna approach the road verges were rather rough as they were on the bog road also. Some signage was rather overgrown and also needed cleaning and painting.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The Committee of twelve is obviously working hard to make Whitegate a better place in which to live and to visit but unfortunately you have a number of problems to contend with, some of which are outside your control. Do continue with the good work, bringing all the community with you. We look forward to seeing Whitegate progress in the competition in the years ahead.