

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **COOLMEEN**
County : **CLARE**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 12-07-2001

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2001	Mark Awarded 2000
Overall Developmental Approach	50	18	--
The Built Environment	40	15	--
Landscaping	40	18	--
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	10	--
Litter Control	40	10	--
Tidiness	20	6	--
Residential Areas	30	10	--
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	10	--
General Impression	10	3	--
TOTAL MARK	300	100	--

Coolmeen, Co. Clare

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The Committee is thanked for this first entry presentation and is welcomed into the Competition. What the Committee must first do, as a new entrant, is to carefully prepare a three-year Plan of possible projects that can reasonably be undertaken and completed within this three-year period. Every effort should be made to involve all people within the village and especially the pupils of the school. It is noted that the number of members in the committee numbers 12, this is a good response. The preparation of this document is essential and will definitely increase the marks for this category.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

First impression is a general lack of division between public and private areas – especially at the filling station and public house. There should be a clarity of separation, either in raised planting beds, trees and/or shrubs. The road markings are practically indistinct, both on centre road markings and road warnings. Discussions with the County Council are essential. Advice must be sought from Dúchas/DoELG on the proper construction of stone walls. There is a wonderful heritage of traditional stone walls in Clare. There is a tendency at present to cap stone walls with a slurry of cement or even placing small stones widely spaced in this slurry. This is an unacceptable finish. Walls must be finished with large stones, closely packed of an even or uneven height.

LANDSCAPING

There is much potential for the planting of trees, which must be indigenous to the local area. Prunus (Cherry trees) should not be used in road edges or public areas. Trees must be attractive to bird life. The small picnic site opposite the school is attractive.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

As stated above, the choice of trees – thorn, ash, whitebeam and oak must reflect their attractiveness to birds. The wildlife aspect should consider the need to employ plantings that are of use during winter months. Check if there is a need for bird boxes before considering them as there are often simpler actions that satisfy the demands of wildlife.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter bins and a bottle bank, which can be obtained from the County Council, should be sited at the crossroads area and pleasantly screened. The school or picnic site opposite should have a litter bin. There was much litter in the rear playground due to the breaking up of a cupboard there. This happening would cost many negative points.

TIDINESS

It is essential to get the commercial interests being aware of the tidiness of the village and making use and promoting litterbins and the bottle bank. The Committee should visit the school and make them aware also of promoting public tidiness and helping in regular clean-ups.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The Committee should impress on homeowners the need for trees as well as flowers. There is a need for investing in permanent planting and this can have a significant return in 10 years when plantings mature.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

There is a need for the Council to improve the quality of road markings and signage, and for the Committee to attend to the verges. Only a narrow strip of grass needs to be cut, the remaining section of verge could be devoted to wild flowers which need be cut only twice a year and also addresses the wildlife aspects.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

There is a general lack of focus in the presentation of this village perhaps because this is the first time that you have entered. It is recommended that you get in touch with a similar village and seek advice on the preparation of the development plan. At the moment the action plan is only starting and this will need attention to establishing good goals that are achievable with the resources of the village. Best of luck in the future.