

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **ROCKCHAPEL**
County : **CORK**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 03-06-2001

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2001	Mark Awarded 2000
Overall Developmental Approach	50	22	26
The Built Environment	40	33	29
Landscaping	40	17	17
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	11	11
Litter Control	40	20	24
Tidiness	20	10	11
Residential Areas	30	24	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	30	25
General Impression	10	7	6
TOTAL MARK	300	174	170

Rockchapel, Co. Cork

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

As mentioned by last year's adjudicator it is essential at this stage in the competition that you formulate a three or five year work programme, this document need merely be a few pages long, outlining your plans for the village's future. Many of the issues raised in last year's report are still a problem. A good starting point might therefore be to use the constructive criticisms raised in this report as a basis for writing your work programme.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Both public and commercial premises of the village looked well cared for on adjudication day. The school was very fresh in pink and the adjacent new building was admired. The Post Office looked extremely fresh in yellow although the adjacent ball alley looked quite grey in comparison. The church is a most attractive building in stone with its beautifully maintained grounds. Both Paddy Molly's and Murphy's Bar and Shop were well maintained, as was the Music and Cultural Centre. Scope for further improvements would be in relation to the Community Centre which sported a broken window in its gable wall and some external staining in general. T.C. Curtins and the adjacent building are most attractive with their unusual windows, perhaps these could be restored to their former glory. Plastic signage in the village should be replaced in time with those of a more traditional timber variety.

LANDSCAPING

There is immense scope in this aspect of the competition which has yet to be fully utilized by the village. The graveled area by the grotto with its rocky backdrop was reasonably well maintained although the cordelines appeared to need some attention. The grotto itself with its stone boundary wall and inset seating was well maintained. The concrete post and rail fence opposite the school mentioned in last year's report could indeed be replaced by some indigenous hedging in beech or hawthorn. The bog oak sculpture at the junction of the Tournafulla Road was admired as were the circular concrete planters filled with flowers located elsewhere around the village. However, the adjudicator felt that this was rather a seasonal approach to landscaping the village and perhaps something more permanent in nature could be considered, that would be attractive throughout the year. The appearance of the community centre car park could be greatly improved with some landscaping to soften its rather stark appearance. Perhaps consider planting some trees to maintain the street line and a stone wall could replace the concrete post and broken wire fence bounding the riverside. There are some attractive stone wall features throughout the village such as that monument to the Famine.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

There is scope in this aspect of the competition to develop the riverside areas in as natural way as possible. There is evidence of dumping in this area which is most unfortunate. On a sunny June adjudication day a wealth of bumble bees to the hedging of the church boundary were extremely lively. Butterflies and bird life were also much in evidence.

LITTER CONTROL

On first appearances the village seemed to be well catered for in this category. However closer inspection revealed, (as you have recognised yourselves, to judge from your responses to the application form) a definite problem in this regard. There was a light scattering throughout the village in particular along Main Street. Plastic bags dumped behind the recycling bin looked most unfortunate. The riverside area, as mentioned before, showed evidence of dumping. More litter was apparent to the roadside by the church and in the forecourt area of same. Perhaps you could consider screening the recycling facilities in the community center car park – this could be another landscaping project in this locality.

TIDINESS

Some problems in this regard were areas such as the stone shed opposite the junction of the school road which should be re-whitewashed. Weed killer appeared to have been sprayed in some areas causing dead weeds which had yet to be removed. Weeds were also in evidence at the 1916 monument where rusty railings were also apparent. These had also been mentioned by last year's adjudicator. The tin roof to the cottage opposite the school junction appeared quite flaky and should be repainted in its traditional red colour. The gap in the hedge adjacent to the monument revealed evidence of litter and dumping. The pile of gravel to the community center car park should be removed if the work for which it was intended has been completed.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Houses throughout the village and along approach roads were generally well maintained with attractive gardens. Of particular note, was a lovely garden extending over its stone wall with a colourful display of pansies on the road to the school. An attractive garden sloping to the roadside opposite the church was also admired as was the attractive clematis creeping up the wall of a house adjacent to the telephone box. The new houses opposite Murphy's had obviously even recently been completed, and it is hoped that their gardens will develop in as an attractive a manner as the more mature gardens of the village.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The roads of the village were generally maintained to a high standard. The Abbeyfeale Road is an attractive approach to the village through its mature trees. The new pavements in this area were admired. The Newmarket Road had been

resurfaced and in this location, hawthorn blossom to the hedgerows looked most attractive. As previously mentioned the weed killer sprayed to the roadsides of the Tournafulla Road have created dead grass and weeds which should be removed once spraying has been completed. Signage throughout the village was generally well maintained and in particular the Duhallow Trail signs announcing ones arrival in the village are most colourful and cheerful.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The pretty village of Rockchapel, sitting in its attractive verdant location, looked well on a sunny June adjudication day. Its residents show much evidence of pride in their village's appearance.