

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **ABBEYLEIX**  
County : **LAOIS**  
Category : **C**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 03-08-2001

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2001	Mark Awarded 2000
Overall Developmental Approach	50	41	38
The Built Environment	40	32	31
Landscaping	40	33	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16	15
Litter Control	40	29	29
Tidiness	20	15	14
Residential Areas	30	22	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	34	33
General Impression	10	8	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>221</b>

## **Abbeyleix, Co. Laois**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Abbeyleix is welcome to the 2001 Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission together with your planned activities for the future. Congratulations on the support you get from the community for fundraising activities and for your liaison with the County Council, schools and FAS. Your tree lined main street interspersed with beautiful lamp standards gives Abbeyleix a stately appearance which complements its planned Estate Town status. Allowances have been made for the non-operation of the Community Employment Scheme during the months of June and July. We note that the Motor Works has been purchased and we look forward to the redevelopment of this valuable site. We wish you well in the implementation of your ambitious plan. Well done on walking trails signposted from the village.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

The great majority of buildings are presented to a high standard. The gable wall of Bergin's is interesting with its old advertisement, which should be retained, however the wall itself needs to be cleaned or repainted. The old national school on the Rathdowney road looks well. The church enjoys a magnificent setting on high ground which makes it visible from approach roads and is a prominent visual feature on the main street also. We look forward to the completion of development works at this most valuable focal point of the town.

### **LANDSCAPING**

Young trees have become well established and mature trees look stately and make a strong statement Abbeyleix. In your future landscaping activities, focus more on shrubs and trees as these have year round interest, rather than just a seasonal splash of colour. Also try to choose species that will complement and attract wildlife. Don't rely too much on bedding plants, window boxes and hanging baskets. The entrance to the town from the Abbeyleix road looked superb with its planting. The wire and post fencing at the Portlaoise end of the village might be planted for hedgerow for greater enclosure.

### **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

The recently landscaped roadside edges on the Cork road near the stone arch will provide a valuable wildlife habitat as these mature. Nearby woodland areas provide woodland habitats. Has a survey been undertaken to ascertain species present? Are there any dangers to species from development and, if so, what protective measures can be taken? Is there a nature trail developed for the woodland area?

## **LITTER CONTROL**

Litter control was reasonably good but there were some weak spots. A contributing factor to the litter problem is the fact that litterbins were full to capacity during our visit.

## **TIDINESS**

The Togher Grass Care premises presents a problem under this heading, the yards here look quite untidy, otherwise the presentation is good.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

Ballandine Drive estate was superb in the presentation of its open green areas. A new stone boundary wall appears to be under construction to a residential property on the Mountrath road, we look forward to the results of the work here. The entrance to the town at the top of the Mountrath road lacks colour in the number of grey buildings in need of cleaning which can be viewed at this point together with the previously mentioned Bergin's gable wall. [note one of the buildings in need of cleaning is located at the top of the Swan road and can be seen coming in from the Mountrath road.] Preston House looks its usual stately self. A number of residential properties at the Portlaoise end of the village could improve their boundary walls by cleaning or painting.

## **ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS**

Car parking arrangements along the main street are well organised. Some public seats need upgrading, for example one out the Mountrath road. The boundary fencing at the corner leading to First Ireland Spirits should be repaired. Street furniture in general was very well presented.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

Abbeyleix looks wonderful and is a credit to those responsible for the general level of maintenance.

## **SECOND ADJUDICATION (03/08/01)**

The quality of the streetscape in the main street is very striking. Excellent trees with high quality tree guards, attractive and substantial lamp standards, the absence of overhead cables and the tidy approach to car parking all combine to give a very satisfactory streetscape. Street premises are looking well. Stone plays a major part of the town landscape and the low stone wall on the Carlow Road fronting the housing estate forms good continuity with the older walls. The tree lined walkway to the Church; the Sensory Garden and the significant plantings on the approach roads contribute very well to the overall landscape value of the town. Work continues at the Church and this will be followed with interest. The new railings being erected are impressive.