

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **CLONEGAL**
County : **CARLOW**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 21-06-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	42	41
The Built Environment	40	35	35
Landscaping	40	37	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	25	25
Litter Control	40	33	32
Tidiness	20	17	17
Residential Areas	30	26	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	31	30
General Impression	10	9	8
TOTAL MARK	300	255	250

Clonegal, County Carlow

OVERALL DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

The information supplied with the application was of immense help and is interesting to read through without ever visiting the village. The folder gives an excellent outline of the facilities and natural assets at Clonegal and charts the work of the tidy towns committee over the years. The achievements over those years are spectacular and a great credit to all concerned. Every detail of the village is documented both from a historical and contemporary point of view. The difficulties and the new challenges facing the village are also faced with positive solutions, the implementation of which one could only expect to be achieved successfully when looking at the past record of the village. The village has a beautiful natural setting by the river. The bridge and trees create a framework which has been built upon through the years to give a very pleasant result today.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The many interesting buildings listed in the presentation were visited and enjoyed. The stonework in the village is attractive. Stone buildings and the many stone walls used give a perfect setting. The low walls by the Community centre are very much in keeping with the tone of the village. The churches are in excellent condition as is the school and carparking areas. The weavers cottages are a great asset and provide very good historical interest and linkage with the present. The little pig house is a novel idea and shows very good initiative with his history. Carved stone feature sculptures add extra interest. The bridge is a wonderful sight and the viewing point provides an excellent picture of the bridge. The painted cottages on the far side of the bridge add a sparkle to the scene, Clonegal House stands proud, the Forge stone is a nice memorial and well placed. Cemeteries form an important part of the village and these are very well cared for. The shops and business premises continue to look well. Some need a little attention more than others. Hopefully, by example, improvements can be made. The pumps are an attractive feature of the village also.

LANDSCAPING

There has been a tremendous amount of planting achieved in the village. There are so many planting schemes throughout the village that a "garden effect" is taken on by the village. Plantings at the village centre are particularly good because there is a wide range of plants included which will give interest through the year and not just seasonal displays. Planting at the Valley View estate is especially good and gives a very nice roadside view. The plantings at St .Brigid's Tce sculpture bed and at the Wicklow way map park are both of a good standard. Planting in the Catholic church grounds and the school make those areas very attractive. Along the village street, numerous gardens are overflowing with bloom and give a lovely effect. The roses planted at the junction for Kildavin make an excellent show. Trees and grass are key factors in any landscape.

The mature trees are providing a certain character to the area. Renewal planting is important so that the next two generations can enjoy the trees as we do now. Planting of trees such as beech, ash, chestnut, oak and sycamore give excellent structure. On the roadside from the high rockery towards the river the trees are mainly conifers. Perhaps the aforementioned trees could be planted in the field behind. Similar places should be found to plant more trees for continuity. The trees in the Huntington estate are beautiful. Yew trees in the estate take several hundred years to achieve the size they are today. Are we planting sufficient trees for future generations?

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The river area is a perfect source of wild life observation. Hedgerows, riverside woodland and grass vegetation which are left untended for a considerable time encourage wild life and allow wild plants to flourish. Having a colony of owls and bats is a great feature. The Huntington castle grounds are a harbouring ground for wild life and this must further enhance the rest of the village. Your effort at developing wild flower areas is laudable.

LITTER CONTROL

There is a very good management of litter and the priority placed on litter control is paying off. However, the cleaner a place becomes, the more obvious are small amounts. So constant vigilance is required.

TIDINESS

The village is a very tidy appearance. The stone wall building tends to give an element of tidiness, as do the clean and well-presented seating areas. There are one or two major trees that are dead or badly ailing, one of these is just beyond the Little Pig House. This is unlikely to recover and should be removed. Attention to painting and cleanliness of walls is a continual process in order to keep places at their best. The placing of all cables underground will further enhance the tidiness aspect.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Both St. Brigid's Terrace and Valleyview estate were looking extremely well. The entrances to the estates are very attractively presented and the well kept greens as well as the upkeep of the individual gardens presents a lovely picture. Individual houses in the village and surrounds take great care and interest in their gardens and it is no wonder that Clonegal recently won the Carlow Floral Pride. Many of the houses with roadside gardens seem to extend their gardens to flow onto the roadside in a very pleasant way.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The excellent formula of well kept grass verges, hedges and trees justifies itself on the

approach roads to Clonegal. There is evidence of great care and attention to the roadside verges and the planting of trees. The entrance roads are non-fussy, yet they have an attractive appearance which is in keeping with the surrounding countryside. There are always problem patches along any stretch of roadway and the committee has made an effort to identify these and set about remedies to resolve them, as shown in the portfolio presented.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Clonegal is a beautiful village to visit. A stroll along by the river and bridge, a walk to the castle admiring the main street areas with their floral displays and a ramble in the church and cemetery grounds, makes for a pleasant afternoon.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (01/08/02)

Clonegal is an attractive and unusual village with strong historical links. Buildings throughout, such as the community centre, school and shops (especially Siopa Ui Dhuinn's with its attractive window boxes and hanging baskets) all contribute well to the built environment. There are a large number of whitewashed walls throughout the village which were extremely fresh. Attractive floral displays to the front of PJ Dunne's and Siopa Ui Dhuinn's looked most cheerful. Efforts should be made to screen unattractive yard areas and to encourage storage of building materials in less visible locations. The natural presentation of the flower beds throughout the village was greatly admired as were the attractive cottages opposite the village green with their front gardens filled with snap dragons. The adjudicator noted development land for sale in a prominent location. It is to be hoped that any future development in this area will be in keeping with the rest of the village. Bridge House, with its attractive stonework and brick trims, was noted. The magnificent landscaped areas and strong sculptural features throughout the village were also noted. Clonegal is a veritable menagerie of animals such as hounds, pigs and goats! It looked extremely well on the second adjudication day.