

"Caring for our environment"

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

Results

Date of Adjudication : 07-08-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	42	41
The Built Environment	40	33	32
Landscaping	40	34	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17	16
Litter Control	40	30	29
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	22	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	34	34
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	235	230

Abbeyleix, County Laois

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Welcome to the Tidy Towns Competition 2002. Abbeyleix is an impressive entrant in this year's competition. Your five year plan is well prepared and your separation of the various parts of the town into divisions establishes manageable work programmes in each. No doubt the high standard of main street presentation has given an impetus to your funding needs. Good to see your co-operation with the various local authorities and other interests in the town continues to bring benefits to the town. It is particularly rewarding to see the high standard of presentation reflected in almost all parts of the town.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

From the adjudicators initial arrival to Abbeyleix at the Heritage House, the expectation was for a high standard presentation of the built environment. Buildings which impressed included the Heritage House, the RC Church overlooking the town, so beautifully set in well kept grounds, several houses on the main street with very attractive frontages and in some cases colourful gardens. All buildings in the square are in proportion and present well. With the exception of Bergins all buildings have rendered frontages. The building on the Ballinakill Road corner is a disappointment. It is noted plants have been placed at the base and that town houses will be built on the site. The Abbeyleix Further Education Centre on the Mountrath Road was very colourfully presented with hanging baskets and flower boxes. At the Cork end of the town the Hibernian Hotel, Prestons, Sextons House and Church of Ireland and school were considered very attractive indeed. Other buildings, which caught the eye, were the hospital, the Garda Station with its forecourt plants and flowers, and the Bank of Ireland building on the main street.

LANDSCAPING

The absence of wirescape and the impressive decorative lamp standards give advance notice of an unusually fine town landscape. There are a number of aspects which have been well developed. Noted among these are the apex in front of the Heritage House, the cut verges on approach roads, maturing trees in their guards along the main street, baskets of hanging flowers on lamp posts, and the planters of plants and flowers at various points in the town. In addition there are the interesting monuments, the Fountain, the De Vesce Memorial all nicely displayed. The street signposting to the points of interest are very well done. The new walls at Sextons House and Thornberry Estate look very well.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Dove House and its Sensory Gardens a delightfully quiet and rewarding experience.

With a wide array of plants, trees and flowers this main street retreat both educates and entertains. In addition the area surrounding Abbeyleix, its woodlands and hedgerows provide a rich wildlife habitat. It is noted that co-operation with the golf club is ongoing in this regard.

LITTER CONTROL

On adjudication day Abbeyleix was virtually litter free and that litter bins had been serviced. Your management programme in this regard appears to be having good effect.

TIDINESS

Graffiti on back of market house was noted. Footpaths clean and clear of kerb side weed. Sun World could keep their sign off the footpath. There are real problems with the Togher Grass Care building.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Abbey Crescent looks well with its tree fronted open green area. And the Abbey Crescent sign also looked well set in a planter of flowers. A number of house frontages have been well developed. Morans Lane looks particularly well and Vesey Close is exceptional with its many excellent gardens and very well maintained frontages. Thornberry Estate looked well with its new wall and planted green.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The Dublin, Cork and Ballinakill approach roads to Abbeyleix look well with cut verges, hedging and on the Dublin side, some fine walls. On the Cork side the front of the Abbey Manor Hotel is nicely presented but Pratts Sales Yard should be screened. The approach from the Ballyroan Rd. Abbeyleix sign is bent and could be cleaned, and is sitting in an overgrown weeded area.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Abbeyleix is an outstanding entrant in the Tidy Towns Competition and the work of those involved is making a commendable contribution to the Abbeyleix community.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (07/08/2002)

The high quality of street surfacing together with new lighting and beautifully simple pavements has rendered the main street of Abbeyleix so much better than in recent times. Although the lamp standards are very ornate and tall they do seem to suit the ambience of the town. It is now important that all street furniture be regularly cleaned / freshened up. The Carlow Road was the most favoured approach. Regrettably, this time, litter was evident both in the town centre carpark and Balladine Drive. Despite the

poor summer the standard of grass cutting was good. We look forward to returning next year.