

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **VICARSTOWN**
County : **LAOIS**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 26-06-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	39	38
The Built Environment	40	28	28
Landscaping	40	29	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	25	24
Litter Control	40	28	28
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	20	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28	28
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	217	214

Vicarstown, County Laois

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Vicarstown must be congratulated on adhering to the development plan which has seen progressive improvements to the village. It is an excellent achievement. The committee has given comprehensive attention to all aspects of the village's social and economic potential. It has identified each interest or activity and has moved forward in bringing many of its aspirations to reality.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Church is neatly kept with well presented garden while the school is an interesting architectural building. The yard is almost without any plants or shrubs. There is an arrangement of flowers around a tree at one end, but generally the presentation is not too exciting. There is weed growth along the bottom of the wall between the doors and some slates need to be replaced on the roof. The community hall is a bit disappointing, the front wall needs painting and some repair work. Viewed from the Monasterevin side of the canal there is some repair work required to the roof of one of the canal side buildings.

LANDSCAPING

Vicarstown is set in idyllic surroundings with the canal and its bridge the focal point for its collection of village buildings. Close to the village are fine stands of trees, verges are well cut, and the water pump in position on its pedestal, is painted and looking well. The verge at this point is somewhat damaged by traffic infringement. Creans is agreeably presented with flower tubs as is Turleys Pub on the other side of the bridge. The period lighting adds to the overall atmosphere of peacefulness. Trees have been planted to add backdrop to the canal scene. The sports ground is well presented with a fine car park bordered with shrubberies and trees. The centrepiece shrubbery was particularly noted. The gates to Gratton Lodge, the main and the one beside the church are attractively designed and should be presented as feature items.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The development of the canal for its fishing and boating is enhanced by the mooring and fishing points, and the clean presentation of its bridge stonework. The small amenity park opposite Crean's pub is a delight with its canal side location, trees, cut grass and picnic facilities.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter is not a significant problem but there was an isolated 'show' on the day of the visit.

TIDINESS

There is a row of 5 recycling bins in the car park opposite Creans. Suggest some screening would help here as would improved surfacing to the car park. The stock of corrugated tin roofing should also be removed or screened.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

In the residential area, 'The Drive', there are about 5 bungalows. Almost without exception these are well presented but there was a small 'show' of kerb side weed and the green on the opposite side from the houses fairly well maintained. At left of entrance is a beautiful open area with both mature and new trees. The old RIC Station, now a residence is in good order. The small stone house beside the bridge is well presented and presumably was once the pump house. Creans have a nice grassed area between the canal and pub car park which is well maintained with shrubs screening the wall of the canal building. The house behind Turleys (the Anchor) with its corrugated roofs should be screened.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The entrance from Stradbally is particularly attractive as it meets the church full square and immediately raises interest and expectation. There is a cut verge on left. The approach from the opposite side is a somewhat overgrown, the Vicarstown village sign is hardly visible due to verge grasses which have not been attended to. Apart from the bridge amenity area the lighting style is standard rather than decorative. It is hoped that something more in keeping with the village generally will become the norm. Phone box and litter bins were in evidence. The adjudicator would like to have seen a public information map.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Vicarstown is a fine example of 19th. century canal village. Most buildings are of a strong stone commercial style which reflect the trading and movement of 19th. century goods for which it was built. It has a wonderfully quiet atmosphere, a retreat from the pressures of today's lifestyles. The Tidy Town's Committee are highly commended for their planning and constructive efforts to build on the natural and man made amenities within and around the village.