

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **ABBEYSHRULE**  
County : **LONGFORD**  
Category : **A**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 04-06-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	39	37
The Built Environment	40	33	32
Landscaping	40	35	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	19
Litter Control	40	31	31
Tidiness	20	15	14
Residential Areas	30	21	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	29	28
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>222</b>

# **Abbeyshrule, County Longford**

## **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Your Development Plan with its interesting pictures and map was not received until the adjudicator had returned from County Longford, so judging was accomplished from what was seen in and around the village without benefit of your written report, which has now been studied in retrospect. The major proposed developments are very exciting indeed, and progress will be eagerly followed; your contacts with the appropriate official bodies are most encouraging. When submitting your updated Development Plan next year, please give annual targets for each individual project and be sure to list what has been achieved in the year from April 2002 to April 2003.

## **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

The nicely painted pale grey buildings throughout give an attractive cohesion to the village, while the strong colour of the well-kept Rustic Inn makes an interesting focal point. The Church is very well maintained – the cross, mentioned last year, does seem to need protection from rust. The sturdy canal bridges and aqueduct are especially interesting from a heritage as well as a visual point of view.

## **LANDSCAPING**

The very well trimmed grass spaces, both on tow-paths and roadsides, take a great deal of work and the results are inspirational. Of the less expansive spaces, the grassed area opposite the Rustic Inn is exceptionally well kept. On the day of adjudication it was seen that beds had been readied for the planting of annuals. It was not expected that tubs would be in flower, but they did not seem to be well tended. The wonderful herbaceous border running the length of the Main Street and canal embankment is conceived on a truly grand scale. Ponticums on the Coleshill Road were doing really well on the date of the visit. If additional planting is envisaged, perhaps more evergreen shrubs would be considered on account of their year-round value.

## **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

The abundance of fine deciduous trees on approach roads and in hedgerows reminds one that new planting is essential to replenish the stock for the future. There are plenty of ideal sites available. It was good to see swans nesting by the canal. It was good to read of the level of fish stocks, and the visits of anglers. Why not organise a school competition for identifying all the trees and plants, and all the animals and birds and fishes, of the neighbourhood, to increase interest among the new generation.

## **LITTER CONTROL**

It was a pity to see conspicuous litter in two spots, though this was probably untypical.

(An advantages for smaller centres is that there is usually a greater awareness of littering and also the possibility of removing it quickly when it appears, so this was something of a disappointment.)

## **TIDINESS**

Hedging and ditching was neat on adjudication day, and not overdone. There was considerable weed along the roadside wall at the graveyard and in the forecourt of the large commercial premises. Apart from these two very minor instances, Abbeyshrule has a very tidy air indeed.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

All homes are well looked after, some with very attractive gardens. Thatch – though expensive and time-consuming to maintain – should be encouraged wherever possible especially if new houses are being planned; where seen, it is charming – it was once a feature of canalside villages. Excellent stone frontage walls were noted at a house opposite the graveyard and at another opposite the canalside garden.

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

Road surfaces are good. Stone walls and bridge parapets are well kept. (A pity that some years ago concrete blocks were used at the styles at the graveyard and Abbey gates, when stone would have been more suitable.) Parking spaces, especially at the Rustic Inn, are exceptionally well looked after.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

A place of real charm and serenity. This does not happen without an enormous amount of work, and the Tidy Towns Committee, as well as the residents and business people, are to be congratulated. Why not consider entering for the National Waterside Award (8G on the application form), and, when work at the Abbey has been completed, the National Heritage Award (8B on the application form).

## **SECOND ADJUDICATION (02/08/2002)**

Abbeyshrule was a pleasure to visit for second adjudication. The wildlife of the village is a particular source of enjoyment ranging from the colony of ducks and swans to the delightful flora. Stands of silver birch are admired together with neatly maintained hedgerow, grass verges and green open spaces. The banks of the river and the Grand Canal are being presented to the highest standard also. Container plants appeared to be better tended than on our first visit. The mural on the rear façade of the Rustic Inn is a good idea as this area is visible from the public domain. Litter and weed control is strong. We note with interest that a sewage treatment plant has been planned for the village, this should facilitate further development which hopefully will be to the benefit of the community. Thank you for your continued participation, we look forward to many

repeat visits.