

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **AUGHAGOWER**  
County : **MAYO**  
Category : **A**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 16-06-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	35	34
The Built Environment	40	33	32
Landscaping	40	30	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	21
Litter Control	40	33	32
Tidiness	20	18	17
Residential Areas	30	22	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	32	30
General Impression	10	8	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>225</b>

## Aughagower, Co. Mayo

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Thank you for a very thorough 2002/03 development plan. The points of action are very specific and achievable. Perhaps to create even greater clarity, you could add a few more headings such as who is responsible for what, projected costings for the various projects etc. Thank you for your maps, however, it would be even more useful with more sites marked on it. The proposed lighting scheme seems very sophisticated and will be greatly looked forward to. Well done in securing such a substantial grant for it. Unusually, there were no photographs included with your entry. Pictures serve to highlight the before and after story of each project undertaken. I would echo the suggestion of last year's adjudicator regarding drawing up a three or five year plan.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

The Community Centre is a fine spacious building, however on the day of adjudication, one front window was broken and the front of the building could do with being re-painted. The rear of the Centre is galvanised and is also in need of being freshened up. Aughagower Church was well presented and in good repair. John Keane's pub has very good colour co-ordination. The Handball and Racquet Centre is well maintained. The stone hump backed bridge in the picnic area is a really lovely feature, complementing the tone of this charming village. Under point 1.3 in your plan you express an intention to strip the plaster off the school and expose the stone work, I would suggest that you seek professional advice on this matter as conservationists may present valid reasons why this may not be the best course of action. The round tower would look even more striking if it were flood lit.

### **LANDSCAPING**

This adjudicator feels that there is a need to introduce more colour to contrast against the stark, grey appearance of the grave yards as they have a prominent presence on the landscape. The village has a pristine look but one wouldn't want to take that to extremes and end up with a rigid almost clinical look. The introduction of more flowerbeds and shrubberies and a moderate amount of hanging baskets and flower boxes should achieve a more balanced effect and coupled with the lighting project should throw a softer hue on the village. The shrubbery and famine memorial plaque in the car park is in very good condition. The Handball centre was in need of some strimming and the footpath edges needed weeding. The grounds of both graveyards are overgrown and would need to be cut. The pathway weeds need to be sprayed. I suggest that after all the grass has been mowed, the grounds be sprayed with growth retardant to reduce the amount of maintenance required. The trees planted around the perimeter were noted and should be attractive on maturing. The stream is subtly flood lit which is lovely as is the foliage around the phone box. Some of the flowerbeds could do with being weeded eg the one opposite the phone box.

## **WILDLIFE and NATURAL AMENITIES**

The picnic area is excellent, tastefully and sensitively developed. The materials used to make the bird table are very natural (wood on a stone column). The stream and its surroundings should offer a good opportunity to witness various species of bird, animal and plant life at close range. It is important to remember that the graveyards are important natural habitats in their own right and any developments would need to be carefully handled to preserve the natural balance. The suggestion on last years report about assigning school children to identify various wild life species and documenting the information sounds like an attainable project, I would suggest nature trails be developed in conjunction with this.

## **LITTER CONTROL**

Aughagower was virtually litter free on the day of adjudication – congratulations to everyone who contributed to this. It is good to see that the school children are involved and are given incentives. Re-cycling and waste management control should be an on-going discipline. If not already the case, perhaps litter picking nights could also be co-ordinated for the adults.

## **TIDINESS**

The village is very neatly presented and has an extremely orderly appearance. If all the points mentioned in the development plan are carried out, there is no doubt that this standard will be maintained.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

Overall private dwellings are very well presented. I commend your plan to have a competition for the best kept garden, this will undoubtedly see results particularly in a close knit community. A residents association if not already in existence may help in introducing new initiatives. All of the homes seemed to fit in with the scale of the village.

## **ROADS, STREETS and BACK AREAS**

The Leenane approach to the village would need to be re-surfaced. The main car park is a good size but may want to be re-surfaced with gravel. It was noticed that the car park at the rear of the community centre seems to be getting extended.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

Aughagower is a striking, extremely clean and neat village. It is a pleasure to come upon it. All of the proposed and existing projects are very practical. This is a good approach because the guidelines are simple and easy to follow. The most costly undertaking will be the lights and no doubt the underground cables will cause some

upheaval (however temporary). There is a lot of work to do but there has been a lot achieved which is a credit to you. I believe Aughagower has yet to enjoy its finest hour but it is in very capable hands.

## **SECOND ADJUDICATION (05/08/2002)**

Aughagower enjoys a beautiful setting against a backdrop of gentle hills and the majestic Croagh Patrick. The community is aware of its heritage and has found a way to successfully present it to the visitor and the travelling public, well done! The Mass Rock 'alter' might also be highlighted and interpreted. The memorial to the famine victims is a nice touch. Local walks should be identified and developed to Slí-na-Sláinte standards to enhance the amenity value of the village further. Litter control is excellent and the recycling point is very neat and well placed. Don't forget to remove sprayed weeds as these look unsightly when they are discoloured.