

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ratheen**

Ref: **195**

County: **Laois**

Mark: **176**

Category: **A**

Date: **09/07/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	26	
The Built Environment	40	23	
Landscaping	40	22	
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	14	
Litter Control	40	25	
Tidiness	20	11	
Residential Areas	30	22	
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	27	
General Impression	10	6	
TOTAL MARK	300	176	

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for your entry to Tidy Towns 2003. Your 5 year plan is informative and a good photographic record of village developments. The new school building is particularly impressive.

The Built Environment:

The approach to Raheen is dominated by the RC Church which is neat and tidy in its presentation. The car park has been restored since ducting of new flood lights. The entrance is decorated by tubs of plants and a nice bank of shrubs running down the right hand side to back of the church. On the opposite side is Eamonn an Cnoics bar which looks fine. The sign could be reduced in size and repainted. There is hedging and planter on the right hand side and also tubs of flowers around the front of the bar. The Old School is cleanly presented if a little clinical. On the left is a fine house with shop attached and with good gardens. The village main street has a number of attractive houses, including one two storey house with a fine array of potted flowers and shrubs. Dunnes' Newsagency looks very well.

On the right hand side is a really striking sculpture set in a flower bed beside the new school. There are plants and flowers in the circular bed in front of the school entrance. The school itself is new and is an exceptionally fine building surrounded by new landscaping of lawns and flower beds. It looks extremely well. In every respect there has been attention to detail from the curved gate to the planted flower beds, modern lighting and at the back, a stone meeting place for the students.

Landscaping:

Mass Rock is well displayed with flowers in front, and a clean and tidy presentation. The railings in front could be painted. The grave yard looks excellent, with well trimmed lawns and maintained to a high level. There are potted flowers at each side of the entrance. Some weed is growing from tops of the grave yard walls, and the stone to stop the gate from opening could be replaced with a more permanent 'lock'. The parish house looks well with mature gardens and its row of cupresses. Out towards the main Portlaoise Road there are houses both left and right particularly on the right is a house with a well treed area in green at road frontage. The excellent garden of the house next door to Eamonn A' Cnoic also provides a tree background to the car park.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

There are beautiful wild hedges for wildlife habitat. The old graveyard has much potential as a wildlife sanctuary.

Litter Control:

There was no evidence of litter on the day of visit.

Tidiness:

Some wirescape is evident. The farm access gate within the village is somewhat untidy and this extends to the main street. The Raheen Village sign is in a verge which could probably be better maintained. The GAA Grounds entrance could be tidied up a little and painting over the entrance needs to be re-done.

Residential Areas:

Opposite the new school is a house beautifully presented with shrubs and window boxes to its front. The house is painted white and looks very well. The Lackins Field House looks fine with new walls. A yellow walled house is for sale and maintenance has not been kept. Houses in general were well presented. Most are single storey bungalows but there are a number of two storey houses along and at either end of the main street.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

There are fine stands of trees which present a welcoming aspect at both ends of the village. A combination of cut verges, well maintained walls, and well kept private gardens give a good impression.

General Impression:

The new school is a superb building and represents a confidence in the future of the village.