

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Aughrim**

Ref: **14**

County: **Wicklow**

Mark: **277**

Category: **C**

Date: **11/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	47	46
The Built Environment	40	36	33
Landscaping	40	38	38
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	27	27
Litter Control	40	38	38
Tidiness	20	18	18
Residential Areas	30	28	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	36	35
General Impression	10	9	9
TOTAL MARK	300	277	270

Overall Developmental Approach:

The 20-membership number of the committee shows a great commitment to the development and care of the village. A walk around the village is a delight with so many interesting landscape developments, building improvements and meticulous care and attention to detail. The village has steadily improved over the years on many fronts. The planning that has taken place has resulted in a village to be proud of. The continued planning and development is very important because like many similar sized villages, especially those near Dublin, buildings developments are happening at a fast pace and it is important that future buildings are in accord with the character of the village and surrounds.

The Built Environment:

The Catholic Church is beautifully presented with the sweeping lawns and tree planting groves. The stonework both of the buildings and roadside walls are very attractive and form a landmark. The Church of Ireland in its pretty surrounds is a gem. So many stone buildings through the village give great character and are fitting for a Wicklow hills village. The new stone buildings look particularly well. The upgrading of Lawless Hotel and surrounds and the corner commercial buildings at the Stone Cutter, and Bia Biasta buildings represent an interesting change of style and look very well. The school also looks well. Business premises along the street have a very high standard of paint and general décor presentation.

Landscaping:

Aughrim excels in the amount of well-landscaped features present around and within the village. The area at St. Martins Park, The Anglers Centre, plantings along the roadsides through the village, the entrance across the bridge, roses along the roadside, many colourful containers and individual gardens are all attractive. The gardens of the terrace of stone cottages opposite the anglers centre are spectacular. Lawless hotel and adjoining holiday homes together with the areas by the river all combine to form a garden village.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

There are many opportunities for wildlife appreciation due to the great access to the river – the beautiful area at the Redna bridge, the N.D.A.F Park, by the bridges in the village centre, the bridges at the school and the Sean Linehan Walk – the last mentioned is a wonderful strolling ground and a worthy tribute to a man who had such vision for the village. Information illustrating the various wildlife observations that may be made would be very helpful and increase the enjoyment of walking in these areas.

Litter Control:

The litter management in the village is very good with a very clean appearance throughout. Some small amounts of litter were noted at the riverside entrance opposite Lawless Hotel. The recycle/litter bins area is very cleverly presented.

Tidiness:

The absence of overhead cables gives a great degree of tidiness. There is a meticulous care and maintenance programme through the village and surrounds. The old mill presents a difficulty and while the entrance gates at the walls have been restored the site frontage by the roadside is untidy. The restored old national school is a lovely asset. A building needs attention to decor at the Tinakilly Bridge. The site on the corner at Millwood estate hopefully will be dealt with soon and the adjoining neglected Motor garage. On looking over the bridge at the village centre the grey roof needs repainting and some sheds on view from the St Martins Park area behind the pump are in need of attention. A wall and gate by the side of Paddy Phelan premises also needs attention

Residential Areas:

The houses through the village are particularly well presented and cared for. There is a great sense of pride of place all through the village. The old stone houses look well and the houses along the approach roads are very well cared for with both gardens and roadside frontage appearing well. The new apartments Cuirt an Gleanna appear well and form a new style of accommodation for the village. The Lourdes Crescent estate appears very well cared for and the large mature trees are a good reminder to plant similar type trees where space allows so that we can leave a similar legacy for the next two or three generations. Crohan View looks very well. The open spaces are attractive with the climbing roses, rock and birch tree features. One gable end of a house hopefully will be dealt with soon. The huge mature beech trees are beautiful above the house named Heather Glen, as is the planting in this garden. The Millwood estate is a fine estate except that proper landscape finish does not seem to have been applied. The Millrace Court new houses look well and Aughrim Oaks is very well presented.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads cannot but be a attractive in this beautiful Wicklow setting. The great achievement of screening the industrial sites and the GAA grounds with tree and hedge screens is a perfect example for many towns and village throughout the country. The Timber works are successfully

screened, the Depot on the Arklow road, Herbst – to list a few examples of well-screened sites. Roadside care is meticulous with so many landscape features. The tree plantings, perfect verges and hedges contribute greatly. The village streets have a lovely finish. Footpaths and kerbs are both in good repair and clean. The road surface up by the side of the Catholic church is in a very poor state at present and hopefully when building work is complete this will be reinstated.

General Impression:

Aughrim is a truly “tidy town” congratulations on all the developments and the continued care and attention lavished. It is heartening to see so many people at work on aspects of the village care – litter collecting, hedge trimming, developments at the Tinakilly bridges, sweeping outside private residences and wall constructing by the riverside.

Second Round Adjudication:

It was a delight for the 2nd round adjudicator to visit Aughrim again after an absence of very many years. The village has a very welcoming atmosphere and a feeling that the residents care very much about their village and how it is presented. The old stone buildings of Wicklow granite have an attractive warm tone. It is good to see some new buildings faced in similar stone. On the Arklow approach road the closed garage premises needs to be screened from view and the plant containers re-planted. The Phelan property stands out as a large with an excellent colour scheme. Indeed the village is quite colourful with generally a good choice of colour made by property owners. At the road junction there are 11 directional road signs that look quite untidy and perhaps some rationalisation is possible. It was interesting to see some Wicklow granite used for some road directional signs such as that for Macreddin. Just a little litter was noted here and there but otherwise litter control was very good. At the river bridge the dead and trapped trees between the bridge and the weir on the down stream side of the bridge should be removed. The old Mill Race visible from the bridge is an interesting feature and perhaps there should be an information panel at the bridge to explain how the old mill worked.

The marks for Aughrim are now very high and additional marks will be won by attention to an even greater level of detail. On the day of 2nd round adjudication the standard experienced by the adjudicator at 1st round adjudication was maintained.