

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Rathnew**

Ref: **761**

County: **Wicklow**

Mark: **170**

Category: **B**

Date: **07/07/2005**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2005 | Mark Awarded 2004 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Overall Developmental Approach | 50 | 32 | |
| The Built Environment | 40 | 25 | |
| Landscaping | 40 | 21 | |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 30 | 15 | |
| Litter Control | 40 | 20 | |
| Tidiness | 20 | 12 | |
| Residential Areas | 30 | 17 | |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 40 | 23 | |
| General Impression | 10 | 5 | |
| TOTAL MARK | 300 | 170 | |

Overall Developmental Approach:

The plan presented for the next five years is very comprehensive and includes very diverse types of activity. It is important to work towards gaining as much cooperation as possible with local authorities and the local community as many of the items would be difficult to achieve without that cooperation. Now that the village is bypassed, traffic is not the problem it was and a new opportunity exists to form a more cohesive village.

The Built Environment:

The business premises through the village appear well. The Rathnew House, Fitzgerald's, Dowling's, the Antique shop and the shops along by the post office are well presented. The petrol station and adjacent units are well tended.. The two old stone and brick buildings (former church?) and the school are very attractive. The school below on the main road seems in reasonable condition. The buildings in the industrial estate may not be the most attractive but they are well away from the roadsides. Stonewalls play a very important part of the built environment in Rathnew. it is good to see from the plan that the value of these is recognised and plans are in place to reveal and repair these.

Landscaping:

The shrub borders close to the junction at the village centres are attractive and add a welcome softness to this area. The grotto was noted. The rose border at the junction for Newcastle looks well also. The carparking space opposite the Dowling's premises has a narrow border bounding the rear of the space – this is in need of restoring. A further shrub border at the Wexford road junction was admired. The areas surrounding the industrial estate are in very poor condition as regards landscaping – these areas do not seem to have been landscaped when the buildings were constructed and now they have a derelict appearance. The entrance to the Donegal Design has made some effort. Individual gardens along the roadsides and within estates that have put effort into presenting their gardens contribute well to the overall landscape of the village. Gardens along the roadside between Dowling's and the junction for the Wexford road have well mown banks and trimmed hedges thereby helping the roadside appearance compared to the other side of the road at this point where there is much room for improvement. The school grounds are in pleasant condition and much work has been done to keep the cemetery with its large Yew trees, in good condition. The tree planting is welcome

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The riverside offers good opportunity to develop a wildlife project. This small river is picturesque and by developing a riverside walk more avails of this could be made. It is good to see that work at the river is included in the plan. Involvement with the school in preparing a project would be helpful and this may tie in with the school's programme.

Litter Control:

It is acknowledged that good efforts are being made from the content of the plan never the less litter was spotted in a number of locations. A constant vigilance is needed to keep litter at bay. Continuous campaigns encouraging people to look after their own litter and the promotion of recycling activities all help. Regular cleanups and continual litter collecting are all essential elements of a good litter management programme

Tidiness:

There is a varied level of tidiness in the village. The new approach from the Dublin side N11 is very organised and clear. The industrial site on the other hand as stated above is very untidy with overgrown verges, weeds, and no proper landscaping. The area opposite Dowling's looks untidy with materials from the adjacent yard assembled without great order – some screening would be helpful here. The removal of overhead cables is a great advantage and the new lamp standards appear very well in the village centre – the remaining old timber poles should be removed. The planned wall restoration work will be helpful – trimming vegetation or removal and repairing where needed will be a worthwhile job.

Residential Areas:

The new houses at the village front Charvey court look well – the final phase when complete will add to the appearance of the estate as this front area will be landscaped and tie in well with the remainder of the houses, the large green inside does not have one tree planted. The cottage style houses along the Rathdrum and Wexford road have a lot of character and these are cared for well. There is a very large amount of housing behind the school, and cemetery. The naming on many of the estates is difficult to find and a plan to name all estate would be welcome, In this area there are very many houses - both single and two storied. There is variation in the standards of roads and individual houses among these areas. Efforts to raise standards through garden competitions and competitions between roads or estates would be helpful.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Major changes have occurred in traffic distribution due to the opening of the bypass. This is very

helpful to Rathnew. The increase in populations that is happening with all the new housing is the other major change factor. The road from the N11 towards the village is in good condition. Within the village the roads surface is patchy in places and needs resurfacing. The roundabout structure at the village centre is very insignificant and many motorists do not seem to understand its meaning. The roadsides as mentioned above are fine where gardens border the roadside and otherwise the grass verges or hedgerows need attention in places.

General Impression:

Rathnew now has the possibility of finding the identity it once had before traffic volumes destroyed this. Working with the various interests within the village – residents, business and commercial, progress can now be made. With a rigid following of the plan great improvements will be achieved.