

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Rathvilly**

Ref: **382**

County: **Carlow**

Mark: **256**

Category: **B**

Date: **11/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	42	41
The Built Environment	40	36	35
Landscaping	40	38	38
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	21
Litter Control	40	34	33
Tidiness	20	17	17
Residential Areas	30	26	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	33	33
General Impression	10	9	9
TOTAL MARK	300	256	253

Overall Developmental Approach:

It was noted that your three year plan for the village is in its final year and therefore the adjudicators look forward to reading your new plan (and indeed your planned brochure on the village) both of which should be submitted with next year's entry for the competition. Certainly the current plan appears to have proved very successful! Many thanks for your map which proved most useful on the day. The adjudicator noted your comments regarding the rapid expansion of the village and wishes you all the best in your efforts to monitor and manage this development. We also observed your comments regarding the re-pointing of public buildings within the village and would encourage you to seek architectural advice in this regard to ensure that this is correctly completed.

The Built Environment:

Both public and commercial premises within the village generally looked well maintained on adjudication day. The Post Office was quite fresh and the school and grounds were well maintained. The churches and associated graveyards were also to a high standard. Commercial premises such as Mace, Lawlor's and Molloy's were well maintained, although the former will need to be painted before next year's competition. Do discourage the practice of using projecting plastic signs. These should be replaced with ones of a more traditional timber variety. The Hall should also be painted before next year's competition although the Pheonix Centre looked fine.

Landscaping:

Try to resist the temptation to overdo floral displays, these can "over-prettyfy" the village's appearance. The Grotto was well maintained, as was Father Cullen's Garden by the church. The village pump was simply presented as was the area around the Kevin Barry monument on its hillside in the village centre. The tennis courts were well maintained with a relatively new fence. Perhaps you should consider a low stone wall or indigenous hedging beech or hawthorn at its base to soften the somewhat harsh effect? Attractive planting by the GAA grounds was admired, as was the landscaping around St. Patrick's Park by the village pump.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your wildlife board by the riverside area was noted. As mentioned by last year's adjudicator you should consider further expansion in this area of the competition. Perhaps you could incorporate a wildlife trail in conjunction with some local walks in your planned brochure for the village?

Litter Control:

The standard on the day was very good and the village seemed to be maintained to a higher standard in regard to this category of the competition, in comparison to last year. However, some litter was evident in the main areas of the village, particularly in the vicinity of the graveyard. Some of the litter bins in the village are in need of replacement.

Tidiness:

The village generally has a neat and ordered appearance. However, there were a couple of problem areas. The Old Mill by the river should be repainted before next year's competition - it appears to be abandoned and empty at the moment. Perhaps you could consider screening the recycling areas by means of a timber fence or hedging. This area was generally neatly maintained, although the bins themselves were a little grubby. There is a new award in the competition for suitably presented recycling areas. Weed control was a problem by the kerbsides on the Tullow approach in the vicinity of Michael Collins Park. A tin shed on the Hackettstown Road should be repainted in its traditional red or green colour before next year's competition. Much evidence was noticed of maintenance activity on adjudication day.

Residential Areas:

As noted by Rathvilly Tidy Towns Association in its application, the village is rapidly expanding and every step should be taken to work closely with Carlow County Council to monitor this new development to ensure that it is in keeping with the spirit and nature of the village. New houses were noted at Slaney Bank which was nicely maintained and landscaped. Slaney Meadows is still under construction - do ensure that it is attractively landscaped once completed. Your House and Garden Competition would appear to be paying off as most properties both within the village and along approach roads were maintained to a high standard on the day. Michael Collin's Park looked well and the stone terrace of houses at Phelan Street is a most attractive feature in the village. Father Cullen Terrace was nicely maintained but appeared somewhat bare, so perhaps more landscaping could be considered in this area. An attractive garden filled with lupins at Woodgrove Avenue was admired although the boundary wall to this estate at the main road was in need of some attention.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Some problems were noted regarding signage on approach roads. The village nameplate sign on the Baltinglass Road was somewhat grubby and there was evidence of graffiti to both the nameplate sign and the Competition Bronze Medal sign on the Tullow Road (although this approach road itself well maintained). Some weeds were evident by the welcome sign on this approach. The Baltinglass Road forms an attractive entrance to the village. Cow parsley was noted on the Hackettstown approach road. It is important that a balanced approach is taken to the presentation of approach roads, in that they maintain a natural appearance while not appearing wild and overgrown. Road surfaces were somewhat irregular in the village centre.

General Impression:

Rathvilly is a most attractive village which is always a pleasure to visit. It was a worthy Bronze Medal winner in the competition last year. Good luck with your future endeavours and do try to ensure that the village maintains its unique character and charm in the years to come.

Second Round Adjudication:

Mature trees, fine stone walls and neat hedging created a welcome impression. The original stone terrace looked magnificent. Well cared for greens and planting were evident in the residential areas – a few drab boundary walls should be attended to before next year. The recycling area was commendably neat. The Church and grounds again contributed greatly. Halla Naomh Padraic is urgently in need of improvement. Also, a few sheds and yards throughout tended to detract from other good presentation in the vicinity. It is strongly recommended that some of the street scape frontages be reconsidered – simple plaster and paint or genuine stone are most appropriate for Rathvilly. Considerable expansion has taken place since this adjudicator was last in Rathvilly. You must seek to keep new developments in scale with the village.