

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Athleague**

Ref: **707**

County: **Roscommon**

Mark: **198**

Category: **B**

Date: **01/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33	32
The Built Environment	40	27	26
Landscaping	40	31	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17	16
Litter Control	40	26	26
Tidiness	20	12	11
Residential Areas	30	20	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	26	25
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	198	191

Overall Developmental Approach:

Athleague is most welcome to the 2005 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your excellent submission which included your plans for the further development of Athleague village. Your objectives are totally realistic and when implemented will enhance the physical and recreational amenity status of Athleague. The village has many valuable features such as the mill, the angling centre, the banks of the river Suck, the old castle, all of which provide a good foundation to build on for the future. Well done on your recognition of the need for facilities such as the People's Park, the Culture Park and your work on attracting wildlife into your lovely village. It is good to note the support you get from the business community and your liaison with the local authority, FAS and other agencies.

The Built Environment:

As noted above, the castle, the mill and the angling centre are predominant features in your overall villagescape and you are aware of the opportunities presented by the mill. The Angling and Conference Centre is an excellent use of an old building. The River View Stores premises is quite well presented in terms of the building itself and its forecourt. Other well presented buildings include the Tiernan Memorial Hall, the Village Inn, J.J. Waldron & Son and Town and Country Interiors. The gable wall of the latter building however should also be painted. The Bridge House enjoys an excellence in presentation, particularly in respect of its hanging baskets and the lovely adjoining blue premises with sash windows. Healy's Hardware and Grocery looks quite well but the

petrol pumps outside are in need of attention. The combination of the use of building materials and colours in the presentation of the church was admired. The magnolia coloured plaster facade with grey stone trim together with the porch area of grey stone looked particularly well. The Shamrock premises sign needs to be repaired.

Landscaping:

Reference has already been made to the hanging baskets on Bridge House and hanging baskets along the main street were admired also. Permanent planting in the form of trees and shrubs were noted and admired at several locations around the town and at entrances from approach roads. Young trees on the verge across from the infill residential development, behind an attractive stone wall, are maturing nicely and others were noted behind the forementioned stone wall. Landscaping at the Creggs Road junction plus trees on verges along both sides of the road are effective in enhancing their surroundings. The grass verge on the right hand side of the road coming in from the Creggs Road should be trimmed to highlight the trees here as a feature. The grounds of the Kepak commercial premises were amongst the best seen by this adjudicator anywhere in the country. The village park at the bridge, with its gazebo feature, its handsome stone wall enclosure and beautiful landscaping is a wonderful introduction to the town's main street at this point. Well done. Planting to the concrete block wall together with stone flowerbeds at the entrance to the town from the Roscommon Road was noted and admired.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The banks of the River Suck have wonderful visual and recreational amenity potential on approaching Athleague from the Creggs Road. We note your plans for the further development in this respect over the next few years and wish you every success. The car parking area at the sports grounds, as you are aware, is in need of resurfacing, however, it should also be landscaped to its roadside edge to soften the impact of the enclosing walls to the sports grounds. Hedgerow could be planted to the wire and post fence which run along both sides of the Creggs Road. Hawthorn would be a good choice for wildlife. Your plans for bird boxes and bat boxes are an excellent initiative as are your plans to introduce ducks to the pond. Do keep us informed as to your success in this regard.

Litter Control:

Litter control was excellent at the time of adjudication. Very little litter was in evidence either in the town or on approach roads. Your weekly clean ups and the use of the recycling facility is helping you in this regard. Submit details of your overall litter management strategy as well as your daily/weekly litter control activities as these can earn additional marks.

Tidiness:

Congratulations on the recycling facility. Well done also on the excellent treatment of the derelict building to the rear of the car park on the main street. We wish you well in your objective of achieving a derelict building free status for Athleague. The window and door apertures of the old mill at the bridge could be boarded up and maintained brightly painted as an interim measure until redevelopment. This would lift this area of the town and enhance the beauty of the old building. The adjudicators appreciate however that the mill is not in the ownership of the Tidy Towns Committee or any voluntary group.

Residential Areas:

Well done on the cooperation you receive from residents in relation to the planting, mowing and weeding within their own areas and outside of their own curtilage area. This is the type of cooperation that brings villages to greater heights within the Tidy Towns Competition, not to mention the benefit of living in a beautiful town or village. Some roadside areas to boundary walls

of dwellings on the right hand side of the road when leaving the town via the Creggs Road looked poor and are in need of improvement. Ideally if these could be grassed it would create a positive strong visual impact, however even if nicely tarmacadumed it would look better than the present presentation. Some weedy kerbs were noted to the footpath out the Rahara Road. At the time of adjudication work was still in progress on the Paddock residential development. No doubt on completion it will be finished to a high standard in respect of roads and footpaths and be nicely landscaped.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads tended to be somewhat overgrown at their verges, however nameplates looked well and other signposting was clean and legible. In a number of instances attractive old stone walls were hidden behind overgrowth. This was the case on both the Roscommon and Galway approaches. Some of the growth could be cut back and the beauty of the stone work revealed and highlighted as a feature of the town. Stretches of road surface were in need of resurfacing. The old stone bridge over the river is a beautiful feature and the lampstandards here together with the lack of visually obtrusive wirescape is an excellent introduction to Athleague. We look forward to the ducting of wirescape that is still prevalent in the village centre on the main street and the replacement of service poles with attractive lampstandards. Both the Statoil premises and the Motor Showrooms premises were excellent in presentation and landscaping to the roadside edge of the latter premises was admired.

General Impression:

The overall impression of Athleague is favourable. The village has a number of impressive heritage features both in the built and natural environment which present opportunities to take Athleague on to the next level in the competition. The committee are aware of what needs to be achieved and we have no doubt that success will be yours at some stage in the future.

Second Round Adjudication: