

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Rathowen**

Ref: **297**

County: **Westmeath**

Mark: **202**

Category: **A**

Date: **18/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	32	32
The Built Environment	40	31	31
Landscaping	40	33	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	11	11
Litter Control	40	29	30
Tidiness	20	11	11
Residential Areas	30	21	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	27	25
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	202	201

Overall Developmental Approach:

Many thanks for your application form and map. It is noted that you have commissioned a five year plan, which we look forward to seeing next year. Traffic continues to be the biggest problem in the village, and while this does not look set to change, the successful implementation of this plan should secure the future of the village.

The Rathowen Tidy Towns committee continues to be proactive and works in cooperation with local community groups, the local authority and other agencies.

The Built Environment:

The approach on the Dublin Road is enhanced by the beautiful building that is St. Marys Church. The Garda Station, Community Centre, Westmeath Information Office and the Gaelic Chieftain Pub all look very well. The presence of some dilapidated houses was also noticed, and while some construction was underway, it was refreshing to see that some boarded up windows had been brightly painted. The entrance to the Church of Ireland church has been neatened considerably, but the gates are in need of painting. Perhaps some work could be done here?

Landscaping:

The grounds of St. Mary's Church were immaculately maintained and the green area at Lizzy's Pond, with its new seat and colourful shrubbery is a welcome addition to the area. The Garda Station was neatly adorned with flowers, and a number of business premises in the village had clearly gone to considerable effort to enhance their appearance with potted flowers and hanging baskets. The half-barrel flower pots on some approach roads brighten the entrance to the village considerably.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The area surrounding the graveyard has a lot of mature growth and would be a thriving wildlife habitat. The areas around Lizzy's pond and Glebe House could also be considered for wildlife zones.

Litter Control:

The car park and recycling area to the rear of Feerick's was a big disappointment to the adjudicator. The recycling area itself was very poorly maintained with quite an amount of dumping evident. Some effort should also be made to try and screen the "White Goods" recycling area. It was noted that there was a considerable amount of construction underway and this did result in a lot of builder's waste in the car park. Dumping was also evident at the community centre. The public roads and residential areas were, however, relatively litter-free, and this is no mean feat considering the through-flow of traffic. Well done to the Tidy Towns Committee!

Tidiness:

With the exception of the above, Rathowen is a very tidy village with no other major causes for concern. A little weeding is required on the Longford approach and on the laneway towards the community centre.

Residential Areas:

The houses on School Lane are very well presented and awash with colour, as are the houses behind the Gaelic Chieftain pub. The green area here was well maintained, and there was little or no evidence of weeding. The residences along the main street were, for the most part, very well maintained. One or two houses could do with painting, but this is probably due to some of the older residents who are in care for long periods, and therefore not in a position to maintain their houses. Again, your pending five-year plan should have measures to deal with this, and the results are eagerly awaited.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach from the Dublin side is beautifully maintained with well-trimmed verges, young and mature trees, public seating, shrubberies and potted flowers. The street lighting is elegant and the signs are clean. The road surface, despite the amount of construction, is quite good. A little weeding could be carried out in places on the Longford approach, but again the verges and signage are well-maintained.

General Impression:

Given the volume of traffic that Rathowen has to deal with, the village is surprisingly neat, tidy and welcoming. Huge effort has obviously been made by the committee and the community in general. As mentioned above, the implementation of the five-year plan can only further enhance the village and community, and should see Rathowen score extremely high in the near future. Your village is a credit to you all. Well done!

Second Round Adjudication:

