

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Rathkeale** Ref: **466**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **221**
Category: **C** Date(s): **26/06/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	33
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	21
Litter Control	50	20
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	12
Residential Areas	40	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	221

Overall Development Approach:

Rathkeale is welcome to the 2006 National Tidy Towns Competition. The entry form was somewhat incomplete, with some sections left completely blank. The town is large, and a more detailed map would be helpful. It is noted that you receive support from the Limerick County Council and Rathkeale Chamber of Commerce and noticed signs acknowledging the support of the Community Council and FAS. You might consider some form of fund-raising drive to help with the task of upgrading some areas of the town.

The Built Environment:

The Church, with its tall spire dominating the landscape, looked well as did the Fire Station; Rathkeale Community Workspace; the Community College; Palatine Museum and the Sports Complex. St Mary's/Sean Finn's GAA entrance area was very smart, but the breeze block wall could be enhanced by planting some ivy. Some of the business premises in the Town Centre also looked well – two Bank buildings; Credit Union, Rathkeale Hotel; The K Boutique; Bloomer's Café; Seán Ó Braonáin's and Giltenane's Pharmacy. The area around the entrance to the Church of Ireland had improved. As noted last in year's report, there are again many business properties in need of urgent attention/redevelopment, including Jim Roach's yard and adjoining building; old Cinema; Kerry Agribusiness Store; Golden Vale Marts; the Eircom building, the old Rathkeale Motors property and the two Euro Kidz premises. A few buildings are also in need of painting – The Library, the Post Office, Pink School by the Church, and Scoil Náisiunta, but the artwork on the stone building opposite was admired. And the Industrial Estate buildings and Meat plant looked well. The public conveniences were in an acceptable condition.

Landscaping:

The rose and formal gardens in the Hotel were much admired, as was the planting by the Grotto. The trees planted in several of the Housing Estates would benefit from having the grass removed from around the base.

The trailing petunia display on the stone dwelling on the road up to the Church was very eye catching. The planters by the Abbey were in the process of being planted with marigolds, and the floral display by Dhoyle Lake was attractive. Many of the private dwellings about the town and in some of the housing estates had very attractive gardens. You might consider having a competition for the housing area with the best gardens. And please encourage the business owners to introduce some floral displays about their buildings. The newly planted landscape project in the grounds of the Museum is attractive, and should be wonderful when it matures.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The gate at the entrance to Dhoyle Lake was locked, so unfortunately viewing couldn't take place at what we believe to be a very fine natural wildlife area. The, FAS supported, Matrix Way and Riverside walk was being enjoyed by some of the employees from the Industrial Estate, and other locals. This is a very fine project, which will be enjoyed by locals and visitors alike.

Litter Control:

The gate at the entrance to Dhoyle Lake was locked, so unfortunately viewing couldn't take place at what we believe to be a very fine natural wildlife area. The, FAS supported, Matrix Way and Riverside walk was being enjoyed by some of the employees from the Industrial Estate, and other locals. This is a very fine project, which will be enjoyed by locals and visitors alike.

Waste Minimisation:

Well done to St Anne's and St Joseph's School on receiving their Green Flags. This is a new category for 2006, and your committee needs to study the Race Against Waste booklet. You have a bring bank – so some waste is being recycled, including bottles, cans, plastics (both containers were full), and clothes, and the bank is in an accessible location. You may also get some useful information on this from the Environmental Section of Limerick County Council.

Tidiness:

Most of the hedges and verges had been trimmed and looked neat and tidy, but unfortunately exposed the litter problem, and weed control was in operation in the Town Centre area. Foliage debris needs removing from some of the pavements about the Town. Again this year the area surrounding the Abbey was in poor condition. Much work needs attention in this category.

Residential Areas:

Rathkeale has many Housing Estates – Court Villas, Cois Deel, the new Orchard Avenue development and Cill Cluain, to name but a few, and many of the dwellings are in fine order, with lovely gardens as mentioned above, but others are in a poor state of repair, including the boundary walls. Consideration should be given to designing and placing new estate signage about the town. Many of the green areas in the estates also need attention. Many of the private dwellings are well maintained and have lovely mature gardens. There is a terrace of houses opposite, Rathkeale Motors, with some beautifully landscaped gardens.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The road surfaces generally in the town were in good condition. The signage was also in good order, but, as mentioned in last year's report, the finger post signs throughout the Town are all in need of attention. The main street of Rathkeale is in good order, but the back areas have been neglected, and they are an integral part of the competition

General Impression:

Rathkeale, just off the N21, is a bustling town, but you need to encourage the community at large to work with your committee to improve the appearance of whole town, and not just the main thoroughfare. Some redevelopment work has taken place recently, many properties are for sale, and it is noted that there are plans for more new developments over the coming year. Again, we ask you to encourage more people to join your committee, as five is a very small number with such a big challenge ahead.