

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Rathmolyon** Ref: **603**
County: **Meath** Mark: **231**
Category: **C** Date(s): **25/06/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	39
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25
Litter Control	50	29
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	16
Residential Areas	40	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	231

Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator would like to welcome Rathmolyon to the 2006 Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for the colour codes map. You have a very large committee of 20-28 people and this level of community support is rather unusual in this adjudicator experience. Also your committee structure seems to be very good and is obviously working well. The adjudicator notes that a Tidy Towns Work Programme or Plan for Rathmolyon was not submitted with the entry documentation. All towns and villages are required to have a simple straight forward 3 Year Tidy Towns Plan for their area. This Plan is prepared by your Committee in consultation with the appropriate local organisations. It should be no more than seven to ten pages long. The purpose of the Plan is to guide the work of your Tidy Towns Committee and others for Rathmolyon over the short to medium term. Your Plan should detail year by year the work that you intend to do each year. It is recommended that you do not have too many objectives each year – perhaps 4/5 key projects.

The Built Environment:

Beautiful limestone walls are the signature feature of Rathmolyon and these walls set off the Church of Ireland Church beautifully together with the Yew trees in the Churchyard. The mural at the crossroads is an interesting and unusual feature. It may well need to be repainted for 2007. This helps to partially hide an untidy area behind which is still visible from the road. The Harnan thatched house is a lovely feature of the village and must be one of the oldest surviving properties. A good use of colour was noted at the four houses across the road from the thatched house. Some poor retail signage remains and hopefully in time these can be replaced with a design that is more in keeping with the village. The Church and car park is meticulously presented.

Landscaping:

The planting of native hedging is excellent and the new walk a most attractive feature of Rathmolyon. The double row of hedging was noted along the earlier part of the walk and this is interesting. The green area at the cross-roads is well presented with well mown grass. However long grass was noted at the concrete posts and at the kerbing. At the church the planter boxes are really effective and colourful. They might be even more effective if aligned parallel with the main road instead of at right angles to it.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The approach road wildflower meadow is an excellent project. We would be very interested to see a copy of the amenity walk audit mentioned in your documentation. It is important that your Tidy Towns Committee would examine further the wildlife potential, and see what you can achieve in terms of making your area even more wildlife friendly.

If you have not already done so, the starting point is to have a habitat survey carried out of the wildlife in the Rathmolyon area. Suggested habitats to be considered include the following –

- Urban habitats – gardens, waste ground, walls, graveyards, hedges
- Woodland habitats – forests, hedgerows, plantations, parks
- Grassland habitats – roadside verges, parks, wet meadows, dry grasslands

The survey should produce a species list for each of the habitats relevant to Rathmolyon. This need not be an expensive survey. Perhaps there is a knowledgeable person locally who might undertake this task for you. Basically the survey would identify the animals, plants, birds, fish that inhabit the Rathmolyon area and their associated habitats. It should be remembered that to carry out the survey properly that it will probably take a year so that all habitats can be assessed at different time of the year.

Using the results of the wildlife survey your next step should be do draft a straight forward Plan for Rathmolyon to preserve the identified habitats in your area, and investigate the possibility of new ones. For example perhaps there is an old Pond in your area that is disused, but with a little work could be an important area for wildfowl.

It is most important to try and involve your local school children in this project, and in many Schools there is probably a teacher who may have an interest in this area who would be willing to get involved.

As part of the actions to be undertaken in your Wildlife Plan you might like to consider the provision of some weather proof display panels, illustrating and explaining the wildlife in the Rathmolyon area. This has been done very successfully in many towns and villages in Ireland.

Litter Control:

Litter control on adjudication day was excellent and congratulations on your top performance in the County Meath Anti-Litter League. Just a little litter was noted in front of the mural.

Waste Minimisation:

This is a new category in the Tidy Towns Competition introduced in 2006. The purpose of this new category is to encourage Tidy Towns Committees and the community that they support to get involved in projects that will reduce waste and encourage recycling. Marks can be gained for Rathmolyon the promotion of best practice. This can include community guidance on methods of reducing waste, segregating litter during clean up events. You could also consider a partnership with local firms and businesses to encourage them to reduce unnecessary waste.

It is great that the school is involved in a waste segregation programme leading to recycling.

Tidiness:

The area behind the mural is rather untidy with weed and long grass growth. Can you try and get permission to have all sign poles painted to an agreed colour. Some weed growth was noted at the house at the sharp corner as the Summerhill road enters the village.

Residential Areas:

The estate on the Enfield road is showing the results of your good work there. There is a long concrete wall

near the entrance and it is suggested that this be painted white to match the lower wall that joins it. Plans for a lot of new housing development were noted and this is to be welcomed, however the provision of appropriate landscaping by the various developers is of crucial importance. If you have not already done so your Committee might talk to your Local Authority to discuss the issue of landscaping by builders. Perhaps this can best be delivered through the Planning Conditions process.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The western approach road is excellently presented and the landscaping here is of a high standard. Not a lot of work appears to have been done recently on the Summerhill road. A fine bank was noted on the left hand side but there is also some verge damage along this approach to the village. The Trim road is excellently presented and this provides a very inviting first introduction to the village. Good private verge development was noted on the Enfield approach but public areas were less well presented.

General Impression:

It was a pleasure to visit your village on a fine June evening, and the adjudicator wishes your 2007 plans every possible success.