

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Athleague** Ref: **269**
County: **Roscommon** Mark: **210**
Category: **B** Date(s): **03/07/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	34
The Built Environment	50	28
Landscaping	50	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	18
Litter Control	50	25
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	12
Residential Areas	40	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	26
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	210

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the very fine map which was most helpful at adjudication time. The plans mentioned in last years report did not seem to accompany the entry form this year - last years adjudicator was very impressed with your future planning. It is obvious from a tour of the village that great efforts have been made in many respects and the fruits of these are showing well. The river and mill areas are beautiful and the peoples park and culture park walk are great achievements.

The Built Environment:

Again the old mill and Angling /Conference centre come in for special mention as they are most attractive areas to spend some time. The church and community centre look well as does the Garda station and Health Centre building. Many of the business premises are looking well presented. There is continual building development in the village and surrounds. The new redevelopment beside the Town and Country shop is taking its toll of disruption in the village centre. The old mill building and surrounding ruins add great character to the village.

Landscaping:

Trees along the main street have matured well and are now giving a very good effect. The small borders surrounding the trees look well. The borders opposite the Church are colourful and give a pleasant effect. The containerised plants through the village give a very colourful summer sparkle to the town. The peoples park is a lovely feature and well done. This is also well positioned enhancing the Mill area. Many gardens contribute well to the overall landscape of the town by their well tended gardens and good credit is due for this. The garden surrounding the Garda station is a little untended. The Paddock estate has a lovely green but the absence of tree planting here is striking. Any area where tree planting opportunities arise should be availed of as trees are the backbone of the landscape and the importance of providing a continuity of tree planting is so

important. For example one of the most pleasant scenes in the village is the large single tree in the on the corner with the grassed area beneath and a bench nicely placed beneath the tree. As new housing estates seem to be arising in every village and town in the country it is important that these are well landscaped so that they merge well into a rural village/town setting rather than appear as if they have been dropped in from a city suburb.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Athleague has a very rich scope for the enjoyment of the natural environment. The river Suck and surrounds are a wonderful asset. The walkway from the Anglers Conference centre along the river by the weir is beautiful. The picnic area behind was marred a little by the broken tables, unsightly building and some litter. Some interpretation signs would be helpful here. The old graveyard is interesting and with the natural growth free to grow this encourages wild life although some carefully mown pathways would be helpful here. The old Yew trees are being overrun with Elder and Ivy and it would be wise to clear these so that the Yew trees could attain their full beauty. The Culture nature walk park is an exciting venture and provides good opportunities – again some interpretation of this is needed. There is an area where machinery parts are laid – some of these appear to be unsuitable and perhaps have been dumped here. The water had dried up on the day and some of the paths needed some attention or they will be lost

Litter Control:

Litter was noticed in a number of places – by the picnic tables behind the weir by the riverside, along the path through the culture park to the church and a little in the street. The bottle banks also had some materials deposited around them which was disappointing. The participation in the national clean up and the weekly clean ups are good but maybe some extra work is needed to get a more thorough job done.

Waste Minimisation:

Well done on making such a fine start under this new category. The separation of materials following your weekly cleanups is a very positive move as is the use of your bottle bank. The plan to introduce extra recycling banks is welcome. A few ideas for the future could include a campaign of awareness with both homeowners and businesses on the importance of waste reduction and recycling. For instance, household composting is an excellent way to make use of waste material. The Race Against Waste booklet which accompanied this year's Tidy Towns entry form provides a lot of good ideas for developing this work further and gaining more marks under this category.

Tidiness:

There is a good level of tidiness despite the building construction work that is taking place both in the village centre and at the housing estates. The work with local authorities is important to ensure actions are taken when needed. Some areas in the culture park where the machinery parts are deposited seem to have gone a little astray. The lack of proper finish on the Rahara road at the footpath/roadside interface is unsightly and any interference with roads or paths as a result of new developments should be reinstated immediately when the work is complete. One ESB pole appears dangerous in its present isolated position to the side of the road at this place.

Residential Areas:

The older residential areas look well and many roadside residences both along the approach roads and in the village itself look well and contribute well to the overall appearance. The new estates – An Craig is very well cared for and it is good to know that the residents association is active here. As mentioned above the Paddocks needs some attention to tree planting especially.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Last year mention was made of approach roads being a little overgrown. Care must be taken to strike a delicate balance between neglect and over care of roadsides. The natural look is important so that the plants can reach their full potential yet safety is a factor to be considered also. The Rahara road as mentioned above needs attention. Road surfaces in general are satisfactory.

General Impression:

Athleague is a fine village with a great range of assets being well used. Very good development work has been done and congratulations on the fine projects that have been completed to date.