

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Gathabawn** Ref: **380**
County: **Kilkenny** Mark: **244**
Category: **A** Date(s): **20/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	29
The Built Environment	50	29
Landscaping	50	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30
Litter Control	50	32
Waste Minimisation	20	4
Tidiness	30	16
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	35
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	244

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for your very adequate responses to the questions on the entry form. It was this adjudicator's first visit to Gathabawn, having read the previous adjudicators' comments, and the village was a pleasing discovery. The view when approaching from Johnstown is truly striking. The entire community appears to be involved, and there is an air of pride and prosperity. (For convenience of reading, perhaps you would write the names of the locations on the map rather than on another page.) Features that are of exceptionally high quality are mentioned below, as are any that do not quite meet the standard; where there is no mention it may be assumed that the feature is satisfactory. The Work Plan shows a comprehensive and concerted effort. Finding time to complete all work is a constraint put on all committees and their helpers, no different in towns than in villages; those with determination always succeed, as do you from observation of the appearance of the village towards the end of June and from a look at the previous marking which is well above the average in town or country. Congratulations to the entire community.

The Built Environment:

The school was looking very smart, with its neat garden frontage, fine walls and railings. Mackeys' Bar was well presented. The Church is a handsome plain building, beautifully maintained, with matching parish house and boundary walls; this particular section of the village – including the property opposite and the Woodland Park - is supremely impressive, a delight to see.

Landscaping:

Planting of shrubs, herbaceous plants and annuals, especially along the left of the street (coming from Freshford) looked very well indeed and help to draw the various elements of that part of the village together. Other plantings, such as in the church and school grounds, in tubs and in private gardens, add to the sense of care and colour.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Trees are considered under this heading. The Native Woodland Park is the major project. It was good to see the planting of a variety of native trees, and the ongoing work at the bridge. As well as a first-class wild-life amenity this area provides visual enhancement to the village. The hedging and fencing is excellent. The enhancement of the ancient graveyard further out this road might be a future project, either under the heading of Wild Life or as a project for a Heritage Award, and depending on whether the landowner would be willing to allow access.

Litter Control:

Thanks to the dedication of your voluntary helpers, young and old, and your RSS worker, there was singularly little litter in Gatabawn on adjudication day

Waste Minimisation:

We are largely dependent on the information given on the entry form as to what activities are undertaken under this heading, but as this is sparse the mark has been left as the same as last year. It was noted that information and training meetings were attended, and that is a good start. It would be important to study the 'Race Against Waste' booklet which might provide pointers to what is appropriate your particular needs. This subject will become more and more important as time goes on.

Tidiness:

There was less to commend under this heading. Very little work on the part of the owners of a premises on the left as you come from Freshford would have a very positive effect. Because of unkempt verges on the Freshford road between the name sign and the first houses there was no sense of approaching a special village; the same may be said, though to a lesser extent, of the road from Galmoy. There was quite an amount of roadside weed along the wall opposite the school on the date of the visit. Last year's adjudicator mentioned what seems to be over-enthusiastic signage at An Siopa. These are small points, but when considered together they add up.

Residential Areas:

Individual homes were seen to be kept with a real sense of pride. The cream-coloured boundary wall and the white-washed boundary wall of houses on the Freshford side will need freshening up with paint for next year.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Surfaces were reasonably good. The yellow 'keep free' road marking at the school, and other road markings, were seen to be in need of renewal. The excellent stone walls, some of them only recently restored, and new stone walls, were much admired, an important feature of the village. It is assumed that a cement block wall near the school will ultimately be faced in stone. The incised stone name signs, such as at the school, at the Woodland Park, and in other places, were much admired. The car park behind Mackey's was neat and tidy and bounded by attractive planting.

General Impression:

It was a real pleasure to visit Gathabawn. (How about reverting to the old Irish name, which must surely be An Geata Ban?) There was a total sense of the entire community giving of their utmost to improve their surroundings for their own well-being and for the admiration of visitors to the village. Every good wish for your numerous future endeavours.