

# Tidy Towns Competition 2004

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Rochfortbridge**

Ref: **647**

County: **Westmeath**

Mark: **202**

Category: **C**

Date: **03/07/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	34	34
The Built Environment	40	27	27
Landscaping	40	34	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	10	10
Litter Control	40	25	25
Tidiness	20	11	11
Residential Areas	30	23	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	31	31
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>202</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

The imminent arrival of the new motorway will provide an opportunity to significantly change the character of the village and perhaps restructure its format from a linear to a more central structure. Rochfortbridge has and is going through an extraordinary increase in residential accommodation. The opportunity and challenge is to ensure that services are created and maintained in the village to cater for its indigenous population while at the same time preserving its natural amenities. Planning for the future is an important part of this process and the role of the Tidy Towns committee an essential element.

### The Built Environment:

The Centra Supermarket looks clean and tidy as did Bagnalls pub. The Credit Union Building lacks architectural quality but was clean and tidy. The church has clean lines and is well presented. The adjoining parish house has very attractive mature gardens, with large copper beech trees. The church car park looks fine and the school buildings and surrounds are well kept. The Garda Station looks very well, overlooked by a fine large tree. The centre of the village is suffering due to lack of car parking, etc., and a number of commercial premises have seen better days. Cooneys Garage is not attractively painted. The Convent House is probably the most impressive building in the village. Lysters Pub is brightly painted with flower baskets on display. St. Josephs School is very nicely presented with attractive garden and flower bed. The old Protestant Church is a fine old building with its square bell tower. Its surrounds are overgrown, but there is potential here for it to form a central

part in the redevelopment of the centre of the village.

### **Landscaping:**

At the Farthingstown turn, there is a very attractive corner feature with shrubs. There is a small triangular park adjacent to the Mullingar turn which is in need of higher levels of maintenance. There are flower beds at this junction, but these are not well maintained. The river which flows at the Mullingar turn is virtually ignored. Also, the green area between the main road and the Hair Control premises on the Rhode road offers some potential. The area around the community hall could be improved. There is a nice development of hedgerows along western entrance to village.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

Along the Rhode road is a fine display of mature trees set on trimmed verge. There is ideal wildlife habitat with grasslands, hedgerows and variety of trees which offer potential. The graveyard on the Kilbeggan Road could also offer wildlife potential.

### **Litter Control:**

Litter control was reasonably good albeit there was no sign of litter bins.

### **Tidiness:**

All wiring is underground. Public lighting is of the standard style for a busy main route but not really suitable for village servicing. Further into the village is a spot of dereliction. The advertising sign at the Texaco Garage should be removed. 4 recycling bins were located at the Community Hall.

### **Residential Areas:**

Houses in Rahanine Manor Estate are modern and attractive and work seems to have come to a halt in completing the curtain wall between the main road and the estate. There is an extraordinary amount of new housing, and on one of the estates visited, road surfacing was in progress. Most of the houses have open plan front gardens and virtually all are well kept. The central grass area is disappointingly maintained. The grass 'buffer' area between the houses and the curtain wall on the main road is not well maintained, perhaps due to the work in progress on the wall. A fair show of builders 'litter' gave an untidy impression. Derragarra Park on the opposite side is a more mature development and is presented very well, with the exception of one house with boarded up windows and doors. The crescent shaped grass area is trimmed and, along with its mature trees, looks well. Further into the estate, the flower beds which link the front to the inner reaches of the estate provide a taste for the excellent presentation of this part of the estate. The open circular grass area is well maintained with attractive maturing trees. The houses surrounding the central grass area reflect considerable residential pride. The Health Centre which is located here needs a coat of paint on its door surrounds. There is a complete absence of wirescape. Stonebridge Park is part of the current new housing development. Grass at the entrance pillar needs trimming, but housing in general is well presented. All private gardens and verge frontages are in good condition. There was ample evidence of new tree plantation and would generally be regarded as of good suburban practice. The housing in this area is mature generally with well kept gardens. The mature housing on the west side of the village is well presented with attractive grass margins and shrubberies. Brookfield is a very nice and well presented estate in which the central grass area is well maintained as are the roadside grass margins and church walls.

### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

The approach road from Mullingar is quite good; the verges are cut and there is quite a nice variety of young trees planted within the verge area. On the left hand side of the footpath there is quite an amount of kerb weed. The approach from Dublin, starting with the traffic calming signs, is good;

verges on both sides have been trimmed and there is a nice array of young trees planted both left and right. Fencing is of the concrete type. There are no hedges at this point so it is a bit 'open' looking. At the 30mph sign the footpaths commence, and there is quite amount of kerb weed as it approaches the traffic calming facility. The approach from the Athlone side at the traffic calming facility is quite pleasant. There is a well presented verge on the left and mature housing and trees on the right. To the left, the Rochfordsbridge sign is nicely set into a trimmed verge. A good footpath starting at the 30mph sign on the left leads into the built area with an attractive estate of houses at Castle Park with mature trees to the right. Brookfield estate is maturing well with trees and plants at its entrance. Nice groups of tree plantations. The approach from the Rhode side is very natural with fine old trees and hedgerows. It is a little uncared for, although some attempt has been made to rough cut the verges. There is a nice feature of dressed stone wall and cut verge close to the Galway road exit. Village footpaths are of the brick style and on the south side are modern and dished. On the north side they are traditional and broken in places.

### **General Impression:**

Rochfordsbridge has exciting potential and you are commended for your efforts in highlighting its environmental quality. The number of new houses has, in effect, introduced new life into the community and it is this new life which will steer the village's future.