

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **BLESSINGTON**  
County : **WICKLOW**  
Category : **C**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 03-07-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15
Landscaping	40	19
The Built Environment	40	21
Litter Control	40	24
Tidiness	20	10
Residential Areas	30	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	21
General Impression	10	5
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>162</b>

## **Adjudicator's Comments**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Welcome to the new format of the Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for detailed questionnaire and map which were useful during the course of adjudication. The adjudicators look forward to the submission of a five-year plan for Blessington. In this plan try to incorporate features - for example, opening up access to the lake, completion of the square, tree planting programmes, provision of wildlife and measures to counteract the overuse of signage. Also, try to develop a continued better working relationship with Wicklow County Council. Your efforts to improve the town square under the Village and Town Improvement Scheme are to be commended and the adjudicators look forward to seeing this project completed over the coming years.

### **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

There is potential for greater nature conservation in the town. A good starting point would be to identify the wildlife habitats in your catchment area and see what species of birds, animals and fish these attract. Why not invite your local environmental experts and groups to get involved to advise you and provide you with the specialist information you require. The school children in the area also have an important role to play in this in creating awareness. The fact that Blessington is located near the lake is something that should be promoted under the heading of Wildlife and Natural Amenities. Could access be opened up or improved? For example, on the Lake Drive Road, a lane-way leading down towards the lake was noted - could a feature be made of this? Amenity areas that were noted by the adjudicator included open grassed areas in residential park which were relatively well maintained. The entrance to the Leisure Pursuits Centre was also well maintained with an attractive entrance. At the GAA Park, the perimeter grass needs attention.

### **LANDSCAPING**

The adjudicators would like to commend the efforts made to the area around the square, this should be very attractive once completed and the adjudicators look forward to seeing the improvements next year. The area by the Naas Road junction could be better landscaped. Between Beechdale and the junction area where trees had been planted, more landscaping is required. Tree planting was also noted at the Council Engineers Office. The trees that had been planted on the approach roads, particularly from the north, are coming on very well. Try to have the grass cut around these areas. It would be great if further tree planting could take place along the Main Street. This would create a very attractive appearance in years to come.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

There are some very nice attractive buildings in Blessington which were well presented this year. Most of the public buildings were well presented, for example, churches etc. The railings outside the Church needed to be painted. The Downshire House Hotel was looking quite well on the day of adjudication. Most of the petrol stations and forecourt areas were well maintained and litter free. Other premises that were looking well on the day of adjudication were The Tudor Inn, Blessington Pharmacy, Credit Union, Ulster Bank. It is nice to see the improvements at Clarkes Funeral Home. There is still considerable room for improvement in this area. However, particularly in the overuse of signage and the use of plastic signage - try to address this in your five year plan. The Community College was good, apart from weeds at the fencing which was noted on the left hand side of the entrance. Most of the industrial premises were relatively well maintained as was the entrance to the leisure centre. At Iosaf Halla Naomh the cobblelocking was very attractive. The building owned by the VEC was very badly presented and maintained and this needs to be addressed. Also, the signage regarding the fast food take-aways needs to be removed/changed. The overall appearance of the premises is really being lessened by the appearance of the overuse of signage. Simplicity in a large number of places can be just as effective in attracting attention of the passer-bys, so there is no reason to have such an overuse of these signs.

## LITTER CONTROL

Overall, the adjudicators were impressed with the litter control management throughout the town. The Main Street was relatively tidy and the approach road from the North as one comes into the built area was also very attractive and looked very positive in appearance. Overall, quite good performance in this area.

## TIDINESS

Tidiness overall was quite good. The improvements to the square will further improve the appearance of the town. Again, signage is a problem and the adjudicators feel they have to bring attention to the overuse of signage on the approaches which is taking from the overall appearance. Another particularly bad area was the building owned by the VEC with rubble noted by the telephone kiosk outside. Landscaped areas need more attention as grass was overgrown in many cases, particularly on approaches and at the junction on the Naas Road.

## RESIDENTIAL AREAS

A good performance in this area this year, well done. Westpark and Beechdale were very good examples with the open spaces well maintained, good individual efforts. In Beechdale weeds were noted growing along the base of the perimeter wall. Rockery Villas-the signage needs to be replaced. St Josephs Road was also neat and tidy but the path needs to be sorted out on the green area. Overall, a good performance here.

## ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

On the approach road from the south at the sign was well maintained with tree planting noted. Litter was evident where grass had been cut back and generally this area needs a fresh approach in terms of landscaping and presentation - there was just a rough cutting of verges which neither portrayed a neat appearance or promoted wild flowers. The approach road from Naas was quite good, improved by the widening of the road at the school and residential parks. Approaching Blessington from the north, the tree planting on the road was quite good but the grass did need cutting on day of adjudication which took from the overall appearance. However, but there was a clean and litter free appearance coming into the built area for what is a very busy road - well done. Also, the Main Street was relatively litter free. The approach road from the lakes was okay but graffiti was noted on the signage and verges were slightly overgrown.

## GENERAL IMPRESSION

The overall impression for Blessington this year is one where individual efforts are noted. There is however, a need for a more concerted effort which should be a co-operative approach between the Tidy Towns Committee, commercial interests and the local authority as well as residents. In this regard more of an effort must be made within the town and the adjudicator looks forward to the development of a realistic five year plan which will seek to encourage all these groups next year.