

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **LARAGH**
County : **WICKLOW**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 02-07-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	19
Landscaping	40	23
The Built Environment	40	23
Litter Control	40	26
Tidiness	20	11
Residential Areas	30	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	22
General Impression	10	5
TOTAL MARK	300	173

Adjudicator's Comments

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Welcome to the new format of the Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your detailed questionnaire and map which were very helpful during the course of adjudication. The adjudicators look forward to the presentation of your detailed five year work programme. Laragh was looking quite well on day of adjudication. It is a village that is surrounded by a feast of natural and wildlife features and attractive scenery.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

As already stated, Laragh is a village that is surrounded by nature and there are great opportunities to highlight them, particularly in the area of nature walks. The surrounding area also has a noted nature reserve and area of Oak forest. The Oak forest area was noted by the school. Well done. It is nice to see native indigenous trees being encouraged. Could this perhaps be made into a picnic or nature point, with information perhaps developed in conjunction with the school? The fact that the Wicklow Way runs through the village is also important. The village is also fortunate in having the river running through it - could a river walk be developed here? It is nice to see good planting in the surrounding area and also the presence of wild flowers and even Woodbine. There is potential for greater nature conservation in the village, and a good starting point would be to identify the wildlife habitats in your catchment areas and see what species of animals, fish, plants etc. these attract. Why not get involved with your local environmental experts and groups who could advise you and provide you with the specialist information you require.

LANDSCAPING

The open green spaces were very well maintained this year, free of litter and neatly cut. Is there potential for the old well noted near the entrance to the Church to become a feature of the village. The wall had also been cleared near here. With regard to the open green spaces, the plastic seating by the cafés could perhaps be replaced with more traditional materials. The fact that Laragh is surrounded by wooded area might perhaps be used as a theme for the village. For example, fencing, seating and wooden signage might be attractive.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Generally quite good again this year. Lynams and the Wicklow Way Hostel were quite clean and tidy. It is nice to see the new flowers and stone wall at the Wicklow Heather Restaurant. The signage at McCoys is somewhat excessive. The school grounds were very well presented with resurfacing and new extension. It is very nice to see that the new extension is in-keeping with the older building, well done in this regard. Near Glendalough, the attractive new stone wall at the Wicklow Mountains National Park office was noted. The Church and its grounds were also looking very well. Also worth mentioning is the Post Office with good use of flowers, Mitchells and the General Store. Overall, quite good this year.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter control was excellent in the village this year. Well done, particularly in light of the fact that there is a large through-put of visitors through this area. All areas seems to be tidy, including outside McCoys, outside the Post Office, Lynams and along by the Bridge area.

TIDINESS

The overall appearance of the village was one of neatness and tidiness this year. Weed control was well taken care of. The only negative factor seems to be the unco-ordinated approach to signage.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Residential areas were also quite good. In the residential park on the Rathdrum road, planting was noted at the entrance, Perhaps this could be slightly improved. You could encourage the use of wildflowers and perhaps the children could take a role in watering and caring for these. Some earth was on the road at time of adjudication which took from the overall appearance. At the other park by McCoys, fencing could be painted up. There were some well maintained premises throughout the village, for example, the premises with ivy adjacent to the general store, and most of the B&Bs were well presented.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

On the approach road from Rathdrum both verges had been cut back and a nice rockery was noted opposite the Laragh sign. The Wexford/Glendalough signs need to be replaced. Approaching from Annamoe, the verges had been given a rough cut and the signs were in need of a cleaning. Approaching Laragh from Glendalough, the adjudicators noted that the signs had been moved out. Grass verges needed a trimming at the time of adjudication but, having said that, it was nice to see that there was some wild flowers, such as foxgloves, in evidence on this approach. At the signs, grass had been cut. The road leading down to McCoys from the Church was tidy and a good effect had been made at a premises with Beech hedging. The Main Street, bridge area, etc. were also very neat and tidy.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The general impression created in the village this year was one of neatness and tidiness. The fact that it is a busy tourist point did not take from the overall appearance, which is a good indication of co-ordinated effort. Well done.