

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **CALLAN**
County : **KILKENNY**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 17-06-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	22	20
The Built Environment	40	23	22
Landscaping	40	23	23
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16	15
Litter Control	40	30	30
Tidiness	20	13	13
Residential Areas	30	22	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28	28
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	183	179

Callan, Co. Kilkenny

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Not having visited Callan for some time this adjudicator, not unlike last years adjudicator, was equally struck by the potential of the town now that the by-pass has taken most of the heavy traffic away from it. The old town seems to have taken on a new existence which can only be of benefit to those who live there and in terms of its future in the Tidy Towns competition. It is suggested however that there is a need to draw up a 3 to 5 year plan which should be done in conjunction with your Local Authority and other agencies. It is not necessary to hire a consultant to do this. A simple plan with inputs from the agencies involved will suffice. In 1996 you received an in-depth report and the following comments should be taken in conjunction with that report. Your comments on the entry form were most useful on adjudication day but many of the items pointed out in the 1996 report still remain to be done.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Try to act on the comments made in last years report. On adjudication day however all public buildings including churches, schools, fire station etc. were very well presented and in the case of the schools the gardens looked extremely well. Callan is obviously a very historic place and the suggestion in last years report that a tourist /heritage trail be established would be excellent as a first initiative.

LANDSCAPING

The comments in last years report are still applicable. However the tree planting on the Kilmanagh road and the flower bed on the Kilkenny road were noted on adjudication day. The area of the car park would lend itself to judicious tree planting. It is interesting to note that trees have been planted on one side of the main street in Callan and not on the other. Is there a reason for this ? Additional tree planting on the other side would give a boulevard effect and greatly enhance the appearance of the centre of the town. Please do however plant trees in a judicious manner. Too many trees cause clutter while those judiciously planted can soften the landscape. Think also in terms of the planting of flowering shrubs which will give some colour on an all year round basis. It is recognised that the building of the by-pass has been very disruptive to the outskirts of the town but, at the same time, there are a number of areas in town which need attention. One of these is the area adjacent to the County Council offices which is completely overgrown and, and such, is right in the middle of the town. The grounds of Tube Rollers Ltd. is also very overgrown and takes away from what is one of the best approaches to Callan.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

This is a new heading in the competition and the guidelines in the Tidy Towns brochure offer suggestions as to the type of initiatives

you might undertake. These should include the conservation and enhancement of wildlife habitats and the environment. Woodland, rivers, ponds, hedgerows, grass margins, open spaces, graveyards and walls are important in this respect. It would be most useful if there was a local wildlife expert or a member of your committee with experience in this area who could help with the preparation of such a plan. The Kings River area would seem to be an ideal location for an initial project.

LITTER CONTROL

On adjudication day the main areas of Callan were completely litter-free. Unfortunately the side streets did have evidence of litter as did the car park and many of the housing estates. It was a pity to find that while every effort has been made to keep the Main Street and some of the side streets completely litter free other areas of the town did not show the same initiative.

TIDINESS

As already mentioned, it is accepted that the building of the by-pass has been disruptive and has left many areas surrounding the town in a semi-derelict condition. However it is hoped that by next year this aspect of the development will have been improved. Otherwise the town was presented in a neat and tidy manner. In some areas however there was a high incidence of footpath advertising which did not enhance the overall appearance and should also be looked at in terms of being a possible danger to those who are visually or physically impaired. The high incidence of derelict sites should get priority mention in your 5 year plan, as should a positive approach to have them removed.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Comments made in last years report are still applicable. Many housing estates were extremely well presented while others left something to be desired in terms of the upkeep of open spaces and litter. It is suggested that if you have not already done so, you should form Residents Associations in these estates and invite representatives of these Associations on to your committee. Perhaps also a small competition amongst the estates might help to get a higher standard of presentation.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Because of the building of the by-pass some side roads and their environs leave a lot to be desired. However, this extraordinary situation was taken into account on adjudication day. Some commercial premises, particularly in side streets, could do with refurbishment or painting. In the case of the latter and because there are so many of them, consider getting a Colour Consultant to look at the premises concerned. In the normal way many of the paint manufacturing companies may give the use of such a consultant free of charge. On most approaches to the town the verges needed a trimming. This is an area where a FAS scheme could be productively used. Please bear in mind however that trimming should only be done approximately half way back from the edge of the road in order to facilitate the growth of wild flowers. Generally speaking the comments made in last years report under

this heading are still very much applicable and, with a view to future success in the competition, should be given careful consideration by your Committee.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

As a result of the by-pass Callan has now been given a new lease of life and has become a very nice and relaxing place to visit. Make better use of your historical features by introducing a tourist trail and a piece of literature to go with it. Your Local Authority will undoubtedly be carrying out a street refurbishing programme as a result of the disruption of the by-pass. It would be an ideal time to meet with them to discuss other needs of the town in terms of infrastructure which could possibly be carried out at the same time.