

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **FRESHFORD**
County : **KILKENNY**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 17-06-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	30	--
The Built Environment	40	26	--
Landscaping	40	25	--
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16	--
Litter Control	40	28	--
Tidiness	20	14	--
Residential Areas	30	19	--
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	26	--
General Impression	10	7	--
TOTAL MARK	300	191	--

Freshford, Co. Kilkenny

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

We welcome Freshford back into the competition and wish them every success for the future. Although it has a number of environmental problems Freshford, which is a very compact town, has great potential and on the basis of your comments in the entry form you are certainly going about the development of this potential in the correct manner. It is encouraging to see the involvement of Kilkenny County Council, FAS, school children and voluntary workers in your Tidy Towns effort and that you have also undertaken to raise funds. Your newsletter made very interesting reading and indeed many of the items there could form the basis of a 3 to 5 year Tidy Towns plan. In preparing such a plan however please consult with your Local Authority on the up-to-date situation regarding environmental developmental and also involve fully your local Community in any decision making process.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

On adjudication day all your public buildings and in particular both churches looked extremely well. The entrance to the GAA park was also well presented. Unfortunately there are many derelict areas in the town and in particular opposite Woodview estate where with an exception the entire row of buildings were in a very bad state. When living in a small Community it is very difficult to know how such matters can be approached but perhaps this could be done judiciously either directly with the owners or through the Local Authority who do have powers in such matters. One or two derelict houses were also noted in other areas and again the same approach might be used. Most business premises, too numerous to mention, were very well presented and this appears to be a major strength in the Tidy Towns effort.

LANDSCAPING

While the trees on the green look very spectacular other open spaces and approach roads might also be looked at with a view to judiciously planting further trees and flowering shrubs. In the case of the latter do select shrubs which will give colour on an all-year-round basis. The emphasis however is on the word judicious as to do otherwise will only cause clutter whereas selective planting of trees and shrubs will have the effect of softening the landscape. Flowers in bloom always look extremely well but also need constant attention. Please bear this in mind as Tidy Towns Committees sometimes have a tendency to overplant relative to the labour available for maintenance purposes. The open space and tubs on the Freshford road were badly in need of attention on adjudication day. The tubs did not appear to be planted.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

This is a new edition to the competition since you last entered with

the emphasis on the conservation and enhancement of wildlife habitats and the environment. Woodland, rivers, ponds, hedgerows, grass margins, open spaces, graveyards and walls are important habitats. The Committee should try to identify the habitats in your area and determine the appropriate action to conserve and enhance them. Guidelines in the Tidy Towns brochure offer other suggestions as to the type of initiatives you might undertake. If there is a local wildlife expert or a member of your Committee with experience in this area please get them involved. The area of the river which runs through the town and the portion in the immediate vicinity of the church would be an ideal starting point for an environmental project. The area around the church is particularly overgrown and unsightly but any attempt however to clean up this river should bear in mind the needs of the wildlife of the area and if only for that reason alone please take the best advice possible. The green, is of course, the most striking feature of Freshford. On adjudication day it did need some cutting but your comments regarding this in your plan have been noted.

LITTER CONTROL

Except for one or two of the approach roads there was no visible litter in Freshford on adjudication day. In fact the adjudicator observed your litter collection system in operation on that day. In this respect your housing estates were also remarkably free of litter but some attention would need to be paid to the approach roads.

TIDINESS

In the main the town was presented in a neat and tidy manner. Try to encourage commercial premises to remove their hanging signs, particularly of the plastic nature, as they do not do anything for the premises concerned or the town in general. If signs are required and particularly in the Square area these should be of the ornate kind particularly in timber or metal which would further enhance the ambience of the square.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Housing estates were very well presented and it was noted from your entry form that they have formed Residents Associations and are directly involved with your Tidy Towns effort. You are to be congratulated on this. Individual houses were, in the main, excellent. The houses around the Square are very striking. At some time in the future it might be worthwhile considering, with the consent of the owners, the introduction of a colour scheme which would have the effect of each house complimenting the other and further greatly enhance the ambience of the square. Some houses in the housing estates would need to pay attention to their gardens and fencing which, in some cases, was dilapidated.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

All approach roads were in good condition with good surfaces. However and having noted your comments regarding the cutting of verges, some roads could do with further work, in particular the approach road from Callan. Be careful however when trimming back the verges. It is now recommended that these should not be

cut back entirely to the hedge or wall but a narrow strip should be left close to the fence for the purpose of the propagation of wild flowers.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

We look forward next year to seeing a copy of your Tidy Towns 3/5 year plan but, in the meantime, your Committee are to be congratulated on a number of fronts. (1) For re-entering the competition. (2) For the excellent work which you have done this year at very short notice. (3) For getting the involvement of your Local Authority, FAS and many others. There is no other way to succeed in a competition except through total Community effort.