

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **URLINGFORD**
County : **KILKENNY**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 16-06-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	35	34
The Built Environment	40	30	29
Landscaping	40	28	27
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17	16
Litter Control	40	29	29
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	20	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	31	31
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	213	208

Urlingford, Co. Kilkenny

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

This year's adjudicator, like last years, had not been to Urlingford for some time and was greatly surprised and delighted at the way the town was presented. There has obviously been a coming together of all aspects of private and commercial life in Urlingford to achieve these spectacular results. You received an excellent mark in last year's competition. In order to move further ahead the advice is that you formulate a 3 to 5 year plan and that you do this in conjunction with your Local Authority, FAS and local Community groups whose inputs will be invaluable in the formulation of such a plan. When in place aim to do a certain amount each year without overreaching your financial and physical resources. Success does not come overnight in the Tidy Towns competition but is as a result of carefully planned activities done on a yearly basis and reaching a high standard. In the meantime, congratulations to all concerned. You received an in-depth report from last year's adjudicator. The following comments should be read in conjunction with this report and acted upon accordingly.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Urlingford is a very busy commercial town and yet the presentation of commercial premises is of the highest standard. The garages in particular are very well kept as are many other buildings such as the courthouses, the banks, the library and the church. There are still one or two areas of dereliction. In a small Community it is very difficult to know how to approach this. Perhaps one way is to find suggested uses for such buildings which could be put to the owner or that some arrangement could be worked out with the Local Authority who have powers in such matters. Where possible try to influence shopkeepers and garages to reduce their signage particularly the plastic kind or where they are necessary, encourage them to use nicely designed timber or wrought iron signs.

LANDSCAPING

Your work at the junction of the Kilkenny road is excellent as are your flower beds and cultivation of open spaces. Do however consider the judicious planting of further trees and shrubs, in the case of the latter, those which will give you some colour on an all-year-round basis. The emphasis here is on judicious planting as to plant too many only creates clutter where as careful planting will have the effect of softening the landscape. In this event you should consult with your Local Authority engineer, Coillte or any other qualified person who can give advice on such a matter. Perhaps there is such a person amongst your Committee.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Your excellent work to-date has been noted. This is new category in the competition. The objective is to encourage local groups to enhance woodland, rivers, ponds, hedgerows, grass margins,

open spaces, graveyards and walls and other types of initiatives in the interests of the conservation and enhancement of wildlife habitats. For 1998 you should seek to expand where possible your existing activities under this heading. The comments made by last year's adjudicator might be a starting point.

LITTER CONTROL

The town was relatively litter free on adjudication day. It is an area which needs constant monitoring but you seem to have largely overcome this problem in what is a very busy town.

TIDINESS

The comments by last year's adjudicator under this heading are still applicable, but in general the town looked exceptionally well.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The residents of St. Mary's Avenue are to be congratulated on the way the estate and the open space has been presented. The other housing estates in the town also looked well and allowances were made for one where building work is obviously continuing. Private residences were excellent. Many are outstanding with great pride in their gardens and general presentation. Congratulations to all concerned.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

All roads in and around the town were very well presented on adjudication day and the new completed stone walls were noted. Road surfaces are good and verges of most approach looked well. However, grass verges need constant attention but please bear in mind that there is a new school of thought that says they should not be cut right back to the wall or hedge. An area should be left to the wall or hedge for the propagation of wildflowers. The suggested rule of thumb therefore is that you only cut your grass verges back approximately half way.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The community of Urlingford is doing excellent work and in the estimation of this adjudicator, it will not be long until they will be in the running for County, Regional and possibly National awards.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (12/8/97)

Landscaping around the town is truly impressive; well done to all concerned. Some thought might be given to reconstructing the stone wall located just before the nameplate on the Portlaoise entrance to the town. During the second adjudication the nameplate on the Kilkenny Road was obscured somewhat by overgrown vegetation. The windows of the derelict property near the fire station need to be reboarded. A little weeding is necessary out the New Line road particularly along the footpath. The kerbstones to the footpath here and out the Mill Road are old and most attractive and should be retained upon any refurbishment. (Perhaps they could be relocated closer to the centre). Infill development looks well. The green area marking the entrance to Emerald Gardens could do with a little more

landscaping. An appropriate long term project might be the reconstruction of stone wall out the Mill Road, particularly around the cemetery. Some tree planting inside the stone wall on the left hand side of the road beyond the Community Centre (which is on the right) would do much to soften the impact of the outbuildings which can be seen on approaching the village centre from this road. The large white walls across from the Community Centre should be kept freshly whitewashed. The derelict looking premises beside The Forge is an unfortunate development. The roadside boundary wall to the school on the Main Road could be cleaned and/or painted. Some consideration might be given to planting the wire and post fencing on the southern entrance to the town with a combination of beech and hawthorn hedgerow for greater enclosure.