

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **SALTMILLS**
County : **WEXFORD**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 05-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	20	20
The Built Environment	40	18	16
Landscaping	40	21	20
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15	12
Litter Control	40	29	24
Tidiness	20	14	10
Residential Areas	30	15	15
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	20	16
General Impression	10	4	4
TOTAL MARK	300	156	137

Saltmills, Co. Wexford

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The application form provided information on the projects but this must be supported by a thorough report highlighting the goals and objectives of the Committee so as to understand the larger picture of the Committee's role in the village. The general approach is one of a strong control over the entire village and new projects were easily separated from past projects. The level of maintenance to past projects ensures a very balanced approach to both past and current projects.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The presentation of all the buildings along the main street is very well handled with the walls to the front gardens gaining a focus of attention with the fine displays of bedding plants. The Pound creates a pleasant internal space and commands an important location at the exit point of the town. Its simple treatment reinforces the quiet virtues of the town, while the sign at the gate is helpful in telling uninformed public that they can enter. Improvements to the well, such as the introduction of a natural stone wall and removal of the concrete, would integrate this with the Pound. A sign highlighting that the water is drinkable would allow this facility to be used by visitors. There is a very pleasant random street character established by the housing as it rises over the hill. The new information kiosk may be a bit too visible on the quiet estuary sands and though parking is not really a problem on the sand, car parking should be further away from the bridge.

LANDSCAPING

The new plantings along the road from the bridge are beginning to mature and add colour to the entry sequence of the town. Some larger native trees on both sides of this road would set off the whole area beside the bridge and integrate the new picnic area. The colourful display of flowers along the main road is an effective way of linking up the many properties on the street. The treatment of the intersection beside the pump is spectacular and effective in improving traffic safety. This is a strong splash of colour. The seats provided around the area are a pleasant facility, offering a necessary resting place. The entry to the town would seem to be better handled beside the bridge and this may be as a result of more significant plantings rather than just flower beds.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

This is an area of the 3-5 year report which can emphasise the approach that is being taken to develop or extend this resource. One of the problems with this issue is not to make forced efforts within the environment. There is a very strong connection with the surrounding countryside in this village which provides ample opportunities for addressing this element. Consideration should

be given to the policy of planting more native plants and not as many exotics or short term plants. The use of wild flowers is often both easier to maintain and provides longer periods of colour. The provision of the kiosk is a helpful example of how the wildlife and cultural associations are facilitated. The quietness of the village adds to the wildlife experience in that there was a wonderful sound of birds to be heard. The future treatment of some of the flower beds will provide an opportunity and to integrate and extend concerns associated with this issue.

LITTER CONTROL

All areas were free of litter which implies an effective litter policy. Litter bins to be placed in strategic areas as they can be effective in reducing the continual attention required at litter source points (i.e. re-cycling bins).

TIDINESS

In general the town was very tidy, however there is a need to control the loose gravel on road surfaces such as at the junctions and also the kerbs. These are important in defining the edges of the roadway. The beach was particularly clean.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Most areas are tended and very presentable. The Tea Rooms ensure a cottage environment, while the edges of all gardens through being defined by small walls and fences, do contribute to a cohesive environment.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The improvements made to the junction at the pump ensure a very presentable junction, just try to keep the loose gravel under control as it detracts from the presentation of the flowers. Entry roads are very fine and have good vegetation cover associated with them. Perhaps the only addition that detracts from the entry into the town is the new kiosk which may be placed here for good visibility, but does not add to the landscape setting.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

There is a good focus on establishing a village character. At present there is need for more permanent plantings to become effective in establishing a distinctive environment. The entry over the bridge is a memorable setting and more attention should be given to integrating it with the surroundings through native plantings.