

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **GLENEALY**
County : **WICKLOW**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 10-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	29	27
The Built Environment	40	23	23
Landscaping	40	22	20
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	19	18
Litter Control	40	27	26
Tidiness	20	13	12
Residential Areas	30	18	17
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	24	23
General Impression	10	6	5
TOTAL MARK	300	181	171

Glenealy, County Wicklow

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for your completed questionnaire, map and detailed work programme, which was very helpful during the course of adjudication. You appear to have good support from the community. The adjudicators wish the Glenealy Development Group the best of luck. There is a lot more heritage that could be developed in Glenealy and the surrounding area and could be used as a theme for the development of additional features in the village. This heritage could include, for example, the church in the graveyard, which you have already recognised, well done; the fact that there is an old estate nearby; is there any farming heritage or connection with the railway which might provide some industrial heritage that could be built upon? Try also to consider the use of Irish where possible, for example, what is the meaning of Glenealy and has it any significance. In terms of accessibility, you have good surfacing, but there could be additional seating along the main road, particularly for the elderly. The adjudicators commends the use of litter patrols, try to continue this.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Every town in Ireland is different - each has its own unique history, topography, buildings and even use of building materials - but the most important town in Ireland is your own. Much of the overall impression of any town is dictated by its buildings. Each building is unique in its own way and collectively these buildings contribute to the character of the town. In the case of Glenealy there is a need for improvement in this category, not just the buildings but the open spaces adjacent to buildings can have a tremendous impact on the overall presentation. The public buildings were well presented, for example, the church and grotto were well maintained at time of adjudication. The GAA building itself had been freshly painted and the community centre was not too bad. It was good to see that some weeds had been cleared - try to paint the perimeter walls. The attractive gate house up near the Christmas Tree Farm is still derelict. It was good to see that work was taking place at an open space near Glenealy Garage. There are still sensitive sites throughout the village, including, to the left of TOP Garage. The school grounds were well presented. Finally, at Glenealy Lodge, try to remove the plastic canopy, which is torn and dated.

LANDSCAPING

Generally, open spaces throughout Glenealy were well maintained this year, and well cared for, well done. It is also good to see that open spaces in residential areas are well cared for. Tree planting is coming on well in the GAA Park and provides a feature. The Cemetery grounds was not too bad, generally, and it was nice to see that the area outside was well maintained. The triangle area had been planted. The grassed area adjacent and opposite Gleann Chill was well maintained. The grassed area to the left of Glenealy Lodge was well maintained at time of adjudication.

Excellent work has been done on the wall on the approach road from Rathdrum; try to have the grass landscaped and cleared for next year. The entrance into O'Reilly-Hyland estate could be much improved, while the entrance near the forestry was a much better presentation.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Glenealy is blessed with plenty of hedgerows and a good mix of mature trees, both in open spaces and forested areas. The Beech hedging and grassed areas are quite attractive, but needed clipping at time of adjudication, so it was nice to see that this had been started on the day of adjudication. There are plenty of forested areas nearby and the fact that Deputys Pass Nature Reserve is nearby should be seized upon as an opportunity to expand under this section. Potters River is a nice feature as well. Conserving nature is a new venture for many towns and can appear daunting at first. The adjudicators recognise that environmental programmes can take time to get up and running and even longer to assess their success. This section of the report requires an involvement of all groups, including schools in the village. The emphasis is on the conservation and enhancement of wildlife habitats and the environment. Woodlands, rivers, ponds, hedgerows, open spaces, graveyards and walls are important habitats. The committee needs to identify the habitats in their area and then determine the appropriate actions to conserve and enhance these habitats. Guidelines in the Tidy Towns book offers other suggestions as to the type of initiatives you might undertake. Is there a local wildlife expert, or a member of the community with experience in this area, that your committee can draw on? In preparing an environmental programme for the village, there should be a year-round participation in environmental protection and promotion involving all members of the community and providing access for all. The next step is to identify what habitats are in your area - are these woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, or other habitats such as cemeteries, walls etc. Prepare a survey and map, showing the areas of wildlife importance and areas of potential importance. Other steps involved in the preparation of the environmental programme for Glenealy would include identification of species list of the flora and fauna in the area; preparation of a wildlife management plan as part of the area development plan; work to be carried out including conservation projects, wildlife gardens, areas of conservation, access, tree planting, information areas etc. This must be carried out in sympathy with the local landscape and must not be overwhelming visually, or environmentally.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter control was quite good throughout Glenealy this year and is much improved. It is nice to see plenty of litter bins in evidence. Overall, a good performance this year. Maintain the vigilance and congratulations on the litter patrols that you have in place.

TIDINESS

A fairly good presentation and better than last year, with open spaces well cared for and grass verges had been cut back. Try to

watch the weeds which were beginning to overtake the car park of the GAA, and weeds were also noted in the car park adjacent to Gleann Chill. The Dublin sign in the village needs to be replaced also, as it is dated and faded. Grassed areas were generally well maintained with litter or no weeds along the main road, congratulations on the effort here as it creates a very tidy appearance. Some graffiti, however, was noted at the telephone kiosk.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Again, a very good presentation under this and there is good evidence that there is strong community spirit throughout the village. The adjudicators wish the Residents Association in Carraig View well in their efforts, as there was good presentation and it is obvious that this association is working well. Gleann Chill had an excellent presentation this year, well done, with very good individual effort and attractive landscaped areas well presented. Ballyfree Crescent and the other residential areas were also well presented this year. Overall, a very good performance under this category. The Gatekeepers house at the railway junction was very well presented.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

On the approach road from Rathnew, one of the 30 MPH signs needs to be replaced, there was overgrowth by the Glenealy sign, meaning the nameplate was not visible - this sign itself also needs to be replaced. The verges had not been cut back at time of adjudication, but were not too bad. Approaching Glenealy from Ashford, the left hand side had been cut back, but unfortunately, this exposed considerable litter. The right hand side was not cut back at time of adjudication. Try to paint the poles which were rusted. Approaching Glenealy from Rathdrum, verges had been cut back and there is evidence of efforts and maintenance taking place, with shrubs noted. Some signs need to be either fixed or repainted along this approach road and provides a nice vista into Deputy's Pass. Over time, you might consider the following measures in your overall five-year development plan including kerbing of grassed areas where they meet the road way; secondly, traffic calming measures, as traffic in the area was considerable; thirdly, given the fact that you have a school right in the centre perhaps an option of cycling lanes for school children might be considered.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Overall, the adjudicators were happier with the presentation this year compared with last year. You have shown that you can achieve works with good efforts in residential areas and taking on projects for example, the rebuilding and improvements to the wall area on the approach from Rathdrum. Remember that you have to consider all aspects and headings of the competition, including buildings. Good luck for next year.