

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **ROUNDWOOD**  
County : **WICKLOW**  
Category : **B**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 08-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	28	26
The Built Environment	40	20	23
Landscaping	40	24	20
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15	15
Litter Control	40	30	28
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	18	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	24	22
General Impression	10	4	5
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>169</b>

## **Roundwood, County Wicklow**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Thank you for your completed questionnaire, map and three year plan, which was very helpful during the course of adjudication. The adjudicators enjoyed their visit to Roundwood and look forward to future improvements next year. Some of the initiatives you outlined in the development plan are to be commended, in particular, the development of Litter Cadets in the village. The visibility of the Irish language was in emphasis in this years adjudication, as is accessibility for the disabled and the elderly - this includes the provision of seating etc. It is good to see the use of Irish on a few premises, try to expand on this and incorporate this into future action plans. Also, the historical and cultural uniqueness of the village should be considered, e.g. place names. In your plan you must give attention to all areas and categories of the Tidy Towns Competition, and in this regard, improvements will be needed in the presentation of buildings. The adjudicators noted some new buildings being developed, try to ensure that these are developed in a traditional and sympathetic manner. In general, the premises would benefit from additional painting - try to look at the possibility of innovative colour schemes for the village.

### **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 unique character of the town. This section considers a number of factors under the Built Environment, including Presentation of Buildings; evidence of bilingualism in signage; conservation of heritage buildings; treatment of undeveloped/derelict sites; condition of public toilets and accessibility; street furniture; appropriate use in mix of materials, textures and colours, and accessibility in general. Overall, there is room for improvement in the presentation of a number of commercial buildings along the Main Street. During this years adjudication several new developments were taking place, which took from the overall appearance. It is felt that a lot of the existing premises could be improved, even through painting, or removal of inappropriate signage, for example, the Village Take Away signage is not in-keeping with the village. Some improvements that should be undertaken during the course of adjudication were to paint up the Garden Café; Robbies Tavern could also be generally cleaned up, as weeds were noted to the side of this building; try to, perhaps, paint up the Parish Hall. It is nice to see the building up and running by the craft shop, Harvest Loom; again, additional landscaping is needed around this building. The Church, Credit Union and Roundwood Inn, all looked well, as did The Coach House. However, the adjudicators strongly recommend that there is an overuse of flowers at The Coach

House - try to reduce the number of containers and concentrate on a few well maintained and presented boxes/baskets - it takes from the overall appearance of the building itself. The National School was freshly painted. Roundwood Stores was okay and flowers were noted at Kavanaghs.

## **LANDSCAPING**

There is limited evidence of landscaping throughout Roundwood this year. Existing areas, in places, were in need of attention, which detracted from the overall appearance; for example, at the triangle to the Sally Gap, the grassed verges had a rough cut but the triangle itself, in general, was very untidy with long grass - illegal signposting here. The triangle to the Newtownmountkennedy turn, again, illegal signs were noted, grass could be better presented in this area - could this area be enhanced in any way? It was nice to see planting and flowering by the Parish Hall. The Church grounds were very nicely presented, well done. The entrance into Vartry Lakes Golf Club could be improved, but the efforts made to date are to be commended. It is strongly recommended that you remove the plant containers by the Garden Café and replace them with more appropriate containers. Having said that, the street is generally well maintained and between the Roundwood Inn and the residential park is very neat and tidy. Could perhaps the fencing opposite the main shops be improved? Appearance, maintenance and presentation of the public spaces including amenity areas, open spaces and footpaths etc. are a vital aspect of civic design quality. Poor presentation of public areas can, and does, take away from the high standards achieved by individual properties. Unique furniture and planting containers should reflected the tradition of Irish towns. You should strive for a good natural urban planting with a mix of trees of different ages, as trees have a soothing effects against buildings.

## **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

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. While the number of natural habitats within the village may be limited the surrounding area provides much consideration for development. The picnic area on the Ashford Road is a nice feature but could this area be enhanced, particularly in light of the fact that it is a wooded area and also the fact that you are close to the lakes. The adjudicators noted your plans for building on this relationship and look forward to developments in this regard. 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. Environmental work is a balance between developmental needs

and wildlife imperatives. The conflict between the two can be resolved by creative consultation and informed common sense. Entrants who show they have grasped this and indicate they are prepared to continue over the years will be suitably rewarded.

## **LITTER CONTROL**

This section considers the absence of litter and dumping; the management of prevention and control of litter; measures to promote anti litter awareness in the community; provision of litter bins, for example, at sensitive spots, bus stops etc.; and evidence of regular clean-up campaigns. In general, Roundwood had good litter control this year, congratulations in this regard. On the approach roads and along the Main Street, there was no evidence of bad areas of litter. In relation to litter control, try to establish what the local authority are proposing to do under the Action Against Litter campaign. A very good performance in this regard, congratulations.

## **TIDINESS**

The tidy appearance of Roundwood was quite good this year apart from the presentation of some buildings, which took from the overall appearance. The directional signposts were either new or clean. It is good to see that the Coach House car park is much improved, well done in this regard and down to such small items such as the pump had been painted up near the school. Illegal signs were noted for a particular craft shop, which should be removed and replaced with standardised authorised signage. Some buildings on the Main Street take from an otherwise tidy appearance.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

This includes the overall site. Front gardens, outbuildings, rear gardens, boundary walls are all considered in the presentation of maintenance of houses under this category. In this regard, some excellent individual efforts were noted throughout the village this year. Two individual premises noted were Wayside and the cottage near the Sally Gap turn off. Within the residential park, no nameplate or sign was noted, try to incorporate bilingualism here; some resurfacing is needed and kerbing needed in places. The park was generally litter free, however, some gravel was noted dumped on grass in a corner and some weeds were noted by kerbing. Overall, though there is evidence of good individual effort.

## **ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS**

Approaching from Annamoe, it would be nice to see bilingualism incorporated onto the new Welcome signs; landscaping is needed near the GAA and at the sign nameplate; grass was not cut back. The approach needs more attention. On the approach road from Ashford, the grass was generally overgrown, for example, at the sign and both sides here needed attention. The picnic area is nice, but again, it could be enhanced - flowers were noted, well done. Approaching Roundwood from Dublin, the verges had been cut but the triangle area was very disappointing. There is no point in having landscaped areas unless they are going to be

maintained - try to keep this in mind. Approaching the village from Newtownmountkennedy, verges had not been cut, nor had they been cut on approaching the village from Lough Dan, as grass was overgrown at the sign. Also, a nice stone wall was noted here on the right hand side and perhaps this could be cleared of grass.

### **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

This covers the overall integrated impression of the village and also provides an opportunity to reward exceptional effort in overcoming a difficult problem. The adjudicators recognise that problems do exist in all towns and villages but in this competition - there are no marks for aspirations or complaints, marks are available for achievements. In the case of Roundwood, there is a need for more of an effort, which needs the support from all sectors of the community and local authority. The adjudicators look forward to seeing further improvements next year, and in particular, improvements to the built environment.