

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **SHILLELAGH**  
County : **WICKLOW**  
Category : **B**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 14-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	32	33
The Built Environment	40	26	26
Landscaping	40	28	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17	17
Litter Control	40	23	24
Tidiness	20	13	13
Residential Areas	30	22	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	26	24
General Impression	10	4	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>190</b>

## **Shillelagh, County Wicklow**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Thank you for your completed entry form. The adjudicators were disappointed in not receiving more detail, nor was a map provided highlighting improvements made in the village this year. The adjudicators were also disappointed not to receive your year development plan. It should be noted that there are no marks for complaints or aspirations but only for achievements. Try to let us know of the works that have been completed and highlight these on a map. Your plan should be simple and realistic, covering 3 - 5 pages, together with a map, try to get a greater input from the local authority, the business community, residents and schools. The plan itself can be prepared by the committee. The visibility of the Irish language is in emphasis in this years adjudication, and you should try to expand on this, for example, what is the significance of Siol Ealaigh.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

As stated in previous reports, Shillelagh has a unique architectural heritage. 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. In considering the main aspects of buildings, there are two factors to be kept in mind, one is the quality of the individual structure, i.e., its presentation and materials used and secondly is the building in its overall context. Insensitive changes to individual buildings can destroy the overall character of the street. Buildings on corners, or at the end of streets assume greater civic design importance because of their location. Where such buildings are modified insensitively, or allowed to fall into disrepair, it can have serious visual implications. The adjudicators were disappointed not to see more improvements made this year in light of the comments made in last years report. Areas that need to be improved include the Village Takeaway; a number of derelict buildings; St. Fiacs; the white building in the residential estate is still not painted; why not paint the top of the Town Hall, it is a beautiful building; the seat outside Taylors needs to be painted. The Church of Ireland was very well presented, congratulations, and outside Sandes Supermarket was litter free; the Centra Supermarket was being painted at time of adjudication which was also positive to see. Overall, though, there is considerable room for improvement under this category.

### **LANDSCAPING**

Landscaping throughout Shillelagh was very good this year, which was good to see. In the park, new trees were noted; the pond had been cleared and new seating was noted. The fountain area was extremely disappointing this year and was an extremely bad site as litter was strewn around this area. At the foot bridge near the

park, some litter was evident. The sensitive site by Shillelagh Motors continues to detract from the overall appearance of the town. It was nice to see the shrubbery by the Town Hall, well done in this regard. Nice shrubberies were also noted by Sandes Supermarket.

## **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

Shillelagh could, potentially, perform very well under this section. There are a number of rivers and streams flowing through the village which provide important habitats, regrettably, these were very disappointing as both streams need to be cleaned out at the bridge and at the seat by the Derry River litter was evident. Why not put a bin in here. Hedgerows also provide important wildlife habitats. 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 coastal habitats, 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 Shillelagh 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 disappointing in Shillelagh this year. Litter was noted on the left hand side on the approach road from Tinahely again. Why not put bins in here? It was noted outside the Post Office. Sprinklings were noted in the car park of the park, and also in the car park of Celtic Stars AFC. It was also very bad by the fountain in the park, which is one of your centrepieces. Litter was also noted on the Coolattin/Carnew junction and by the seating near the bottle banks. Improvements are needed in this area.;

## **TIDINESS**

Apart from aspects of litter, tidiness in the village is quite good. Try to consider the removal of overhead wires in the long term plan.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

There is very good evidence of individual effort in residential areas, helped, no doubt, by the attractive granite buildings. Try however, to tackle litter in the residential park as small sprinklings were noted. A few good individual efforts were noted in this park also.

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

Overall, it wasn't too bad. On the approach from Tinahely, the left hand side was quite good, but litter was evident and the right hand side, the line of cottages creates a good visual effect - the Tinahely sign still needs to be replaced however. Approaching from Clonegal, this is a beautiful Oak Tree lined road, which is excellent, neat and tidy. However, closer to the town small sprinklings of litter were evident. Approaching from Tullow, it was okay. Try to replace the sign for Ballynulta. The shrubbery was a nice feature but try to watch the weeds. Approaching from Carnew was much improved but the sign needs to be painted. New paths, walls and resurfacing have helped greatly to improve the tidiness of this approach.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

The general impression for Shillelagh was disappointing for a village that has such unique character and attractive visual appearance. The adjudicators were disappointed to see little or no improvements on the comments made last year. They were also disappointed to see no detailed plan has been submitted. Try to work on this for 1998.