

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **CARLOW**  
County : **CARLOW**  
Category : **F**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 18-06-98

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1998	Mark Awarded 1997
Overall Developmental Approach	50	38	38
The Built Environment	40	35	33
Landscaping	40	31	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	21
Litter Control	40	30	31
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	23	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	30	30
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>229</b>

## **Carlow, County Carlow**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Carlow is welcome to the 1998 Tidy Towns Competition. Congratulations on the high standard of presentation again this year in Carlow. It is helpful if you can let the adjudicators have information about your short to medium term objectives for your work. It is good to have a three to five year plan which is annually under review. The close liaison which you have with other agencies is helpful in this regard in terms of planning and carrying out your work. A lot of new development is taking place in Carlow. The rivers are valuable resources, particularly in terms of amenity and natural wildlife and these opportunities should be exploited to the full. The wildlife sanctuary on the river Barrow is to be commended in this regard. Well done on achieving a high standard of presentation again this year. It was a little difficult to read the map you submitted and to identify the locations of the sites you particularly wished to draw to the adjudicator's attention.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

To some extent the standard of presentation is mixed this year. Several public buildings are extremely well presented. In addition to those mentioned in last year's report, the Presentation Convent and the Poor Clare Monastery Church are examples of other buildings to be commended. Some buildings such as the Fire Station could benefit from a facelift. Many business premises on the shopping streets looked very well. The presentation of the Estate Agents premises on Dublin Street is most appropriate for that building. The new shopfronts are generally very well presented but there is a tendency on the part of some to be a little over elaborate in terms of the amount of features and size of some of them. It is good to keep shopfronts fairly simple and to resist any features above eaves level. The simplicity of the Superquinn premises is most commendable. It was regrettable however that the planted beds were not

doing well on the day of adjudication. In the coming years it is expected that very few of the more ugly plastic signs of the past will remain. Keep up this good work. The new developments opposite Superquinn and along Leinster Street are to be commended and hopefully when completed will benefit the riverside and make the best of its amenity value. There are still some derelict sites and buildings around Carlow. Has any consideration been given to the future of the derelict cottage by the river opposite Poacher's Gate housing development? The condition of the Leix Pharmacy and the building opposite it on Kennedy street which are on pivotal sites is regrettable and the Timber and Cement premises is very poorly presented. Some other sites and buildings around the town, particularly adjoining the river opposite Doogues and The Thatch require attention but your achievements along with that of the UDC regarding derelict sites and buildings over recent years is to be highly commended. As stated last year, the standard of presentation of the industrial premises is varied. Lapple and Braun being the most well presented.

## **LANDSCAPING**

The standard of presentation in some areas was excellent and in some areas greater maintenance was necessary. Some of the beds at the fountain, for example, were in need of attention, as too was some of the hard landscaping and the area in front of the Veterinary Hospital. There are attractive tubs around the town but there is scope for more features such as these and for planting at various incidental open spaces. The main roundabout at the Highfield Residential Estate and Esso station is very well presented. It would be good if resources would permit for such work to be extended to other roundabouts. The scheme at Governey Park where the Madonna and Child sculpture is located is most commendable but on the other hand it is unfortunate that the amenity area by the River Barrow near the carpark is totally neglected with broken timber posts, neglected grass and a large gathering of litter. This is a well located space and the

best should be made of its do that the amenity value of the river can be enjoyed to the full. Do try and concentrate on this space next year. The bases of some of the trees along Green Lane were found to be weedy.

## **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

Carlow should be in a good position to make the most of its entry in this new category over the coming years due to the presence of the two rivers passing through the town with their associated habitats. It would be helpful if you can survey and plan for this aspect of your work and to submit these details with next year's application. During adjudication some duck were seen on the river near the carpark. Do try to involve the schools in this work, as you have in the litter campaigns and seek expert advice from the Conservation Volunteers or local experts.

## **LITTER CONTROL**

The anti-litter poster competition and use of flyers are good methods of creating awareness and gaining co-operation in this regard. It is appreciated that it is extremely difficult to achieve a litter free environment in the larger centres and there is no doubt that your efforts are making an impact. Carlow however still does have a problem with litter (there was a scattering of litter in most places). Litter was noted in the housing estates, along streets and carparks, in alleyways, and at general gathering places such as at the fountain. A few areas were fairly clear of litter. The Gowran road was almost clear of litter from the town as far as the VEC. It is appreciated that in the absence of your efforts the problem would be much more serious. Keep up the good work.

## **TIDINESS**

The standard of presentation was very high in some areas, particularly along the Gowran approach road where there are some very well presented Guesthouses and private houses. The main shopping

streets also created a fairly good impression. Large advertising hoardings which are at some locations around the town are too big and unsuited to the streetscape and every effort should be made to have them removed. Where construction work was taking place and where buildings were derelict or a little neglected, the impression was less positive particularly as regards side entrances and incidental spaces and gates.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

The standard of presentation was found not to be dissimilar to last year with some areas being very well presented whereas others were in need of attention. Some of the trees at the open space at Cherrymount, off O'Brien road had been destroyed, these should be replaced and some shrubs and flowers planted. The grass here had only been partly mown. Some of the verges and kerbsides were seriously in need of weed clearance in the estates off O'Brien Road and in and around the town. The goalposts created a poor impression. Attention to this area would be well worthwhile. The entrances to one or two developments, for example, Highfield were very attractively planted. Askea Community Centre and church were well presented this year.

## **ROADS STREETS AND BACK AREAS**

The standard of presentation is mixed as regards the approach roads. It is difficult to achieve a consistent high standard throughout but do try to achieve this over the coming years. The roundabouts while in good condition would benefit from additional planting which would define the town. The planting at the Esso Station roundabout is to be highly commended in this regard. Some of the back areas and streets are in need of attention and this has been referred to elsewhere in the report.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

The general impression of Carlow is positive - do continue to encourage all sectors of the community to become involved in caring for the environment. Try

to encourage simplicity in presentation and the avoidance of too much signage on buildings. Well done on your activities to date and associated increase in marks.

## **SECOND ADJUDICATION**

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**(14/08/98)**

Carlow's very high marking in the competition reflects continuous hard work and achievement: the following comments should be taken in that context. Litter remains a real problem; the first adjudicator has remarked that litter was seen in housing estates, streets, car parks, alleyways and at general gathering places. Such was again the case on second adjudication day - to which should be added the riverbank. It is sincerely hoped that this central component of the competition will be very actively addressed, or the town will remain as a distinguished entrant near the top but never quite at the top. Allied to this is of course the need for general tidying-up of the more obvious places where litter collects - at derelict or vacant sites, at places where developmental work has temporarily ceased, and in little nooks and corners which can not fail to come to the attention as one walks through the town. The second adjudicator echoes the plea for a more detailed map: it is unlikely that important sites will be missed, but it is a possibility, given the size of the town, when they are not marked. For example, the wonderful new Croppies memorial is shown, but the Workhouse Burial Ground is not. The partially opened new by-pass (not marked either) was seen to be already in process of landscaping, which is most welcome. Incidentally, congratulations to those who produced the fascinating 1798 bi-Centenary booklet.