

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **WELSHISLAND**
County : **OFFALY**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 10-07-1999

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	29	31
The Built Environment	40	26	26
Landscaping	40	30	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	14	13
Litter Control	40	34	34
Tidiness	20	16	15
Residential Areas	30	23	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28	28
General Impression	10	6	7
TOTAL MARK	300	206	205

Welshisland, Co. Offaly

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you very much for your completed entry form; it provided a very honest appraisal of the situation with respect to establishing the Tidy Town policy and even though it is a small group, the results have been very effective. The community should seek to establish a theme to tie the various parts of the village together as it is quite a long village without any significant centre. This perhaps is beginning to develop with the planting of the 2,000 trees. The drop in marks is a reflection on not having a development plan for three to five years. This is an important aspect of the Competition and is very helpful in establishing priorities and in adjudication for the specific year. Hopefully this is a short term drop and we would see such a document in the near future.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The village is expanding in ribbon development form and as such is very dependent upon the front gardens; all the houses are very well cared. The church is very pleasant and very well cared for as is the graveyard. There is very good connection between the painting of walls to the church and the school and this allows for a strong integration and effective improvement signalling an important area in the village. The school perhaps could do with a bit of painting and again needs a strong theme.

LANDSCAPING

There is no large public space in the village or for that matter along any part of the road and though this is not essential the landscaping efforts are more concentrated on specific spaces such as around the school. The committee must be complimented for the setaside approach where grass is only cut where specifically required and this should be explored more fully. The graveyard was very well cared for. Perhaps the most important thing from a landscape point of view in this village is to find a unifying theme to tie all the different parts of the village together and to seek a long term planting plan which should

have less variation in the selection of species so that there is greater unity along the linear space of the road. The sponsorship for the 2,000 trees is an excellent idea and hopefully there is not too much variation in species selection along the roadway so that the same scale mass and canopy can be acquired in later years.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

This is an important aspect in the competition and though your answer for “a let alone” system may be very appropriate, there is a need to express how this might be handled and presented in the Development plan for three to five years. The school’s policy of setting aside must be complimented as it increases the rural context of the site and is a direction towards the more gentle landscape setting. You should also look at how hedges are managed.

LITTER CONTROL

There are few sources in this village and as such little litter was seen and all must be complimented in ensuring that this category is well maintained

TIDINESS

The village is very tidy and ordered. The painting of the walls around the church and graveyard reinforce this tidy appearance as to the distinctive areas of long grass and mowed grass beside each other. In thinking about long term concepts of tidiness, one of the issues is how the village will unify its basis and a great variety of trees planted in long lines is not as effective as creating a strong alley of a similar species; when planting occurs in the coming seasons, this should be considered so as to get a strong overall impression.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

This is a very strong aspect of the village; there is obviously very good care for all the houses to a very high quality. There are no public spaces associated with these residential areas as all amenity space belongs to the private gardens. Churchview is very well maintained.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

There is really only one road in this village and it is well presented. It is perhaps important to keep the rural character and to adapt a strong approach to maintaining the hedges to maintain that rural connection which could be so easily lost. Entry to the village on the various roads is pleasant and understated. Perhaps consideration in the wildlife category will add further thought as to how to present the roads. Is it through the use of more wild flowers and managing the hedges?

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Welshisland is attractive and displays very strong commitment. Perhaps the village should investigate how it can better present the rural setting and allow for appropriate treatment along the road edge without losing the benefit of the roadside hedges. The school and graveyard offer tremendous opportunities in this respect and would again build on the identity of a focus point for the village.