

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **LARAGH**
County : **WICKLOW**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 08-07-1999

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	32	30
The Built Environment	40	24	23
Landscaping	40	26	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	20
Litter Control	40	13	28
Tidiness	20	13	13
Residential Areas	30	20	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	23	23
General Impression	10	6	7
TOTAL MARK	300	178	189

Laragh, County Wicklow

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for your completed entry form, map of the proposed Millennium Project, map of the town and outline of the 3 year plan. Good luck in relation to the Millennium Project. The village of Laragh is well maintained and well presented this year. The village is blessed with a number of unique features which would be the envy of other towns, such as the river, surrounding National Park together with Glendalough and wooded areas. In relation to your 3 year plan try to incorporate all aspects of the competition. In this regard you may consider incorporating additional items such as wildlife and natural amenities, how you are tackling these, improving the built environment as well as concentrating on residential areas and approach roads.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The built environment is concentrated on the main part of the village and the limited number of buildings increases the importance that each plays in the presentation of the overall village. In general, most premises were well maintained. Lynhams had been newly painted, The Wicklow Way/Harvest Loom was also freshly painted. The Post Office was also well maintained, as was The Wicklow Heather. St. Kevin's National School was excellent and very well maintained. The new section is very much in keeping with the old. The Church and grounds were also very well maintained, with nice mature trees. The adjudicator also noted the new Car Park and site for the proposed Resource Centre. Overall, most premises are well cared. Try to pay attention to detail however, e.g. improving the appearance of the car park next to the Wicklow Heather.

LANDSCAPING

The adjudicator noted the development taking place in the triangular grassed area (New Millennium Project) and looks forward to this in due course. It is important that any development project is backed up by regular maintenance. The grass area by the Tea rooms is also well maintained; nice to see visitors relaxing on day of adjudication. Perhaps plastic seating might be replaced in time. Also you can see other efforts being made by premises in maintenance of their open spaces. Very nice flower containers were noted at the Arch B&B.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Try to draw on the expertise of the nearby Wicklow

Mountains National Park staff in terms of developing the wildlife and natural amenities of Laragh and its surrounding area. You have unique features for example, the river which passes through the village which is a very attractive and important habitat. Even looking over the bridge on the day of adjudication the adjudicator noted small Trout in the river together with dragon flies. Other important habitats are for example, lovely mature Oak trees and the wooded area up by the National School. The surrounding valley means that Laragh is very close to nature. Try to make this accessible to the visitors, with information in the village on the Wicklow Mountains National Park.

TIDINESS

The one negative impression noted by the adjudicator in terms of tidiness in relation to Laragh is the over use of signage. One specific example noted was the Wicklow Wool Centre, big signage repeated on several occasions which is uncalled for. The adjudicators commend your efforts in the developmental of co-ordinated system of signage and good luck in this regard. The other aspect of signage is that some signs were simply just dirty and in need of a clean which would help improve overall appearance. Try to minimise the use of signage on commercial premises. For the size of the village there is no need for such over use of signage as visitors travelling through are not on a motorway!

LITTER CONTROL

Overall, the standard of litter control was very good in Laragh this year, particularly so in light of the large number of visitors passing through the village. You are to be commended in this regard. No serious problems were noted.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Good individual efforts were noted. Houses on the approach road from Annamoe were all well cared for. Beech Wood both individual and combined efforts are evident. Premises on the way out to Glendalough are also well cared for.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

On the approach road from Annamoe, grass verges had not been cut and the Laragh sign needs to be cleaned. Approaching Laragh from Rathdrum try to fix up the stone wall as part of your overall 3 year plan. Try also to ensure that weeds are cut at the base of walls which takes from this appearance. The road approaching from Glendalough was mixed, try to strike a balance between presenting a neat, tidy image, yet at the same time allowing for growth of

verges and hedging. In this regard partial cutting of grasses can probably create the best approach which allows for balance between tidiness and wildlife development.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The adjudicator was impressed with the presentation of Laragh. May you continue to make progress. There is evidence of co-ordinated efforts being made as well as individual efforts by both residential and commercial premises. Don't be afraid to experiment and good luck for next year.