

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **WICKLOW TOWN**
County : **WICKLOW**
Category : **E**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 08-07-1999

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33	30
The Built Environment	40	32	31
Landscaping	40	28	27
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	17
Litter Control	40	27	26
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	19	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25	26
General Impression	10	6	7
TOTAL MARK	300	200	195

Wicklow, County Wicklow

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for your submission which was very comprehensive and detailed and your map which was also very helpful in the course of adjudication. However an A4 map would have been easier to follow while driving around the town. It is very evident that there is considerable effort being made by many different interests in Wicklow under each category. Congratulations to the committee in their weekly clean ups. Wicklow is blessed with a number of unique features from the coast line, the harbour to the Murrrough / Broadlough Nature Reserve. Good luck also with your Millennium project.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Wicklow town has a potentially very attractive street scape helped by some very good examples of traditional shop fronts and well maintained buildings. A number of premises noted included The Old Forge, SV Delahunt, Abbey Pharmacy, the use of flowers at the Allied Irish Bank, Kids Stuff, Butlers Chemist. The unique detail on some buildings, for example over Clarke Delahunt is also something that should be highlighted. The Coffee Shop, Tourist Office / Sheridan Colohans which were newly painted as was the Mariner. New Credit Union was noted on the main street, Hannahs was good, Dowlings had been painted, Anne Harris was good; a very good flower display was noted outside Fitzpatrick Bros.. It is also encouraging to see the use of Irish in An Stra Nua, James Gormley and Blades were well presented as was the Opera House and the Old Court, which provided bright and contrasting colours in the Market Square. A new wall was noticed at the entrance to the GAA. Wicklow Gaol is a good addition to the town. Other premises very well maintained included the Church Grounds, The Bakery, The Bridge Tavern. However greater watering of flowers is needed if flower boxes are to be maintained. The Quays Bistro was also well maintained, as were East Glendalough School, The Fire Station, Abbey School Grounds and the Tennis Club. The Local Authority can provide practical advice to potential developers or to existing premises owners who are considering improving their premises. Tidy Towns Committee might try to encourage all owners to make contact with the local authority when considering up grading their premises in order to ensure that traditional materials are used. Overuse of stickers in the window of Earls takes from it's otherwise good appearance. Clarke Delahunts should change it's sign and there is continued scope to improve other premises such as The Pineto. Down towards the sea front is an area that needs improvements.

LANDSCAPING

Wicklow Town exhibits a number of large landscaped areas and open spaces and this presents a challenge in terms of providing the necessary resources to maintain these. Around the soccer club is well maintained; flower tubs were noted. The adjudicator also noted the landscaped area opposite Quinnsworth highlighting the Lifeboat and commemorating the RNLI. The back area of the Wicklow Gaol provided a restful park. Improved presentation was noted opposite the Domincian Convent, with seating, new bollards and new cobble locking. Also new railings were noted along the river walk. However, the shrubbery areas are not that well cared for and could be improved. The monument area next to the FCA was very good. The long grass around the car parking area at the shore line could be better maintained also. It's good to see information boards in this car park. Long grass was also noted along by fencing by Veha. Fitzwilliam Square was well cared for and provides a nice focus. The area around the Black Castle was also neat and tidy. Planting at the Mall is to be commended. It's good to see that efforts are being made to bring about improvements to landscaping.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The unique features of the town can encourage the development of wildlife and natural amenities access to locals. Leitrim Nature Walk is to be commended, however some additional information to allow appreciation of this might help highlight this area. In light of the fact that there is a Nature Park, i.e. the Murrough in the area little evidence is focused on this in terms of access to the area through industrial non - maintained areas. The adjudicator enjoyed a walk along the grassed area shore line to the north which provides important habitats; yet no information is provided on this for the visitor. Also within the town both in terms of individual residential premises and town parks and estates, can you look at planting programmes which will encourage development of habitats within the urban context. In addition schools have a significant role to play in encouraging development of wildlife habitats and appreciation of same. What is needed is an evaluation of the habitats in the area and preparation of a plan that will allow appropriate access for locals and visitors alike, yet at the same time protecting and encouraging these.

TIDINESS

Tidiness is mixed throughout the town. It would be good if overhead wires could be put underground, for example, at Fitzwilliam Square. ESB poles could benefit from painting, Lakeview public park area was somewhat untidy and could be improved. Grass growing out of the gutters at the

Assembly Hall could be taken away. Also pay attention to proper signage, it is important to replace the Wexford / Wicklow sign opposite the Grand Hotel. As one enters the town from Rathnew there are a number of open spaces which seem some what unplanned and need to be developed appropriately to provide visually attractive features. In addition the car parking along the main street is somewhat haphazard leading to a cluttered visual appearance which does not help under the category of tidiness.

LITTER CONTROL

The litter management throughout Wicklow was varied but overall quite good on day of adjudication. The main street was generally litter free apart from minor sprinklings. You should consult with the local authority in relation to the fact that they are now required to prepare a litter management plan every 3 years; so consult with the UDC to see what their plans are for Wicklow Town. The litter at a number of areas visited by the adjudicator, for example, the carpark at the railway station was quite bad. Lakeview Public Park could also be improved. Glass was evident by the Beaches Gym. The approach roads did not suffer from any major outbreaks.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Wicklow Town possesses a number of residential estates the majority of which make good efforts in presenting and maintaining the open spaces. Within Glebemount was well maintained; however, the adjudicator was particularly disappointed with the outside which was bad. Dunbur Park was very neat and tidy as were Heatherbrook, Brooklands, Marlton Court, Crinion Park and Bellview Court. New apartments also noted along the sea front. Outside Pierview was particularly bad; greater attention is needed through encouragement of the residents to take responsibility for the maintenance of their open spaces.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

On the approach road from Rathnew, better presentation is needed at the nameplate, kerbing is also needed along the left hand side; resurfacing would also improve appearance. Cobble locking was noted on the road leading up towards the Golf Course. Approaching from Brittas Bay, outside the GAA was overgrown; litter was evident and the use of weed killer presents a very dull, negative image for visitors. Surely this is not the impression that we would like to present to visitors. Approaching from the Beehive on the left hand side verge, the Tourist Office sign was very untidy and needs to be tackled. The right hand side was not too bad, although closer in there is scope to provide a neater

appearance.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Continued improvements have been noticed this year. Wicklow Town was last year looking particularly well in light of the fact that the Tour de France was taking place. The extra efforts made show what can be done in relation to the town when everybody is working together. The Tidy Towns Committee needs to maintain a practical approach and to encourage a greater participation by a number of key groups. Business associations, clubs and societies could become part of the Tidy Towns effort as well as residential estates associations. As stated in previous years, Wicklow has the ability to do very well in this competition; it needs to take a professional approach to overcoming problems. With time this can be achieved in conjunction with all interests including local authorities who have a key role to play. The town was very busy on day of adjudication; however, in comparison with other towns around the country which rely on tourism, Wicklow Town has some way to go in terms of improving its appearance for the benefit of the visitors.