

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **ROYAL OAK**
County : **CARLOW**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 14-06-2000

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2000	Mark Awarded 1999
Overall Developmental Approach	50	31	31
The Built Environment	40	24	24
Landscaping	40	29	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17	17
Litter Control	40	16	16
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	20	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	19	19
General Impression	10	7	6
TOTAL MARK	300	177	175

Royal Oak, County Carlow

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

As indicated in last year's report, a plan is needed which will guide your activities over the next three to five years. It would be of enormous help to you in tackling areas which need attention and so that progress can be made in the competition. The plan should be a simple one, with an accompanying explanatory map. It should clearly set out your objectives for each year and establish a limited number of targets which are achievable and so, be more likely to achieve results. One does not have to engage consultants to prepare your plan. Expertise will be found in your own committee and in the wider local community. Do liaise with the local authority, the Regional Tourism Authority, the ESB, Eircom and the National Rehabilitation Board all of which will have very good advice to offer in the preparation of the plan. It is essential that you involve all the community in your work. You already have a good number on your committee, but also involve the schools and their pupils in your activities.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The commercial properties are well presented. Perhaps the disused petrol pumps could be refurbished and be a nice feature. However, if this is not done, they should be removed altogether. The 1798 monument is a lovely piece of sculpture. The engineering works and the entrance to the estate do need to be tidied up considerably. The gates need repairs and refurbishment. The telephone booth also needs to be painted and repaired. Wells Graveyard is immaculately kept and tremendous credit is due to the people who look after it. The pathway to the graveyard would need some weeding.

LANDSCAPING

The green spaces were well maintained and the shrub beds were free of weeds. Trees planted are maturing nicely and a good selection was chosen. The shrub areas beside the telephone booth were also maintained to a high standard. Grass cuttings were left on the green area and should be removed as soon as possible. The Millennium Park is near completion with the grass just coming over ground. This, when completed, will be a very worthwhile project. The choice of seating is excellent and will be maintenance free. The hedge at the railing, in time hopefully, will reduce the noise levels coming from this very busy road.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

As a Tidy Towns Committee you have an important rôle to play in enhancing and increasing the wildlife of your community. This aspect should be included in your plan. An ideal area would be the Millennium Park where there is a hedge by the pathway. This should be fully explored to identify the wildlife habitats there. If you need help in identifying the local wildlife habitats why not speak to your local environmental expert, to advise and provide you with the required expertise. Another possibility is Wells Graveyard which could be a habitat for birds, bats, flora and fauna. Once identified, and if they are properly managed, it will add greatly to your area.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter control was quite good with just some small amounts in the car parks and on the road to the estate. One does need to be vigilant at all times in the control of litter. One should consider having more litter bins and they will be necessary in the Millennium Park. It is essential to promote anti-litter awareness among the whole community and also to get the assistance of the local schoolchildren in any anti-litter drives.

TIDINESS

The surface in the car parks require attention. They need to be tidied up and the boundaries to be defined. If the car parks receive attention it will certainly improve the appearance of your village. There was an absence of fly-posting and graffiti throughout. Control of weed-growth at kerbs and at the base of buildings and walls was very good. As mentioned, the boundaries of the car parks had weeds and growth.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

There are very few residential houses in Royal Oak. There are some bungalows which are well presented. There is a nice terrace of small houses on the road towards the engineering works some of which might need some attention. They have some very nice traditional features which should be retained and enhanced. Perhaps the committee might be able to give some help to the owners regarding the choice for colour of paintwork.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

As stated in last year's report, the difficulties of the roads present problems. The car parks need resurfacing. There are some nice shrubs and plants used on the boundaries. A new footpath has been put down on the left, going towards the pub.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

You are making progress and it is good to see the number on the committee. You have difficulties with the roads but you are making great efforts to overcome them. The Millennium Park is a delightful project and, no doubt, will be treasured by the community in the years ahead. It is essential that you work on a plan for the next three years. Well done to all concerned for making great efforts.