

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **LARAGHGLENDALOUGH**  
County : **WICKLOW**  
Category : **A**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 19-06-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33	33
The Built Environment	40	29	27
Landscaping	40	30	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	21	21
Litter Control	40	26	27
Tidiness	20	15	14
Residential Areas	30	21	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	23	23
General Impression	10	7	6
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>201</b>

## **Laragh/Glendalough, County Wicklow**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENT APPROACH**

The combination of Laragh and Glendalough is interesting for tidy towns purposes and allows the pooling of resources. The committee of 16 members will allow good progress to be made. The plan submitted suggests the broad outline of the work proposed. A more comprehensive plan based on the needs and work planned over the next three to five years is really needed for this competition. Such a detailed plan would enable the committee to identify specific projects, decide a priority list, consider all the resources needed for items and place a time scale on the items with reviews each year. This type of plan will also help to concentrate minds and, with consultation with other bodies, targets will be achieved.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

There is so much of historical interest in the buildings of Glendalough and a visit is a great experience. The newly completed Brockagh Centre is a marvelous addition to the community. This is a fine resource centre and has excellent parking and views. The visitor centre is attractively set in its surrounds and provides a great asset to the visitor. The many business premises around the village are well cared for. Signage could be a little more discreet in some instances. The B&B's are well groomed and inviting. Again, while it is understood that signs must be seen, more discreet types may be more in keeping with the surrounds. The Lynhams Hotel is well presented as is the Glendalough Hotel with its magnificent views from the back. The visitor interest areas are carefully tended and make pleasant viewing.

### **LANDSCAPING**

The natural landscaping of the village is so spectacular that any additions tend to be pointless. The visitor centre's car park is very tastefully landscaped with the simple formula of trees, and grass which is in keeping with the surrounds. Also the division of the carpark by plantings is a landscaping lesson that could be repeated in many places in Ireland. The Lynham hotel carpark is attractive also, with the timbered boundaries, birch trees and beech hedge being used to divide the carpark. The riverside walk is a lovely feature. The planting at Brockagh resource centre is suffering a little from wind exposure and weed invasion and some attention will be needed, especially in the early years. Many gardens are beautifully cared for, adding to the attractiveness of the villages. The beautifully trimmed and shaped hedges opposite "Heathers" were very impressive.

### **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

The availability of wild life facilities and features offers tremendous potential. Many groups use Glendalough for wild life observation and the visitor centre is helpful in this respect. Projects involving local school and local people are always interesting and could be included in the future planning of activities. The walkway behind Lynhams Hotel is an excellent feature allowing people to explore an area that would otherwise have been inaccessible.

### **LITTER CONTROL**

Litter management must be a major priority in such a busy and much visited place. The weather may determine the number of visitors that arrive, so plans for all occasions should be in hand. At 3.30 in the afternoon the row of bins on the road behind the Glendalough Hotel were full and some litter was blowing about in places.

### **TIDINESS**

There is a tidy appearance in both villages. Some items such as the profusion of signs for shops and B&B's on the triangle at Laragh detract a little and there is a similar over-use of signage outside shops.

### **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

There is a vast range of residential properties around the two villages consisting of old stone buildings with distinct character and newer homes. The preservation of important stone buildings is important to retain the character of the area and its historical links. Homes and gardens are well cared for and it's easy to see that there is great pride taken in the maintenance of homes.

### **ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS**

The natural vegetation of the walls is important to retain and care is always needed to avoid being over enthusiastic in such cases. Foxgloves, pennywort and ferns all play a lovely part in the appearance of the village and surrounds. Remarks made in last years report are very valid. The various types of grass margin maintenance options are worth considering in different places. The choice as to whether to use natural or formally managed options must take the surrounds into account.

### **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

Laragh\Glendalough presents a beautiful picture as nature bequeathed. There can be little improvement made on nature except to provide opportunities to live and enjoy. The business and residential inclusions in such a place have to be managed in a way as to cause as little interference as possible to the natural beauty and at the same time make the place available for residents and tourists.