

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Welshisland**

Ref: **486**

County: **Offaly**

Mark: **215**

Category: **A**

Date: **17/06/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	30	30
The Built Environment	40	30	30
Landscaping	40	31	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16	16
Litter Control	40	35	35
Tidiness	20	16	16
Residential Areas	30	23	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28	28
General Impression	10	6	7
TOTAL MARK	300	215	215

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for submission and illustrated sketch map of the village. Our first pleasure is to welcome the new committee to the competition and to thank the former committee for all the hard work down through the years. We hope some of the former committee members remain on the current one. It is many years since this adjudicator visited Walsh-Island and one can see at a glance some significant changes, especially with house building. This offers you new challenges and new opportunities. Like all centres you need a plan of action that will chart the way forward for phased progress. This is best done in association with the local authority and the community. New residents will surely be interested in being part of your efforts.

The Built Environment:

Yours is a rural village with a pleasant unspoiled environment and new buildings should respect the rural ethos of the area. The church and school dominate the village and they were presented to a high quality, although the school would benefit from painting the boundary walls. The forge as always is a gem and well presented. No progress on the petrol pumps and dead trees which are now an eyesore.

Landscaping:

You have a lot of landscaping from previous years now needing attention and we urge you to revisit these before embarking on new landscaping developments. The area is ideal for tree and shrub planting and you should draw up a landscape scheme that could be implemented over a three year period.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

When planting you should plant species that will provide food for autumn and winter. The natural amenities here include large open grassed spaces ideal for amenity areas. Wildlife could be promoted in the school and might lead to a survey of the local birds and animal life. This would stimulate interest among school children and parents.

Litter Control:

Litter control throughout the village is good and no obvious problems here. Litter control is everybody's business and local shopkeepers should provide their own litter bins.

Tidiness:

You have a good deal of poorly presented open spaces, boundary walls in need of attention and some neglected open spaces. Grass had been cut at Church View estate and bales of hay were left unattended at the green edge, which looked untidy.

Residential Areas:

It is many years since this adjudicator appealed for a closer integration of the local authority housing estate with the village core. Alas, this has not happened and the estate does not even have an identity. Residents need to be a part of the village and need to have a relevance to the work of the committee. Bear this in mind when formulating your plan. New housing estates have an opportunity to play a major role in keeping their areas to a high standard. Birchwood has some very attractive flower tubs: could this be emulated by other residents?.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Well done on the recycling centre which is well presented and free from abuse. Approach roads and the approach by the ESB site has some good landscaping projecting a favourable image for the village. Could the GAA gates be painted: the house opposite here has some distinctive shrubs, and the approach to the village from the GAA has a lovely hedge. We hope developers will finish new houses to a high standard and erect appropriate bilingual estate nameplates on each scheme. The black well was dry on inspection day.

General Impression:

It was delightful to visit Walsh-Island once again and observe the many new developments. You now need to preserve and improve the village centre and get the new residents on your side. We look forward to improvements for next year.