

# Tidy Towns Competition 2005

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Laragh\Glendalough**

Ref: **120**

County: **Wicklow**

Mark: **213**

Category: **A**

Date: **08/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	30	
The Built Environment	40	30	
Landscaping	40	32	
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	24	
Litter Control	40	28	
Tidiness	20	15	
Residential Areas	30	22	
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25	
General Impression	10	7	
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>213</b>	

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Laragh/Glendalough is welcome back to the competition since the last entry in 2002. The area and village is known to be one of the most scenic areas in Ireland and high on the tourist list. All building interventions are in danger of damaging this wonderful historic and beautiful site so the ultimate in sensitivity is required to ensure the village and surrounds are developed in a way that is both conducive to public enjoyment and retention of the character of the place. A plan is needed to chart out the aims of the committee over the next five years. This should be made in conjunction with all interested parties in the village; priorities can be made a timescale set.

### The Built Environment:

The wonderful historic building elements of the villages and surrounds form the most fundamental and attractive aspects of the area. St. Kevin's Church is very attractive and nicely set above the village. The Broch Resource centre nearby is a fine building and well concealed above the village. The many tearooms and guesthouses are a part of a visitor's experience. Timber forms the best material for outdoor furnishings at these places as it blends so well into the surrounds. The post office looks well. The Glendalough Hotel is a landmark building in the village and is well presented. The Lynam Hotel also appears well and the carpark of this hotel is very sensitively constructed and landscaped. The visitor centre buildings are attractively constructed and well concealed.

## **Landscaping:**

The planted green areas give a pleasant welcome to the village. These look well with their well-trimmed verges and the shrubbery opposite Lynam hotel looks very attractive. The church grounds are interestingly landscaped using both natural vegetation giving the wildflower feature and the more conventional areas with mown grass and the fine yew trees. The Visitor centre is beautifully landscaped - the green predominance is perfectly suited to the area and the screened carpark is most helpful. The maintenance in this area is superb. The carpark at the upper lake is well managed although it would be preferable if the car parks areas were divided and screened. Numerous roadside gardens along the way contribute greatly to the overall landscape of the village and great credit is due to those who care for their gardens, and road frontage so well.

## **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The opportunity for observation and appreciation of the wildlife and heritage of the area is very good. The visitor centre information is very accessible. The numerous walks and strolling grounds make Glendalough a wonderful place. The importance of retaining the natural roadside vegetation is vital – there are lovely examples of roadside walls with ferns, foxgloves, various grasses and a host of smaller plants. The St Kevin's Church grounds contribute well by the retention of the wildflower areas in the lawns.

## **Litter Control:**

There is a very good level of litter management considering the huge number of tourists visiting. Some litter was noted around the bridge and adjacent carpark and at the upper lake carpark. Constant litter care campaigns are needed and a management system to control litter especially on peak visitor days

## **Tidiness:**

There is generally a good level of tidiness throughout the area. The current work on footpath construction is having some disruptive effect but this is only temporary and the final result will indeed be very positive. Extra care is needed at the shop areas to avoid clutter, plastic signs and gaudy facades at the buildings- mostly this aspect is very good but an exception can be very noticeable. As stated above, where outdoor tables and chairs are provided timber products appear best in this environment. The roof of the music centre building needs attention and perhaps a muted paint tone to blend into the environment. Two instances of severely cut back conifer screens at the road frontage are looking very ugly in their present state.

## **Residential Areas:**

Individual residences along the roadsides are well tended and contribute well. The housing estates at Beechwood and Brockagh are generally well cared for – attention to detail is important in estates. The more people care for their properties, road frontage and gardens the better estates appear

## **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Road are in good condition. The carpark near the bridge needs resurfacing. The surfaces of the carpark at the visitor centre are well finished. The retention of stonewall details by roadsides is important where roadworks are planned. The new footpaths are very welcome and much needed for safety and ease of access.

## **General Impression:**

Laragh\Glendalough is a beautiful place – by its nature. To retain this natural beauty A careful watch must be kept on all buildings and landscape interventions.

