

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **ENNIS**
County : **CLARE**
Category : **F**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 16-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	43	42
The Built Environment	40	31	30
Landscaping	40	33	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	23	22
Litter Control	40	33	34
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	20	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	27	26
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	232	225

Ennis, Co. Clare

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Your excellent submission, including the C.A.A.S report outlines an all year round work programme that seems to involve a wide section of the community and the support of a large number of agencies. Your committee seems to be based very much on partnership and this gives you access to commercial and public bodies on a regular basis. Your appendix to the entry form is nothing short of excellent and encompasses the competition in its entirety. You have certainly created a spirit of community endeavour and the theory outlined in your submission is very much evident in practice throughout the town. Your efforts this year are further spurred by your entry to the Entente Florale Competition and the rich display of flowers necessary for this competition is further enhancing your normal tidy towns efforts.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Much of the development that was under construction last year is now complete and blending in well with the towns environment. For the most part commercial buildings have been well landscaped and will be further enhanced with the passing of time, provided maintenance is to a high standard. The towns core remains your strong point in this section and the plethora of shops - large and small, financial institutions, public buildings and some historic buildings have been presented to a high standard again this year. The many new small businesses that have set up in side streets and back lanes add a new and additional dimension to the commercial life of Ennis. Parnell Street and the lanes off it illustrate the extra development in question. However, allied to the building development is the commendable policy of developing extra car parking with well defined car spaces and tree planting within easy walking distance of shops and services. The two new super loos with wheelchair access have changed the adjudicators mind on the value of these structures, which were in regular use on adjudication day, with many visitors availing of the service. The American policy of adopt a street as illustrated in Barrack Street is praiseworthy and should be extended. It is heartening to witness so many new pieces of sculpture and your plans in this respect deserve praise. Your weakness in this section lies mostly with long operating small commercial operators i.e. O'Donovans Garage on the Limerick approach.

LANDSCAPING

You have scored well in this section and the numerous extra tree, shrub and flower planting - including those being planted on adjudication day, continue to further enhance the town - especially the strong floral presence at approach roads, roundabouts, bridges and various junctions throughout the town proclaiming a high degree of colour. Your efforts here have been matched by the commendable widespread individual effort - extending to the numerous housing estates. Of course the tree planting of former

decades is also serving you well - especially in areas near the river. Your choice in selecting shrubs that will offer almost year round colour provide great landscaping value. Also, your treatment of planting shrubs and hedgerows at areas with chainlink fencing is helping to screen unattractive material i.e. at the Tennis Club.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

You are one of the few centres to tackle this section in a meaningful way and the erection of colourful, well designed display boards at strategic locations are very effective and visitor friendly. You are endowed with much natural habitat along the river bank and you are exploiting this distinction well. The large numbers of mallard and swans on the Fergus provide an attractive spectacle for locals and visitors alike.

LITTER CONTROL

This is probably your greatest daily challenge and the high demand on the Towns facilities and services tends to create a large amount of litter, which needs continuous control. You have slipped a little here and small amounts of litter were seen at the car park fronting Temple Gate Hotel, outside the Post Office near Bank Bridge, and there is litter accumulating in the gas fuel cage outside P.J. Cootes near Market Square. It is acknowledged that the busy streets i.e. O'Connell Street, Parnell Street, and Abbey Street, were exceptionally clean.

TIDINESS

The small amount of untidiness in evidence related to weed growth at Bindon Street and some weed growth in the gutters between the E.B.S. and Clare County Council Buildings. Other areas relate to back lanes i.e. opposite Buttons and Bows. The twining signs on Limerick approach at St. Flannans College need cleaning. The footpaths along by the E.S.B. and opposite will improve this area when complete. Some small uncared for open spaces on the approach roads present an air of untidiness and some buildings not yet complete have untidy surrounds.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The availability of priming grants from Ennis U.D.C. to residents is to be complimented and the local competitions are playing a vital part in promoting this section of the Tidy Towns Competition. Your efforts will best be rewarded by continuing with this policy and giving recognition to individual and collective effort where appropriate. In general, the housing estates were very well presented and many had attractive identity signs with floral embellishment.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

This section is now a major mark earner for your committee and not surprising, as the amount of side and rear entrances that have received attention by way of development and new access is startling. No doubt, the boom in commercial activity has focused attention on all available space within the town and you have responded well. The many shops and restaurants especially, add

great colour and character to these areas and the limitation to pedestrian access adds comfort for those availing of the service. However, such developments often unveil poorly presented rear or back entrances of neighbouring buildings that will also need improved presentation if you are to get full value from such additional developments. The use of cobble lock pavements is attractive and the attention to detail in terms of dignified signage and the welcome absence of large hoardings is to your credit. Yet, there are signs of some traders taking up valuable footpath space by displaying goods or sometimes obtrusive sandwich boards, which will prove a deterrent to shoppers especially those with disabilities. The surface area of these new developments is excellent. You might consider more public seating in the pedestrianised areas. The supplementary small signs throughout the town centre are well placed and well maintained, together with litter bins which won praise last year.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Ennis looked well over two days of adjudication - the second day being favoured with blue skies and sunshine. As the day progressed, the traffic density increased and your plans to create extra car parking space is obviously needed. The town centre is your strong point, but the vast amount of floral displays project a welcoming image for Ennis. Your environmental developments are of a high standard and it must be acknowledged that the current and former Fas schemes are playing a significant part in the towns progress. Your challenge now is to pay greater attention to detail - especially with older developments and keep the community with you in your endeavours.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (12/08/97)

The town of Ennis looked well despite a rainy second adjudication day. Generally the standard was high, however, at this level of the competition attention should be now given to items of more detailed presentation. Greater attention needs to be given to signage as the speed limit sign on the Kilrush Road and directional signs at the Upper O'Connell Street and Carmody Street junction were quite grubby. Weed control is another area that needs to be addressed. Weeds were noted to the kerbside on the Kilrush approach to the town, to the spaces in between the cobblelock paving at the O'Connell Street car park and the gravelled forecourt area at the junction of the Shannon and Kilrush Roads. The new street name signage and lavatories at Market Square were admired. What inappropriate curved canopies are still apparent should be removed and replaced with more traditional fabric awnings. Litter control was generally quite good although a few papers were noted along the Kilrush approach road and the abundance of hanging baskets on display for the Entente Florale competition looked marvellous - good luck with this!