

Tidy Towns 1997

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **KILKENNY**
County : **KILKENNY**
Category : **F**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 03-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	39	39
The Built Environment	40	35	34
Landscaping	40	35	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	17
Litter Control	40	29	28
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	21	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	34	33
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	234	229

Kilkenny City, County Kilkenny

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

It is good to see that your Committee continues to have the support of so many bodies in Kilkenny and, most importantly, your Local Authorities. Lack of A detailed map made it difficult to identify areas where additional work had been carried out. The adjudicator is grateful to the very knowledgeable Tourist Advisor in the Kilkenny Tourist Office for rendering great assistance in these circumstances. From the information given on the entry form it would appear that somewhat limited work has been carried out during 1997 but all items mentioned were visited and noted. Having won major awards in the competition Kilkenny City should not rest on its laurels and the adjudicator looks forward next year to receiving a detailed map showing further works as part of your planning. You received an in-depth report from last year's adjudicator. The following comments should therefore be read in tandem with that report.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

One of the great strengths of Kilkenny's Tidy Towns effort is its magnificent shopfronts and the way in which its numerous buildings of historical and architectural interest are maintained. On adjudication day many of these sites, too numerous to mention, were visited. All were beautifully presented. However, the wall of Saint Patrick's Church could do with a coat of paint. The Court House and surrounds looked magnificent as indeed did Kilkenny Castle. The premises mentioned in your entry form as possible entries for different shop front awards were all inspected. Many did not make the criteria but other premises in Kilkenny were photographed and will be entered by the adjudicator.

LANDSCAPING

Without doubt this is another of the great strengths of the Tidy Towns effort in Kilkenny. The work which has been achieved is remarkable to say the least and too extensive to mention in detail. All major sites were visited including those in the vicinity of Saint Canice's Church, the Railway Station, the Market Yard, the roundabouts and many other open spaces in the vicinity of housing estates and major buildings. Added to the work done by commercial and private premises through the provision of window boxes, hanging baskets and planters, the whole City was a blaze of colour on adjudication day. It is remarkable to note how this aspect of the competition has enthused so many people. Kilkenny Castle grounds again looked excellent. What a wonderful facility for a city to have. There was much evidence of your programme of tree planting which has taken place over many years and is now greatly enhancing the environment of the City. The landscaping of the Waterford / Carlow by-pass is now beginning to come on. Unfortunately, on adjudication day, this section of road was very badly littered due to dumping. Open spaces on the Bennettsbridge road were excellent and beautifully kept. Indeed,

all open spaces on approach roads looked extremely well but some could have benefited from a mowing. For the future your Committee might think in terms of the judicious planting of some flowering shrubs which would give you some colour in these large open spaces on an all-year-round basis. It is obvious from the standard of planting that you are taking expert advice. Please continue to do this on all occasions.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

This is a comparatively new heading in the competition with the emphasis on the presentation of wildlife habitat and the environment. The Tidy Towns book suggests a number of initiatives which your Committee might take under this heading. The Kilkenny Castle pond and Millers Marsh were both visited and your comments regarding the latter were noted. The Kilkenny Pond project has been noted and will be put forward for the Wildlife Award.

LITTER CONTROL

There were, on adjudication day, some signs of litter on the outskirts of the City and in the slip-ways between High Street and Kieran Street and also on the Waterford/Carlow By-Pass (as mentioned above). There was also a certain amount of litter on the Waterford road. Otherwise Kilkenny was litter-free but this is an aspect of the competition which needs constant and careful monitoring on an ongoing basis. Nevertheless there has been a big improvement under this heading since last year.

TIDINESS

Kerbside weed was again evident on the Castlecomer road and some areas of the same road further on out also looked very untidy. However, these were slightly outside the adjudication area but perhaps your Local Authority could look at this. With so many wonderful shopfronts it is a pity that there are also so many hanging signs. In fact there are so many of them now they probably serve no useful purpose. Many premises do have very nice wrought iron and nicely made wooden signs. This is to be encouraged. It was also felt that plastic shopfronts are beginning to reappear albeit in traditional shopfront style.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Many housing estates including Glendine Heights, Larkfield Avenue, Dukes Meadows, Castle Gardens, Lacken Drive, Shandon Park, Ashurst, Talbots Inch, etc were visited as well as many more which were title-less. In the vast majority of cases they looked extremely well with open spaces being very well looked after. Many of these estates are also providing seating. Inevitably some houses need a coat of paint and some fences need painting and repairing but, in general, they were excellently presented and represent a major plus in your Tidy Towns effort. It is noted from your entry form that you have Residents Associations wherein lies the secret of your success in this respect.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Some of the comments made by last year's adjudicator are still

applicable but in general all approach roads were excellent. These included those from Kilmanagh, Tullaroan, Castlecomer, Callan, Freshford and Carlow, all of which were visited. The presentation of side streets, particularly in the centre city area improved by leaps and bounds. The area in the vicinity of the new shopping centre was particularly noted.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The whole ambience of Kilkenny is just superb but needs constant monitoring and vigilance if the standard is to be maintained. With a large resident population and a huge influx of visitors during the summer, litter and tidiness should be top of your priority list. Congratulations are due to all concerned for presenting Kilkenny in such a wonderful way.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (8/8/97)

Kilkenny city looked quite magnificent for second adjudication on a warm August afternoon. Litter control was substantially stronger for the second visit than on first adjudication. Do try to achieve a consistent standard throughout the season. Some of the weaker areas of the town are St. Kieran's Street and New Building Lane. One or two upper stories in St. James St. could be repainted. Your urban renewal programme is progressing at a consistently high standard. The town is an interesting, vibrant centre and becomes more pleasurable on each visit. Some areas beside the roundabout at the Gowran entrance are underdeveloped and might be brought to the same standard as at other roundabouts. A fine presentation, well done.