Tidy Towns 1997

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **KILKEE**
County : **CLARE**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 09-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	43	42
The Built Environment	40	29	29
Landscaping	40	29	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	22	22
Litter Control	40	33	31
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	19	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	24	24
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	**300**	**218**	**215**

Kilkee, Co. Clare

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Your submission which accompanied your entry form was really comprehensive and informative, outlining an all year round activity. You are now fortunate in having the C.A.A.S. report which gives you very clear suggestions for phased improvement. Since last year the town has undergone an inordinate amount of house building and this is ongoing with great implications for your committee. In particular the summer population, when it peaks in July and August will really test your capacity and that of the various agencies to cater for pressure from high numbers.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Looking down on the town from the Carrigaholt approach or from the west end one is struck by the amount of houses now visible. Within the core of the town, many features of the 19th century Kilkee are still evident and the shops in particular have retained their traditional characteristics. In most cases O'Connell Street and O'Curry Street are still your strong points and many commercial traders here are working hard to present their premises to a high standard. The church and banks are well presented. Strand Line and Esplanades looked well and the access lanes to O'Connell street are, for the most part well maintained. The Water World , built on a previous badly kept site is one of your major environmental successes. It is well designed and fits in neatly at this important junction. The environs will need improved presentation and litter control should be policed from the centre itself on an hourly basis during peak season. For thirty years now, the former Atlantic Hotel has represented an environmental error of major proportion - a decision should now be taken to demolish this unacceptable building. The tourist information office would benefit from painting at this important corner.

LANDSCAPING

Again this year you have worked hard in presenting a high and colourful degree of flowers, shrubs and trees. The entrance to the new housing scheme beside the Methodist Church is unusual for its great density of tree planting - illustrating how well the sycamore in particular will grow when properly cared for. However, in the housing scheme itself, many residents have decided to concrete their front space in total, which is giving a very cold effect - surely St. Senans Well should have been part of the development and not having to rely on volunteers for its development. The planted area at Marian Estate is quite attractive, also at the junction of circular road and O'Connell Street. Some of the caravan sites are not keeping their environs as well as required. In particular caravan park entrances should be festooned with bright colour displays of flowers - this would also provide an added welcome to visitors.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Your efforts to enter into the spirit of this section is commendable and your submission outlined your liaison with Kilkee Dive Centre. Consider a schools project in association with school management for identifying the wildlife of the Kilkee area.

LITTER CONTROL

What could be expected to be your most vulnerable section, has in fact been your strong point. A fairly thorough walk through the town encountered very little evidence of litter. One bin at the Explanades was full at midday and emptied by 2pm. It was then realised that your litter pick-up team is full-time and this is most praiseworthy for Kilkee. Was there any student scheme this year? Litter control in the towns outskirts was good and no indiscriminate dumping in evidence.

TIDINESS

Because of the great amount of house building throughout the town and on the approach roads, many heretofore green sites have been disturbed and are at an in-between stage, and causing untidiness. Builders have a responsibility to finish well, and ideally should landscape sites before leaving. Other areas of untidiness result from small unattended sites in the town itself. Many of these, like the one opposite the Waterworld have been mentioned before.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Kilkee is now unique with the number of holiday homes far exceeding the resident population Your task is to impress upon owners and occupants the importance of playing their part. The mix of old and new, large and small, single storey and multiple storey is not easy to blend. This is really a matter for the planners to ensure that this building blitz does not get out of hand. As a tidy towns committee you are entitled to have your thoughts and suggestions entertained. The C.A.A.S. report will be helpful in this respect. One obvious distinction is the absence of colour and floral embellishment that one would normally expect from residential areas.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Again, the pressure of building has opened up side and rear views not previously obvious. This presents a challenge for owners of commercial buildings and in many cases private houses to ensure their side and rear entrances are well presented. Many commercial operators have developed new side entrances themselves and this requires extra vigilance. Much of the road surface is poor - the road near the catholic church, the footpaths at the Garden Ornaments and the road down from Craft Showcase is poorly presented. Your comments about the council not wishing to rectify until building is complete is not without reason.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The first adjudication was done during an exceptionally fine day

which witnessed large crowds on the beech and a busy Kilkee. Like most developing towns you have traffic problems - but not as bad as elsewhere in Clare. Still, one side parking on O'Curry Street would give more space and comfort to Shoppers wishing to avail of the services, etc. The one way system along Strand Line seems effective. The horse shoe shaped beach itself is renowned and was spotlessly clean on adjudication day. The efforts of your committee are quite evident and for the most part you seem to have the backing of the community and the Town Commissioners. Well done.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (12/08/97)

The busy seaside town of Kilkee looked quite well on a dull second adjudication day. The profusion of hoardings and advertising signs on the Kilrush Road give it a very cluttered appearance. This road was also quite overgrown and two rusty supports missing their sign created a bad impression. The road surface was also in bad order and the speed limit sign was quite rusty. You are to be commended on the lack of inappropriate projecting plastic signs. The only evidence of same was to one pub. There are very few curved canopies also apart from one shop. These are also quite inappropriate and should be replaced with a traditional fabric awning. The Marine Bar and Apartments was very stained with green algae growth - in marine atmospheres one has to be even more vigilant in terms of freshening up facades. Old Moore's and Halpins Hotels were both very fresh. It is important when considering presentation not to forget back areas. Some of the houses and buildings along Grattan Street and the side areas off the west end looked quite neglected.