

"Caring for our environment"

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

Results

Date of Adjudication : 14-07-99

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	46	46
The Built Environment	40	33	32
Landscaping	40	35	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	24	24
Litter Control	40	33	34
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	22	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	29	27
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	244	240

Ennis, County Clare

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Ennis is welcome to the 1999 Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your completed and most comprehensive application together with map. These were most helpful for adjudication. The committee and all concerned are to be congratulated on the video and the c.d. with your litter song. The adjudicator enjoyed these. The organisation structure of your Tidy Towns Committee is admirable and your strategies and delegation of responsibilities makes for very interesting reading. Congratulations on your success in achieving the support of what appears to be the entire community. Congratulations also on your success in involving the schools as well as statutory bodies and last, but not least, congratulations on all of the work that has been achieved for the 1999 Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for the information regarding particular difficulties faced by your committee. Not all of these problems were detected by the adjudicator so perhaps some of them have been overcome in time for adjudication. Congratulations also on the Mill Wheel Restoration Project and we wish you well for the ultimate completion of the riverside walk for the Millennium.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

For the most part, the town centre looked exceptionally well, with its narrow winding streets, neat laneways and alleyways and well presented buildings. Newly constructed buildings, of course, have been finished to a high standard. Many buildings have retained their original architectural features and this is commendable. The J. Spellissy Book Gallery on Parnell Street has some very fine architectural features which it is hoped will be retained, if and when it is to be refurbished (it is currently in a poor state). Some buildings facing onto the Abbey Street carpark could be upgraded. A large premises on the Sandfield Road could be improved by painting and a large oil tank is visually obtrusive, perhaps it could be relocated out of public view or kept clean and well painted. The town sculpture trail is delightful.

LANDSCAPING

The proposed public park in Clon Road to be titled "Garden for the Five Senses" is a beautiful idea as is the Remembrance Garden proposed for the Circular Road. Trees planted in previous years have established themselves well and the town now has a fine stock of mature, semi-mature young trees and newly planted trees. Well done on the amount of tree planting during National Tree Week. Well done also on the landscaping of carparks. Flowerbeds are colourful and were nicely presented for adjudication. O'Connell Square is an attractive combination of trees, flower displays, sculpture and

seating. Further opportunities for landscaping include a short stretch of grass bank on the N85 (on the right hand side of the road travelling out of the town), and a short stretch of steep grass bank on the R352. Note the grass here was a little too long around the nameplate during adjudication. The industrial estate on the Gort Road looked superb. Your 'sponsor a flowerbed' scheme appears to be working very well. We wish you well in the provision of a water feature for the town centre.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

It is good to note that the Tidy Towns Committee has a wildlife officer. It was a pleasure to note the wide variety of wildfowl on the river Fergus in the town centre during adjudication. The information panel with details of wildlife as well as details of the town nature trail was also very helpful. Well done also on the wildlife garden at the De Valera Library. Your strategy to increase awareness of wildlife by featuring the theme for this year's primary school art competition of the Ennis Rivery Nature Trail is a really good idea. We note with interest the information regarding otters on the river bank and foxes in the urban area.

LITTER CONTROL

A lot of work has gone into maintaining Ennis to a high standard in terms of litter control and the committee really are to be congratulated on their efforts here. The appointment of the litter warden will make a big difference as will the imposition of the Litter Act on Take-Away outlets. Well done also on your new "Green Machine" for road and street cleaning and, of course, congratulations on the new litter song! Your Litter Presentation Pack for Schools is sure to have a significant impact on raising awareness of the importance of keeping streets litter free. During adjudication, litter control was very good. There was no litter to be seen on the outskirts of the town, however there was a little litter in the town centre (with the exception of Parnell Street). Brewery Lane, High Street, O'Connell Square, Abbey Street showed small amounts of litter, a light scattering, but it was not a serious problem. However it was not quite good enough to help you to win the national award. The area around the AIB premises in Bank Place was a problem spot also. Most of the litter consisted mainly of scraps of paper, sweet wrappers and so on. None of the litter noted was from Take-Away premises and there were no plastic bottles or bags or substantial pieces of litter. A lot of progress appears to have been made under this heading, well done!

TIDINESS

Well done on your many initiatives to raise awareness of the importance of tidiness in relation to property. Your activities regarding a plan to provide dog litter bins is important also. The recycling point on the N85 looked a little untidy in that its

site was quite weedy and was also underdeveloped. Another site which looked untidy was located near the speed limit sign on the R352. There were no major problems detected by the adjudicator under this heading during adjudication.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Well done on the activities of both the Tidy Towns Committee and the UDC to encourage residential developments/residents associations to participate in the competition and, of course, to co-operate with the town's participation in the competition. Most residential properties are presented to a very high standard. The general guideline, as you are aware, is that both roadside boundary walls and areas outside of roadside boundary walls should be maintained to a high standard by property owners. A number of roadside areas to boundary walls on the R352 need to be regrassed or better maintained with their roadside edges straightened. Some boundary walls also need to be refurbished. Woodside residential development is presented to a very high standard, however the 'Yield' sign at the junction with the main road needs to be refurbished. Other very well presented estates include Westfields, Greendale Estate, Abbey Court, Oakleigh Wood, the latter was still in construction phase as was the Hawthorns. No doubt these will both be finished to the high standard achieved for other developments. The terrace of cottages just before the junction with the N18 looked especially well. Landscaping to the roadside of a residential development on the N85 (Cusack Road) is superb. Other nicely developed and well maintained estates include Aughanteeroe estate (off the N18), together with Girroga Heights and Ashfield Park. Landscaping to the roadside of the latter was superb also. Victoria Court also deserves a mention. A fine overall presentation.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Well done on the upgrading of roads and footpaths. Congratulations also on the acquisition of new street furniture and the maintenance of existing furniture. All entrances to the town from approach roads were presented to a high standard and roundabouts with their flower displays and sculpture pieces created a very good first impression of Ennis town centre. A stretch of new stone wall and footpath on the N85 was noted. Some stretches of footpath in the centre have yet to be refurbished. The wirescape-free town centre is a nice feature of Ennis. Some stretch of grass verges on the N85 between the Statoil premises and the speed limit signs were a little overgrown. Sign posting throughout the town is excellent. Your 'Adopt a Street' concept is a good idea, well done. It is also good to note from your application that sandwich board advertisements have been removed from the main trading areas.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Ennis is a beautiful town with fine buildings, streets with an old-world charm and character, beautifully appointed parks, amenity areas, superb landscaping and an interesting and visually appealing sculpture trail to name just a few of its great features. The town has enjoyed substantial success in the Tidy Towns Competition in recent times and no doubt it may go on to achieve the ultimate award of the National Tidy Towns winner.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (8/08/99)

The attractive and busy town of Ennis was a pleasure to visit on a second adjudication day. There is much evidence of stone walling under construction on the Lahinch entrance to the village. The magnificent floral displays throughout the town and along approach roads were admired in particular the flowers at the Maid of Erin monument and the hanging baskets at the bridge to the River Fergus. The magnificent new limestone statues throughout the town were greatly admired and this Sculpture Trail is indeed a very interesting one. Other items of street furniture such as the road nameplates and lamp standards were admired. For a town of Ennis' size litter control was very good on adjudication day. However, problem areas were the numerous laneways of the town, the car parks and the bridge by the Abbey. Weeds were evident to the extremely prominent O'Connell monument. Some of the gabled buildings to the Abbey Street car park looked quite grubby however, the main streets of the town looked well – in particular the new limestone paving on Abbey Street was admired. Alexander Knox & Co. is an attractive traditional shopfront. The abundance of birdlife such as geese and ducks to the riverside creates a lot of interest for both visitor and resident alike.