

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **FIRIES**
County : **KERRY**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 06-07-1999

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	26	24
The Built Environment	40	18	17
Landscaping	40	24	23
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	14	14
Litter Control	40	24	23
Tidiness	20	9	8
Residential Areas	30	17	16
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	23	23
General Impression	10	6	5
TOTAL MARK	300	161	153

Firies, County Kerry

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

In the past this adjudicator has been critical of Firies in terms of the lack of development in the village and other problems. On this occasion the adjudicator would like to congratulate Firies on the excellent spirit of rejuvenation which has taken over in the village. Well done to your Tidy Towns Committee and the other agencies that are working with you. You are indeed making excellent progress. Progress in the competition will be dependent on everyone working towards the same ends. With this in mind you should prepare a "3 /5 Year rolling Tidy Towns Work Programme". This programme should have the support of the community, local groups, the County Council and other agencies. It would therefore guide your Tidy Towns actions for the next three to five years. The Work Programme should detail the Tidy Towns objectives to be achieved by your committee in the years ahead. The preparation of such a Plan which is updated annually is now an important aspect of the Tidy Towns Competition. The new Tidy Towns Handbook, which has been issued by the Department of the Environment and Local Government to all Tidy Towns Committees, is a highly useful document which will be a great help both to established Tidy Towns Committees and to all new entrants. It is divided into a series of seven Action Sheets which together cover all aspects of the Competition. It might be most useful for your committee to run a series of seminar evenings based on the contents of this Tidy Towns Handbook. The Photographic Exhibition in the School is an excellent idea.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The painting of business premises in Firies is especially noted. The School, in the bright yellow colour looks really well as does the nearby new hall painted in a different colour. However the gable wall should also be painted as soon as possible. The long post and rail concrete fencing by the Hall should be painted matt black or white. The yellow section of the Funeral Home property is in need of freshening up. The corrugated iron building beside the old Hall looks well. The old hall as a derelict building needs attention. Try to see if you can get permission from property owner to white-wash external walls, windows could be boarded up and painted matt black. In this way the original derelict property can become a feature of your village. The pillars at the entrance to the Presbytery will be in need of painting for next year. Other fencing opposite the new houses could be treated in the same way. The Church and grounds were well presented and the planting is being well maintained. You should try to find a new use for the old Creamery building in co-operation with the owner(s). The gable wall of Johnny's Bar is in need of painting.

LANDSCAPING

The new landscaping feature at the village corner looks well, especially the attractive cobble-lock paving. Can you consider extending this to include the telephone box area ? The five fingerposts here need to be replaced with a new pole and modern fingerposts. The School and Hall

grounds looked well.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Your river area is potentially attractive and important also for wildlife. Try to develop further amenities which will encourage wildlife to your area. Your first step however is to identify the species which inhabit any such areas. Wildlife can be encouraged by the planting of native berry producing trees and shrubs. The provision of bird and bat roosts and nesting sites in any old buildings might also be considered by your Committee. Make sure that any wildlife areas to which the public have access are properly signposted. Remember the access needs of people with disabilities. The development of these amenity walks and nature trails will add greatly to your area in the years ahead. Has your Committee considered the erection of some information plaques about the wildlife to be seen in the area? Draw up plan for this river area at an early date. Perhaps this potential amenity area can be linked into the nearby site for 13 houses which are hopefully to be developed.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter control in the village was good on adjudication day. Your co-operation with the School on litter issues is most important and is obviously bringing the required results.

TIDINESS

The long grass at the concrete fencing opposite the new houses looks very untidy and needs your attention. When you are dealing with such areas do please keep in mind the needs of wildlife. A clean up is necessary behind your new wall at the village corner.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The "Mountain Range" new housing is nearing completion and will look well when landscaped. The "Rosebank" property has an attractive and obviously much loved garden. It is hoped that the 13 houses planned for the area near the river will be so designed that they will blend into the village and add to its character. I hope that you have had a chance to examine the plans. The Council development opposite the funeral home is a welcome addition and when the landscaping and grassed areas have matured, will look well. Some gardens are in need of attention and one property with tall grass was noted.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Your approach roads banks are in need of a trim. They should not be tightly cut, again with the needs of wildlife in mind.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Making a return visit to Firies after two years the adjudicator is impressed with the progress that has been made and looks forward to seeing the results of developments now under way.