

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **KILLARNEY**
County : **KERRY**
Category : **E**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 05-07-99

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	41	39
The Built Environment	40	33	33
Landscaping	40	35	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	19	18
Litter Control	40	31	31
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	24	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	29	28
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	235	230

Killarney, County Kerry

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The adjudicator would like to thank Killarney Tidy Towns Group for the most comprehensive documentation which was provided, and which was most useful. The Killarney Town Tour was especially helpful. Killarney has adopted a very highly structured approach to the Tidy Towns Competition and this is strongly welcomed. The 5 Year Plan is realistic and is bringing results. The high level of co-operation with other Agencies in Killarney is noted. The plans to expand the scope of the Killarney Looking Good Competition are sensible. The new street signs provided as part of the bilingualism plan are an excellent development and these signs help to personalise the various parts of the town.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The built environment in Killarney is indeed impressive in both the heritage of older buildings and more modern developments. Most of these blend together well to give a character to Killarney which is most attractive. Your plan for signage guidelines is to be encouraged. The present signage in Killarney is much improved on some years ago. However the elimination of some of the surviving projecting signs would be another excellent development. For example there are some projecting signs in New Street which need attention. There are many fine buildings in Killarney which are excellently present. the fire-station and grounds on the bye-pass road has matured well. The various ecclesiastical buildings in Killarney are being excellent maintained and the landscaped grounds in many of these are excellent. the new Tourist Information Office in the Beech Road Car Park makes a good end building to that street, and is well located. The upper floors of some buildings, which are well presented at ground floor level, need attention. Poorer presentation of upper levels detracts from the overall appearance of the building. The new retail centre on Park Road is nearing completion and it is hoped that a high level of appropriate landscaping will be incorporated into the finished project. College Square lacks definition and you might examine this for next year. Increased pedestrian development here would be attractive. At Beech Road the Quinnsworth sign which may indeed be a temporary one needs upgrading. In the same area the many signs on the front (to the Car Park) of the Innisfallen centre need to be rationalised. As well as many well presented old shop fronts there are a number of good modern ones, for example "Frameworks" looks well and has been given simple treatment. The brick portion of the Post office building in New Street requires painting as does the gable wall of the same building.

LANDSCAPING

One of the very special features of Killarney is the very high level of landscaping both in the town and on the approach roads. Much of

this landscaping is now mature and the many trees in Killarney give a beautiful rural quality to the whole area. Your many on-going projects involving landscaping will make an excellent contribution to Killarney when fully completed. The improvements at the Market Cross area are noted, as is the new Heather and Rock Garden at the Grotto. The Fern garden plans are also noted. You have adopted a very structured approach to landscaping and planting, and this helps to bring out the character of Killarney. Obviously in many cases access for deliveries is required. Bridewell Lane is very colourful and looks well.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

You have made very positive efforts to encourage wildlife into the town. The new wildlife areas and viewing points are welcomed. The 15 km Deenagh River walk is an important wildlife area and the information panels along the walk are an excellent feature. Bank reinstatement works have been noted here, and when this area has greened over it will look well. The bat research programme is imaginative and valuable. The heavy planting and landscaping in many parts of Killarney are making a really good contribution to the preservation and development of wildlife and your good work here is commended. It is noted that brochures of the various wildlife trails are in production in co-operation with "Killarney of the Welcomes".

LITTER CONTROL

Litter control in the town centre was quite good on the day of adjudication. However litter was noted on the bye-pass road and near Fitzgerald Stadium on the Lewis Road. Some litter and weed growth was also noted at the Mean Scoil in New Street.

TIDINESS

The more frequent collections at the Bottle Banks are noted. Your Spring Clean Campaign is an initiative that other centres could also carry out. The Grotto railings near the District Hospital require painting. At Ross Castle the Car parking area must receive urgent attention. The area requires filling and gravel surfacing to remove the large ponds of standing water after heavy rainfall. The work carried out by Duchas on Ross Castle is really excellent. Some roadside selling was noted near the Friary and this may detract from the presentation of that part of Killarney. Have you a policy on this? The open yard beside the entrance to Bridewell Lane needs attention. The replacement of the gates by solid timber ones would be an improvement. It is noted, that hopefully, there are development plans for the vacant site near the end of New Street. Car Parks are generally all well presented. The re-lining of car parking space and re-painting of road arrows in some cases is required.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

In general, very many private houses and housing estates are well presented, and many fine mature gardens with much colour were

noted. Excellent presentations were noted on Lewis Road, York Terrace, and Park Road to name just a few. Do continue to encourage private individuals to carry out planting of appropriate scale in their own gardens.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

In general approach roads are well presented and these provide in many cases, very good cover for wildlife. Park Road, Port Road, Muckcross Road and Ross Road are among those roads examined which looked really well. The circular trail signs on various streets and roads look well and add the historical dimension to roads and streets. The high standard of presentation of many back lanes was noted, and this is a good feature of Killarney. St. Anthony's Place appears somewhat devoid of colour and perhaps some small tree planting on the pavement side would help to develop the character of this area. You should try and rationalise parking in back lanes as far as is practicable. Obviously in many cases access for deliveries is required. Bridewell Lane is very colourful and looks well.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The overall presentation of Killarney is very impressive and it is accepted that the high visitor levels to Killarney do not make the Tidy Towns task any easier. In terms of both the built and natural environment there is an excellent feeling of maturity which adds so much character to the town.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (13/08/99)

Killarney was looking remarkably agreeable on a wet Friday in August. The increase in marks is small but significant and reflects the very positive and thorough attitude of the Tidy Towns Group in recent years. It is interesting to see how large new hotels built during the 1990s have blended so quickly with their locations in a way which several hotels of the previous quarter-century did not - partly due to superior design and partly to judicious planting and landscaping. There are only two negative overall points to be made in this second adjudication, and they are ones which the Group will undoubtedly have heard before: a traffic system which makes the word 'control' something of a misnomer (it is extraordinary that town-centre deliveries are allowed during working hours in the tourist season!); and the increasingly untidy signage, much of it on approach roads and therefore providing an initially poor impression. Finally two positive points picked from many: the greatly improved landscaping and public floral displays, and the astonishing range of geraniums running for almost fifty yards at the upper storey of O'Shea's and Blarney Mills.