

"Caring for our environment"

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

Results

Date of Adjudication : 21-06-2000

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2000 | Mark Awarded 1999 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Overall Developmental Approach | 50 | 26 | 26 |
| The Built Environment | 40 | 18 | 18 |
| Landscaping | 40 | 24 | 24 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 30 | 14 | 14 |
| Litter Control | 40 | 24 | 24 |
| Tidiness | 20 | 9 | 9 |
| Residential Areas | 30 | 17 | 17 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 40 | 23 | 23 |
| General Impression | 10 | 6 | 6 |
| TOTAL MARK | 300 | 161 | 161 |

Firies, County Kerry

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

As mentioned last year an overall plan of development work is now needed for Firies to chart the next 3 to 5 years. This plan is particularly important at this stage as there is so much building development and change taking place in the village. The committee must, through their plan, focus on issues that arise with building development and foresee situations in time to have an effect. Building developments frequently go at a very fast pace but the finishing and reinstatement of areas can be very slow unless pressure is brought on developers. Use the Tidy Towns handbook and look at other village developments as well as discussing among your committee and village members the various impacts on your changing village.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The church and school are in very attractive condition. The church is beautifully kept both inside and outside. The railings and stone piers are especially attractive. The gable end of Johnny's pub needs some attention and the old ballroom and cottage with 'for sale' signs signal a final salute to a bygone time. The wall opposite the Post Office is a lovely asset and anywhere that real stone walls can be constructed they lend a great character – a point to be taken when new housing developments are tied into existing village settings. The funeral home is pleasantly presented. The Presbytery gate piers as mentioned last year are ready for painting.

LANDSCAPING

Landscaping should be focused on seriously in your plan. Tree planting in particular could be a good priority. The planting in the school is admirable. While the ornamental trees are attractive they frequently suffer wind damage in exposed sites. Looking around the neighbourhood teaches some essential lessons about trees. Ash and Sycamore thrive in this area and all the big trees are mainly of this type. These lend great character to the area. The people who planted these never could have expected to see them to maturity. We owe it to the next generations to do likewise and we should plant more of these types where space permits – in the school grounds; in the church grounds, at the boundaries of fields adjoining roads such as the corner opposite Pat Sheahans pub and anywhere else that can accommodate them. The large pine trees in the presbytery grounds also deserve the same comment. These pines are a lovely sight now. The planting of the new estates is vital as mentioned earlier – planting at the entrances and on open green spaces within.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The river offers interesting possibilities and this should be investigated. At present the river at the bridge is a lost opportunity and plans that would enable access would be very welcome.

LITTER CONTROL

Despite the disruption of the buildings there is little litter and the ongoing work of your committee in this respect is valuable.

TIDINESS

In the present circumstances it is difficult to present a very tidy appearance. However in the areas such as the school and church and the far end of the village a tidy appearance prevails.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Individual homes always play a significant role in a small village and many of the homes are well kept and the gardens contribute to the overall scene. Good planning for the new gardens will be important and with the treatment of entrances to estates and finishing of sites. The Council Estate is progressing .

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Similar remarks apply here in relation to the new housing. The incorporation of the bridge and the housing estate will be interesting and the relation to the corner at Johnny's pub. The committee should make sure that developers leave this in a satisfactory manner. This is also a time for planning any planting arrangements that might be available. Consult the building plans.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The impression is of a changing village and optimism about the improvements that can be achieved. A plan is badly needed. A change in marks is difficult in the circumstances.