

"Caring for our environment"

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

Results

Date of Adjudication : 22-06-2000

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2000	Mark Awarded 1999
Overall Developmental Approach	50	42	41
The Built Environment	40	34	33
Landscaping	40	38	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	19
Litter Control	40	31	31
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	24	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	29	29
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	241	235

Killarney, County Kerry

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Many thanks for the most informative material submitted with this year's application form. The materials gave a very good understanding of the activities of the tidy towns committee. There is no doubt that the committee has been instrumental not only in raising the standards of Killarney but also in the creation of interest and enthusiasm among so many groups in Killarney. The work of committees varies among entries and with the stage of the development of a town. In your case the ability to influence public authorities and various organisations is vital to the well being and development of Killarney. The "Walkabout 2000" guide of directions for adjudication was an excellent suggestion and this was followed with great interest. Developments are proceeding well and "Killarney Looking Good" slogan is very catchy and effective. New road developments, building programmes, expanded car parking facilities and increased traffic all present their challenges and switch the focus of activity as well as keeping everything looking well.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The standards of tourist accommodation, which comprise such a major part of Killarney, continue to have a very high standard. The many business premises and shops throughout the town have attained an exceptionally high standard. Once upon a time lists could be made of all the attractive shop fronts – now it would be easier to list the few that need upgrading and these would be well known to such an active committee. The Cathedral and the old monastery are indeed highlights. The whole range of Killarney's ecclesiastical architecture makes enjoyable viewing. The wonderful positioning of both St Mary's church and the Methodist church add real character and these are beautifully presented as time passes and towns develop new opportunities evolve. This is very evident with the development of the "backs" of buildings and back lanes. Because car parks for shopping areas now reveal the backs of buildings that were hitherto unseen work must now be done to treat these areas. Back lane shopping takes people into view of areas, which need treatment to bring standards to match. The Bohereencael Glebe is a good example – leading to the large carpark where so many rears of buildings come into view. Now painting and treatment of these areas becomes important. By their nature the backs of buildings have not always been built to look attractive so extra skill and imagination is needed to succeed with this challenge. The lane up by Fas is attractive. Observations in many lanes such as – Old Market Lane, Pawn Office lane, Barry's Lane, Bowers lane, Flemings Lane, Hilliards Lane, Church lane showed a wide range of stages of development. They can create a lovely atmosphere in the town. The lack of

traffic in these lanes is one of their advantages which prompts the question of pedestrianised streets in areas of Killarney. Is this a possibility? The little residential areas of Bridewell lane and Green Lawn are gems. The focus on signage is welcome. Some of the major road directional signs are seriously blocked by trees – as on the road leaving Killarney for Farranfore - and need attention. The signage competition is a very imaginative idea.

LANDSCAPING

Nature has been a major influence in providing such a wonderful landscape in Killarney and the nurturing, interpretation and making access to this is the major attraction of Killarney. There are many splendid uses of the National Park and the river walks allowing both understanding and enjoyment of this great amenity. The relief roads and the planting programmes associated with them are lovely developments. On a more local level the standard of gardens in both the private and business sector is extremely high and this is a tradition in Killarney that continues to grow. There are so many examples to choose from – The Killarney Park Hotel grounds are a delight. The Old Monastery is very tastefully planted with the lime trees, lawns and rose lined entrance and beautiful outside walls with the tiny ferns and herb robert retained, making a fine formula consistent with the building . The Killarney Community school grounds are in a lovely condition with the mature lime trees lining the road outside and the splendid Spanish chestnut tree on the corner at the top of the road. The landscape at McDonalds is well planned and provides a standard for a takeaway restaurant seldom seen. The garden at Gael Scoil, the landscape at the Redmond O’Sullivan memorial, a lovely find up a lane behind shops opposite the post office and the high quality treatment of various roundabouts and traffic islands are commendable. The monument beside the Methodist church is particularly well planted using the copper beech hedging which will be a lovely feature in time. The Cathedral grounds with the well-kept lawns and mature, lime trees are very appropriate to the site. As all these trees are mature consideration needs to be given to future plantings for continuity over the next generations. The numerous planted containers give a colourful lift, which is welcome – particularly in the laneways like Church lane. The carpark by the ESB offices is well concealed with tree planting and some peripheral tree planting around the carpark at the top of Bohereencael Glebe. The Flesk Park is an attractive riverside park. A sign to indicate the position of this would be helpful as would a path system especially as it has the elderly in mind.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The range of amenities in this regard is enormous and with the information provided to visitors a great sense of interest and enthusiasm must be aroused. The National Park and all

its wild life make Killarney a natural heaven and the interpretation and access is commendable.

LITTER CONTROL

For such a large town and with such an influx of tourists the litter level is very good. Litter can be spotted in several places but this is a national problem and certainly not confined to Kerry. The work you are doing with all the organisations is having a great effect and it is marvellous to see, from the material submitted, all the activities in the Killarney Looking Good Environmental Project 1999/2000. It is so encouraging to see so many young people in this project and their influence will be greater than so many national campaigns.

TIDINESS

Again the project as mentioned above has a major bearing on the level of tidiness in the town. The project of the grotto railings is noted. Road works and changed road systems obviously cause some hindrance to tidiness as do building projects but these are only temporary and proper finishing is essential – this is something that the tidy towns committee can have a watchful eye on.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The standard of residential properties is very high. Because the accommodation sector occupies such prominent positions of road frontage throughout the town they portray a very high standard. Housing estates are kept well. Tree planting continues to a priority as so many large green spaces in housing developments offer tree-planting possibilities. Individual homeowners by their careful maintenance of their homes and gardens play a very significant part of the overall as they work away silently.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The roads and roundabouts are in fine condition. The new roads will prove a great advantage and the ability to avoid the centre of the town is marvellous. The volume of traffic and carparking requirements grow at an amazing rate and facilities seem to be swallowed up as they are provided. Pedestrianisation must be a possibility in some areas. The back areas as mentioned above are a real find and as happens in all towns and cities more and more of these open up with business developments and carparking which in turn shows a new set of needs.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

As always Killarney has an unusually high standard of facilities to match the natural beauty of the area. High quality work and developments are the key to success to conform to

the natural resources of the area.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (06/08/00)

The busy town of Killarney was extremely lively with much musical activity on a warm August adjudication day. Due to the abundance of Bed and Breakfast accommodation, it is important that you try to rationalise this signage by having a standard format for same. Do discourage advertising hoardings as they give approach roads a rather cluttered appearance. Also in terms of signage, the badly stained directional signs opposite the Court House leading one into the center of the town were rather badly stained. The adjudicator was pleased to note that the Sensory Garden was maturing well since last visiting the town. The buildings of the main streets were generally well maintained but one or two appeared rather neglected. In particular, a derelict abandoned building beside the Shamrock House looked most unfortunate. Brook Lodge Hotel in its prominent position sported a rather flaky gable wall. A grubby boundary wall to a farmyard on the Castleisland approach also created a bad impression. Litter control could have been better on the day, in particular, outside the Spar on Plunkett Street. Weed growth was evident to the gutter of a building on Main Street terminating the vista of Plunkett Street. The lakeside clean up is a marvellous initiative.