

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kinsale**

Ref: **595**

County: **Cork South**

Mark: **265**

Category: **D**

Date: **07/08/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	46	45
The Built Environment	40	36	36
Landscaping	40	36	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	23	23
Litter Control	40	35	35
Tidiness	20	17	17
Residential Areas	30	28	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	35	34
General Impression	10	9	9
TOTAL MARK	300	265	262

Overall Developmental Approach:

There continues to be a very integrated approach to developments in Kinsale. Working with Cork County Council, the Kinsale Chamber of Commerce and other organisations within the town has enabled the Tidy Towns Committee to go forward with good representation across a wide spectrum of interests with the same goal of improving the Kinsale environment. The enormity of the input of voluntary organisations is a key factor in the success of the town – an input that must be difficult on account of the size of the town. The three-year plan presented is very comprehensive and well focused.

The Built Environment:

The streetside premises and their beautiful standard of presentation give Kinsale its well known and attractive character. Paint and presentation always look well and many people enjoy strolling the streets in admiration of this aspect. The work of the Architectural Advisory Service can take much credit for their efforts with fabric and presentations of both new and old buildings. Sites continue to need attention and these become more obvious as the general standard rises. Premises, particularly in Lower O'Connell Street, will hopefully see changes in the near future. A serious derelict building, just below on the left, mars the beautiful view from the garden of the town hall. Hopefully, the difficulty with infill sites will be resolved. The "Shearwater" development on the quayside is causing a major disruption at present, as is the development across the harbour. When these are complete the quayside will have an interesting new presentation. The market square with the very fine paving

looks attractive and adds to the store of pleasant pedestrian facilities in the town. The brewery building is also a very welcome site and it is wonderful to see this refurbishment. The church buildings in Kinsale are a lovely feature and add to the character of the town. The town hall, standing on high, is a marvelous building, together with the stepped approaches from above and below. The garda station looks well. An ESB building opposite this would benefit from attention.

Landscaping:

The town park, Actions Hotel and the well-known garden "Merlins Keep" bring a welcome and sizable portion of landscaping right into the core of Kinsale on the quayside – this is very attractive. The marvelous array of streetside containers – window boxes and hanging baskets - are greatly admired. The garden and green at the town hall are a lovely feature and are so well maintained. The planting along the stepped approaches to the town hall consist of a good range of shrubs which are ideal to the location, however, the unwelcome bindweed running through these plantations should be dealt with. Surprises, such as the lovely climbing roses in the walkway off Market Square and the town centre gardens of the terraced houses at Assumption Terrace, add to the beauty of the town. The sober line of lime trees approaching the Carmelite friary make an important green statement. Planting and maintenance along the Long Quay looks very well. The approach roads to the town have been carefully treated with good roadside landscaping and this is very helpful. The grassed areas by the roadside beyond the Trident Hotel have a well cared for look.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The marsh area represents an important wild life appreciation area. The plan to shelve the nesting islands is understandable. Hopefully this work will be progressed. Wildlife panel displays are very informative and help to make people aware of the value of the local environment. Specific projects relating to greater wild life appreciation should be developed in conjunction with local interest groups and the schools so that the wealth of information could be more available and that a greater appreciation of wild life could be gained.

Litter Control:

The many campaigns and projects to promote litter awareness and care of local areas are paying off very well in Kinsale. Good street cleaning was noted and it appears that there is a very litter conscious atmosphere within the town. Occasional pieces of litter were noted, but the general standard was very high. Litter lodged at the shrubberies along the steps to the town hall was noticed and some litter by Featherbed Lane also.

Tidiness:

Great efforts are evident through the streets and surrounds of a "tidy attitude" in Kinsale. The carpark by the tourist office could be improved greatly by proper hard and firm surfacing as the dust generated by this at present is very significant and during rainfall the surface is unpleasant. The appearances within the carpark of the backs of the buildings along Emmet Street are not the most attractive despite the murals. Similarly, the backs of the buildings as seen from the Potato Market offer opportunity for improvement. The work on Featherbed Lane is very welcome and this presents a pleasant approach walkway to the housing estate above. The bricked gullies by the roadside below are an attractive detail feature. Nearby, the roof of the engineering works and the site by the building supplies premises are unsightly.

Residential Areas:

On-street housing is a particularly attractive feature of Kinsale. Not only do many of these residences look attractive but they also represent an important living aspect of the town which balances the purely commercial streets. Attractive streets such as Chairman's Lane, for example, lend great character to the town. Apartment developments within the town also look well and can

form either important infill sites or can make use of older building facades. The Guardwell Homes and their surrounding area are interesting. Eltins Wood development has especially attractive colour schemes on the houses and, in a way, this fits very well into the Kinsale theme. Good tree planting, wall building and footpath laying is evident here too. Woodlands and Abbey View were looking very well. Presentation of roadside gardens plays a very significant part of the impression given of housing estates, as do the entrance greens and treatment of open greens within the estates. Residents associations and individual householders who contribute in this respect deserve great praise and credit for their efforts.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The environs of Kinsale are enjoyed by many who like to stroll through the various lanes, squares, streets and passageway steps. Pedestrianisation of these streets would be a marvelous and welcome introduction. Paved areas such as Market Square are interesting and create a good atmosphere within the town. Attractive footpath paving was noted through the town. The approach roads are well treated and signage is good.

General Impression:

Kinsale offers an unique blend of interests which can be availed of by so many people. The developments at Kinsale have facilitated these many interests and the approach to improvements and preservation of the character of Kinsale is a credit to all concerned.

Second Round Adjudication:

The predominately natural / unspoilt approaches to Kinsale, together with the well cultivated entrance points with planted boats are most effective. Once into the town centre, throngs of visitors and locals alike were seen throughout (apart from the upper levels which on this hot day which even exhausted dog; many were seen asleep at the roadsides). It was hard to find fault, apart from a few untidy yards and forecourts, the occasional weedy outbreak and a couple of litter bins beginning to overflow. Besides foreign languages, one was aware of delicious cooking aromas wafting along the narrow streets, resembling an Italian hill town. Walking is the only way to experience Kinsale. Every street seems better than the last as more surprises emerge – sudden glimpses between buildings or from one level to another. The curved corners of buildings were especially enjoyed. It was most encouraging to see some smart contemporary design amidst the beautiful traditional frontages for which Kinsale is renowned, e.g. Fuse Gallery and the entire contemporary building in the name of Dillon Mullins and Co. which sits well in its context.