

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kenmare**

Ref: **454**

County: **Kerry**

Mark: **270**

Category: **D**

Date: **04/08/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	46	46
The Built Environment	40	37	36
Landscaping	40	35	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	27	27
Litter Control	40	37	36
Tidiness	20	17	17
Residential Areas	30	26	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	36	36
General Impression	10	9	9
TOTAL MARK	300	270	268

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for an excellent submission, illustrated street map and an abundance of photographs outlining the work being done by the pupils of the various schools and the floppy disc on the Green School Reports. The Management of Waste at Pobal Scoil Inbhear Scéine is praiseworthy and the first of its kind to pass through the hands of this adjudicator. This illustrates a comprehensive effort by teachers and pupils and of special interest was its relevance to education of a practical nature. Happily, the written text and photographic displays are well matched by the physical presentation of the schools, which were found to be exceptional. You are not resting on your laurels of 2000 and this is commendable. What is needed now is an extension of this attitude and application to the commercial life of the town, bringing the community with you in your endeavours.

The Built Environment:

The town was surveyed thoroughly on foot and by car on the approach roads on a fine June day. The educational and church buildings dominate and are of an exceptional high standard. These are a treat to view and the adjacent schools are without fault, save the requirement of an appropriate name sign on the Pobal Scoil. The environs of Scoil Náisiúnta Chlára Naofa are a delight to witness and the Birdwatch display board is of a high quality. However, it is unlikely bird nesting will take place on such an exposed location around the school. There are numerous attractive shopfronts in Main St., and Henry Street. Those that stood out include O'Donabháin, The Coachman's, The Wander Inn, O Sullivan Ford, Sheehan's Pharmacy, Mc Carthy, Mulcahy's Restaurant, together with An Post and

Bank of Ireland. The Garda Station is a treasure with well presented landscaping: well done. The Health Centre is drab and should be freshly painted. In general buildings are well presented. A great deal of new buildings are springing up and it is hoped their design and structure will be in sympathy with the traditional features of Kenmare. The large new complex at the Killarney approach will need appropriate finish and landscaping. We look forward to a successful conclusion.

Landscaping:

Your very high mark is maintained here and landscaping is of a high standard. The Fair Green Park is a valuable amenity and was well presented on adjudication day. The mature trees here illustrate the value of tree planting for the next generation. Commercial business' and accommodation providers lay great emphasis on good landscaping. The B/Bs are to be complimented in this respect. The strong colour evident in the town is well complemented by a rich array of hanging baskets, window boxes and a plethora of flower displays, all combining to give a fresh colourful appearance to the town. However, you should now consider a new tree planting programme for Main Street. Being relatively wide and one way, it is ideal for a new scheme that would see tree planting on each side in greater numbers than currently. The recent development on O'Connell St., Dublin illustrate how effective tree planting can be. Many towns are now actively engaged in reducing the number of cars from town centres and giving more space back to the people. We support this policy.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Finnihy river offers ample opportunity for the promotion of wildlife. Your involvement with the schools is admirable and the work done on the cleanup at the Pier is acknowledged. Well done on your efforts with birdboxes. The occasional talk from Birdwatch specialists will help promote and popularise wildlife in general.

Litter Control:

Congratulations on your successful efforts in this category. In particular, the principal streets were free of litter and happily no abuse is evident in other areas of the town. This adjudicator was critical of an apparent litter trap at the back of Club Restaurant until it became obvious that a recycling operation is carried out here: well done. Litter bins appeared to be good in quality, adequate in numbers and well positioned on a collection day.

Tidiness:

Your problems here relate to old unattended buildings and new unfinished buildings. The timber pallets beside Hallisseys in the square is unacceptable in a town with such high markings. The site for sale opposite the St. Patrick's Church of Ireland church on the Approach from the GAA pitch is poor in presentation. Perhaps improvements will follow its purchase. The stream beside Rose Cottage is a delight and litter free also. The forecourt of Keal na Gower is poor in presentation and needs attention on this prime site. The information plaques on Finnihy Bridge and throughout the town have gone faded and are now difficult to read. Perhaps the CLÁR funding scheme might help for replacements or refurbishment.

Residential Areas:

This is one of your strong points and many individuals go to great trouble to present their premises to a high standard. Without exception each approach to the town offers splendid developed gardens of high quality. In the town centre many distinctive 19th century houses are strong reminders of the estate era and they are now valuable properties. Some, off the Market Square, are unoccupied and in decline. Surprisingly these houses do not have a name on them. Indeed there is a weakness throughout the town in this respect. We suggest you do a survey of the town and list the gaps on estates and terraces without nameplates: e.g. The c1930s terrace of houses on the approach beyond the Golf Course. You should then embark on erecting appropriate bilingual signs. The new housing

scheme on the Cork road needs to be landscaped.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road quality is good throughout and pot holes seem to be non-existent in Kenmare. The road surface outside the national school is of high quality. One point of note is the many new developments associated with back and side areas. These are now being brought into the core trading areas of the town and offer great scope for improving areas previously neglected. A good example is Rock Street, which has been developed with good taste and is now busy and vibrant. Many side and rear entrances have most interesting architectural features worthy of highlighting and increased commercial development in the town centre will offer potential for highlighting more areas of interest. The whole question of signage is unsatisfactory. Many signs are poor in quality and design and some are quite dirty: e.g. at the corner near An Post. Longterm you will have to tackle the plethora of signs in and around the town as there is a lack of consistency.

General Impression:

It was a delight for this adjudicator to make a first detailed visit to lovely Kenmare and witness first hand the many years of great work and excellence associated with the whole concept of Tidy Towns. There is an air of caring about the town and no doubt a consciousness of the commercial value of a healthy, clean environment. Your challenge now is to cope with the new developments and not allow the traditional rural ethos of the area to submit to the pressure of modernism. You have an important town and an important task to play in the future of Kenmare. Good luck in your endeavours.

Second Round Adjudication:

Kenmare looked magnificent on a bright sunny day and colourful flower displays created a stunning visual impact. Young trees are maturing well and the red-berried Rowan was admired at various locations. Your overall landscaping programme is impressive. Litter control was excellent however scraps were noticed here and there but was not sufficient to present a problem. Tractor tyres were noted in the harbour together with a number of orange-coloured net sacks which were tied at the neck with blue rope. If these are not important for the working life of the harbour they should be removed. The town is being considered for many awards including the Waterside Award. Premises being considered for the shop front award include Mullcahy's, FB O'Sullivan and The Store (all in Henry Street). The plastic canopy on the P.T. Randle's and Son's Victuallers in Main Street looks dreadful. The array of colours in your main shopping areas is visually pleasing. The green waterfront area beside the Kenmare river which features the sculpture was inaccessible at the time of adjudication however it was beautifully presented. Some fingerpost signs were in need of refurbishment and there are far too many signs in the Market Square at its junction with Main Street; some signs need to be realigned. There appears to be many new housing developments in the course of construction and we wish you well for their successful presentation upon completion and for the interest of new residents in the Tidy Towns movement. Henry Street's wire-scape-free status was admired. Hopefully the Main Street will enjoy similar treatment in the not too distant future. Congratulations to all the schools for achieving green flag status. The school children are to be both commended and thanked.