

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Knightstown**

Ref: **157**

County: **Kerry**

Mark: **253**

Category: **A**

Date: **04/08/2004**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2004 | Mark Awarded 2003 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Overall Developmental Approach | 50 | 42 | 42 |
| The Built Environment | 40 | 34 | 34 |
| Landscaping | 40 | 34 | 34 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 30 | 25 | 25 |
| Litter Control | 40 | 36 | 35 |
| Tidiness | 20 | 16 | 15 |
| Residential Areas | 30 | 24 | 23 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 40 | 34 | 33 |
| General Impression | 10 | 8 | 8 |
| TOTAL MARK | 300 | 253 | 249 |

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for a most comprehensive and informative submission, complete with illustrated sketch map and details of work on hand. It was a great pleasure for this adjudicator to make a first appearance to your lovely historic village. What a contrast with the normal run of villages dotted around the region. You have much to be proud of and you are building on your strengths of the great contribution made by Valentia to the commercial and cultural life of Kerry in particular. We commend you for your phased plan and sustained application. You have benefitted well from the various FÁS programmes and this is in evidence throughout the village and beyond. You are in a high league of Tidy Towns and attention to detail and the conquering of many black spots now become all important. You also need to be careful not to depend totally on CEP schemes, bearing in mind that Tidy Towns was built on the voluntary ethos of improving our towns and villages by community endeavour.

The Built Environment:

You have an immense amount of large buildings both public and private and for the most part they are presented to a high standard. Like most villages you are experiencing an inordinate amount of new building projects and this augurs well for the future of Knightstown. You need to impress upon developers the importance of finishing well with appropriate landscaping. New houses mean new residents and this offers you an opportunity to recruit new energy. The area in and around the Pier is excellent and the road surface and layout here is of high quality, with well defined kerbing freshly

painted. You also have a number of derelict and unoccupied houses to contend with and these will need to be tackled if you are to advance in the competition. Of impressive quality were the following: The Lifeboat Station, the Clock and Hut and Knightstown Coffee shop is a blaze of colour. The An Óige Hostel is sorrowful looking and very drab. Could a painting blitz be organised for this important building?: perhaps fee reductions could be offered for voluntary painters in return for accommodation. There are four lovely terraced houses leading down to Pier with distinctive designs. The end one is in need of attention.

Landscaping:

This is one of your strong points and you have worked hard in this section. The numerous landscape projects around the village complement the high colour from freshly painted buildings. The Altazamuth walk is attractive and richly embellished with some good tree planting and a wildflower garden. Well done on identifying the species too. The flower display at the approach road entrance is good and sets the scene for an attractive village. You also have your problems and the open yard area behind the Lifeboat Station is very derelict. Also the large open yard behind Courthouse Cottage is suffering from years and years of neglect. This is a serious black spot for raising your marks and will need to be tackled. The small ESB metal box on the pier is unsightly: ask the authorities if it could be replaced. The grass cutting along the promenade is impressive, coupled with a great display of attractive gardens. The church and environs looked well, but the grass needed cutting.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

More than most centres you have wonderful opportunity to highlight the wildlife of the area. The previously mentioned wildflower garden is lovely. Visitors are always interested in learning about the wildlife species of the area. Well done on the display and information boards, these will help raise your marks in this section. Well done also on the attractive Fáilte sign at the entrance to the village. The plans for the Sensory garden around the old church are commendable and we wish you well in completing this for 2005: we note work has commenced, so good luck with it. The stone monument near Altazamuth is very interesting and must surely be the only one in Ireland identifying mileage to Russia.

Litter Control:

Well done on your efforts here. Despite the large numbers of people using the village and the pier traffic in particular the area was free from litter and this reflects well on your efforts.

Tidiness:

Your problems here have already been touched on and you need to encourage clean-ups of untidy open spaces, attend to derelict buildings and you also have a problem with many boundary walls. We acknowledge the problems of titles and the unwillingness of some owners but as a committee you are best placed to encourage progress. We also note the great usage of indigenous slate for boundary wall and this is praiseworthy. Some of the boundary walls at the houses in Peter Street are poor in presentation. We would suggest you paint them all a single similar colour and make a statement: this would be more effective than a variety of different colours. This may not be acceptable to the freshly painted ones, but would be attractive.

Residential Areas:

The host of early 20th century houses in and around the village are really well presented. There is a great preference for white throughout the village and beyond. We look forward to the many new houses contributing to the enhancement of Knightstown. Tigh an Oileáin is excellent and a model in standard for others to follow. Also the row of large houses beside it with attractive railings mounted on a low wall: ideal in presentation. The village infill of two attractive houses near the telephone

kiosk is an asset to the area. You should pursue the policy of filling in open spaces in the village core, either by landscaping or appropriate building.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads are good and some have excellent landscaping on them. The fáilte signs are also attractive and are serving you well. Some road surfaces around the village are below standard and the Peter St., roadway could be improved. The Heritage Centre housed in the Old School is not the best and has too much material. Best to reduce it by at least 50% and have its presentation improved. Ideally, this material should be in a library or some other suitable building with all year round heating. There is so much material of great interest and quality in danger of deterioration.

General Impression:

It was a delight to visit Knightstown and compare the interesting submission with progress on the ground. You can be well pleased with your success and your challenge now is to maintain the high standard and tend to the black spots. You have raised your marks just a little. Good luck for 2005. Oh yes, the village does look well from the ferry crossing.

Second Round Adjudication:

Knightstown looked wonderful at the time of second adjudication approaching the village from both land and sea. The village was litter free with the exception of the water in the harbour which did show a few small items of litter namely a drinking can, a crisp bag and a J clothe packet. No litter bins were noted and the adjudicator carried an ice-cream stick to the next centre to dispose of same; is this part of your strategy? Well done on your wire scape free status, it shows your village centre off to good effect. The Dive Centre needs improvement as does the roadside boundary of the Royal Pier Hotel. We note with interest the latter handsome building is for sale. Might a coordinated colour scheme be considered for the terrace of two storey houses overlooking the waterfront or at least perhaps the plain cement finished ones could be painted white. New housing developments looked promising and we wish you well in integrating your new neighbors into the village itself and indeed into the Tidy Towns movement. A new stretch of footpath has been noted also. We look forward to your proposed Sensory Garden in the old church. No doubt this will be at a mature stage of development by next years competition. Roadside verges of approach roads were in good condition and indeed your display of wildflowers continue to impress. Knightstown is being considered for the Waterside award. Well done on a fine presentation.