

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Listowel**

Ref: **546**

County: **Kerry**

Mark: **256**

Category: **D**

Date: **05/08/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	46	45
The Built Environment	40	37	36
Landscaping	40	36	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	25	25
Litter Control	40	31	29
Tidiness	20	16	15
Residential Areas	30	24	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	33	32
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	256	249

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for an excellent submission and details of work on hand and work planned. Your separate listing of projects planned is commendable. You have a very large area under adjudication and new developments are taxing your efforts and commitment, so well done. We have observed the great progress in recent years and your policy of involving as many relevant agencies as possible is to your credit. Almost every approach road is undergoing development and changing the face of Listowel. Your challenge is to ensure the character and traditional features of the town, for which you are renowned, remain an integral part of an evolving town. To date you have concentrated on the square and adjoining streets and these are of exceptional quality.

The Built Environment:

The square continues to dominate the excellence of the town and the castle is now a major factor in enhancing this area. We hope that by next year the hoarding will be removed and the castle exposed in all its glory. Well done on the Seanchaí signage which is dignified and effective. The stone street furniture on the square is attractive and you seem to have installed new pieces every time this adjudicator visits the town. The upper storey of the Bank of Ireland is now in need of painting. The schools impressed again this year and most have rich landscaping and all were litter free. The Civic Centre is excellent and a model for others to pursue. We found the 15 coy building below expected standard: could the members be persuaded to paint it. Congratulations on the Lartigue development and we wish it well. However, we hope you will go the 'extra mile' and improve the environs. We

wish to acknowledge all the excellent shopfronts, commercial buildings, garages, supermarkets, pubs and food outlets, on a colourful display.

Landscaping:

Spacious parks, mature and young trees, river and river banks, rich colourful shrubbery, attractive approach roads and a plethora of flower displays combine to present a high standard of landscaping. Your award winning Garden of Europe sets the scene for the rest of the town and the high presence of attractive planting in the town park and on the river bank is to your credit. We suggest you erect a couple of small confirmatory finger signs at the entrance to the Garden of Europe as strangers may not realise where exactly it is. You should also commemorate its ten years since opening. The limestone arch is dramatic travelling in over the bridge and provides a fitting introduction to the park. The seasoned rubble at the council premises beside the arch should be cleaned up. Tree planting of previous years continues to enhance the many streets, car parks, and approach roads. Well done on the clean-up at the Famine graveyard. Perhaps you might paint the gate fronting the roadway . You have a great deal of landscaping at John B. Keane road, some of it now needing a clean-up.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

We read with interest your work on this category, so well done. You are endowed with a plethora of areas of habitat and the river walk is an excellent location for the promotion of wildlife. We notice the ball alley has been painted and is now free of abuse. Of course in most cases wildlife areas need to be left alone, so don't overdevelop.

Litter Control:

In many places the new litter problem seems to be in the area of cigarette butts, which seems to be an occupational hazard from car drivers while parking. Litter control is a major task for you and committee and no doubt for the local authorities also. Litter control in the square and main streets was good and just a little observed in the cinema area. You do have a problem with abuse at the praiseworthy recycling units, a situation not unique to Listowel. However, all the schools were examined, and the many back lanes were, for the most part, litter free, excluding the back of Collins Inn at the Mart which was a big disappointment in such a central location. We acknowledge your programme of involving the school children, community groups and your close association with the litter warden.

Tidiness:

Your problems here relate to derelict buildings, neglected open areas, poor boundary walls, and some untidy back lanes. The environs of the newly developed Lartigue area already mentioned need some improvement, but we are confident it will come in time. In general the town was neat and tidy and concerted efforts are evident. We like the infill development of four houses near the library.

Residential Areas:

Like most towns you are witnessing a huge residential development in almost every direction. Life is made easier for the adjudicator with good street and name plates throughout the town and we commend you for this. The large housing estate off John B. Keane road is an indication of a growing town. Well done on your Best Kept Estates Competition and your continued efforts in these areas. Of course new housing estates should provide opportunity for new recruits to your committee. We liked the tree planting at Cluain Doire: an appropriate name for tree planting no doubt.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road streets are well developed, well maintained and well defined. The limestone kerbing has been

alluded to in previous reports and the road structure at the square excels. Putting overhead cables underground is now a bonus. We notice added developments in back areas and these areas are now part of the core adjudication: e.g., the back entrance of O'Connors Pharmacy. Well done on the development to the racecourse.

General Impression:

The town was judged on the 22 June and observed over a three-day period. The improvements in recent years are obvious to all and the town's infrastructure is now serving residential and commercial developments well. We support the policy of removing cars from the streets by providing improved car parking: we see this as enhancing the environment and creating a town rich in architecture, generous in landscaping and welcoming to all who visit it. An other good performance by Listowel

Second Round Adjudication:

It was a pleasure to revisit Listowel on the occasion of second adjudication, the presentation of the town was excellent. A high standard has been achieved both in terms of litter control and landscaping (including flower displays). Your young trees and shrubs are maturing well and were seen to best effect on a very pleasant August morning. The stretch of kerb to the green area which boasts the sculpture at the entrance to the town from the Tralee road was weed choked which was surprising as this was the only such incident in the town on the day. Previously untidy sites have now been redeveloped with a resulting improvement under this heading, the most obvious one being the site near the carpark in the town centre. Well done! The new Londis Supermarket on the Ballybunion road was admired and many other successful infill buildings have been noted. Of the existing building stock JR Delicatessen and Home Bakery together with Boston and Uí hAlpín in Church street are being considered for the shop front award as is the Olive Stack Artist premises in Main Street. Listowel is also being considered for the inclusive Access Award for the dishing of footpaths and accessibility of parking, etc. The surrounds of the old station house at the Lartigue Monorail could have been a little more tidy, building materials were noted however it is acknowledged that this is a work in progress. The building itself could be improved if door and window apertures were nicely painted. The Shanachi Centre is being considered for the Heritage Award; the organic market here on adjudication day was an added bonus to the heritage experience and the food purchased was wonderful. Well done on your continuous progress in the competition, we look forward to many repeat visits.