

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kells-Kilkenny**

Ref: **41**

County: **Kilkenny**

Mark: **219**

Category: **B**

Date: **13/01/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	35	34
The Built Environment	40	30	30
Landscaping	40	27	25
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	19	18
Litter Control	40	35	34
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	25	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	27	27
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	219	213

Overall Developmental Approach:

Kells Tidy Towns Group is obviously a very enthusiastic one, to judge by the information submitted by you, with your application. It was reassuring to see that you have sought a high level of expert advice in order to improve the village. The urban design study was a very useful and worthwhile document which made very interesting reading. Your three year plan certainly made interesting reading. The installment of cobbles in the village street should be a well worthwhile project. Do ensure that these are of a suitable quality and style to the village - use stone if its affordable and not brick paviors which have been used inappropriately, to this adjudicator's mind, in many Irish villages over recent years! For next year's competition perhaps you could colour code and annotate your map in order to make it clearer and thus aid adjudication.

The Built Environment:

Both public and commercial premises in the village looked well on adjudication day. The tiny church in its prominent location looked well, as did the pubs and shops and well maintained Community Hall near the bridge on the Kilkenny side of the village. The shops and pubs at the upper level of the village also looked extremely well, as did the school, which was extremely fresh, on the road to St. Kieran's church. Work appears to be ongoing to the Priory. There were a number of recently constructed stone pillars which presumably are intended for the purposes of providing information plaques in this location. It is to be hoped that these will be put in place in the not to distant future, in order to assist visitors in understanding this complex of buildings.

Landscaping:

The attractive planted beds each side of the bridge on the Kilkenny approach were greatly admired. There were numerous private floral displays in the form of window boxes and hanging baskets to individual properties. The means of entry to the Priory was somewhat confusing as there are two mill buildings! Unfortunately that containing the museum appeared to be closed on adjudication day. The attractive area around the village pump was admired, as was the working pump water feature at the top of the village. The attractive picnic areas by St. Kieran's Church and also by the Mill looked extremely well. Regarding the former, the church itself is still quite weedy inside as commented on by last year's judge and this adjudicator was not convinced by the feature of incising the village name into the grass in this location! It would seem to require a high level of maintenance.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your plans to develop a wildlife preserve are to be commended. Bird boxes were spotted by the waters edge walk from the Mills to the Priory. Perhaps get the local school children involved in drawing up a map of areas of wildlife interest in their locality and provide an information board at this spot. Certainly there was an abundance of bird life and butterflies evident on adjudication day!

Litter Control:

The standard of litter control on the day was extremely good. A single bottle was spotted by the Priory, however.

Tidiness:

For the most part, buildings looked neat and tidy on adjudication day. A flaky premises in the centre of the village contrasted with the general good impression made. The adjudicator was pleased to see that the recycling area had been moved, as suggested by last year's adjudicator. Perhaps you could consider sealing the hand-painted map on the metal base at the car park area by St. Kieran's Church, as it is beginning to look a little bit shabby and will need protection from the elements.

Residential Areas:

Properties within the village and along approach roads looked well on the day. Of particular note was a charming red house on the Kilkenny side of the village with hanging baskets, window boxes and tubs filled with geraniums. The very attractive stone cottages and thatched cottage, in the vicinity of the mill area looked extremely well. New houses are generally fitting in well with the existing urban fabric of the village. Of particular note was that near to St. Kieran's Church. An attractive stone cottage near the pump water feature sported a very charming rose garden.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads, in terms of grass verges, were generally well maintained and afford the visitor a magnificent view to the village and all of its wealth of heritage. A stone wall was noted in progress on the day on the Kilkenny approach. Road surfaces were generally in bad condition, unfortunately.

General Impression:

Kells is a most attractive village with a wealth of architectural heritage. Its residents show an obvious pride and sense of place. Well done on all the good work so far and good luck with your future endeavours.

