

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Firies**

Ref: **759**

County: **Kerry**

Mark: **183**

Category: **B**

Date: **01/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	29	28
The Built Environment	40	25	22
Landscaping	40	26	26
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15	15
Litter Control	40	25	25
Tidiness	20	12	10
Residential Areas	30	20	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25	23
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	183	175

Overall Developmental Approach:

Firies is welcome to the 2005 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission. We note the absence of a planned work programme and recommend that you prepare one for next year. It is good to note that you have local support and that you work in cooperation with statutory bodies. Your community activities including the parish Newsletter is an excellent way of getting people involved in the Tidy Towns movement. We acknowledge your need for community amenity facilities such as playing field and playing area and your activities to acquire these for the community. Perhaps you could give us a little more information next year on the proposed renewal of Mallahiffe Fair.

The Built Environment:

The school, the church and the community hall were all nicely presented including their grounds, the school was especially well painted. Commercial premises looked well but again you are urged to have the dated plastic neon beer signs removed from the pubs and replaced with more appropriate signage if necessary. Well done on work accomplished for graveyard.

Landscaping:

We wish you well in your consultations with Kerry County Council regarding village renewal status

for Firies and the overall landscaping of the village. The hedgerow opposite the school was neatly trimmed but the field boundary looked less well. The school grounds was admired and flower containers including window boxes at a number of locations were colourful and profuse. Young trees appear to be establishing themselves well. Try to ensure that native species are planted as these increase diversity of wildlife habitats.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your activities here are interesting which include bird nesting boxes, feeding tables and wormeries; we would like some more information on the success or otherwise of the latter with next years submission. The small river was overgrown at the time of adjudication and so its recreational amenity value was limited; however it is likely to be a haven for wildlife. A wildlife survey should be undertaken in order to identify habitats and put in place protective measures in the event of further development within Firies.

Litter Control:

Litter control was strong in the village on adjudication day, well done. Your negotiations with Firies National School regarding the application for green flag status is an excellent initiative as is the proposed acquisition of a composter. Bring us up to date on your daily litter management activities and your overall litter management strategy with next years submission as these can be a source of additional marks.

Tidiness:

Well done on your annual clean ups and the painting of shopfronts. The site at the telephone kiosk at the road junction is an important focal point of the village and appears to be in line for redevelopment; hopefully this will complement the overall character of Firies. Weedy kerbs were noted in too many instances which suggests neglect. The recycling point in the public carpark was tidy at the time of our visit. Derelict premises on the Faranfore approach road, which appear to be outbuildings, need some treatment. Although these are outside the nameplate they are still a part of the village for adjudication purposes.

Residential Areas:

Well done on the bilingual namestones for new housing developments, these are particularly attractive. A number of grass verges in residential developments appear not to have been levelled properly and are overgrown, this will need to be redressed to improve your performance under this heading, tree planting in these verges however were noted and admired. Cois na hAbhan is an example of a new estate with neglected verges and kerbs. Weedy kerbs were a feature of footpaths in most residential developments. Most dwellings are well painted and are attractively presented. An older estate of detached bungalows was beautifully presented with excellent gardens, footpaths and kerbs and the view of the mountains from this estate is an added bonus.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The nameplate on the Faranfore Road should be relocated further out the approach road as it is too close to the village for safety and other reasons. A stretch of new footpath which had not yet been finished in terms of its surface was noted. Verges on the Faranfore approach were overgrown to the extent that the school road sign was hidden and not visible until the last possible moment. The road edge along the Faranfore Road is in need of resurfacing also. Verges on the Dingle approach were neatly presented. The church car park which is neat in presentation should be resurfaced eventually to replace the stone chippings. We note from your submission daily sweeping by residents and this is commendable.

General Impression:

Firies village is attractive that enjoys a good standard of maintenance and presentation except in the areas of verges and weedy kerbs. Firies is undergoing a transition from being a tiny rural village to being a commuter village. New residents will present both a challenge and an opportunity to the community and we have no doubt that the committee are prepared to accept both.