

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kenmare**

Ref: **272**

County: **Kerry**

Mark: **272**

Category: **D**

Date: **18/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	46	46
The Built Environment	40	37	37
Landscaping	40	35	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	27	27
Litter Control	40	37	37
Tidiness	20	17	17
Residential Areas	30	27	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	37	36
General Impression	10	9	9
TOTAL MARK	300	272	270

Overall Developmental Approach:

Kenmare has been a headline for many towns and villages to follow over the past number of years. It is marvelous that the enthusiasm for further improvements and maintaining what has been achieved is present. The particularly large committee of 50 to 100 people is no surprise when one considers all the facets of the towns developments that have taken place. The continued plans which very importantly place the care and maintenance of the existing features of the town as a priority are very positive. The ESB undergrounding of cables is a further priority, which will make a great difference when completed. Paint is a key word in all plans at Kenmare. Concentrations on litter awareness campaigns are vitally important and it is good to see this also figures prominently in the plans for 2005. The community volunteer work force is vitally important for completion of the programme and this is a valuable aspect of the tidy towns movements as it promotes community development and cohesion.

The Built Environment:

The many well-presented shop preemies through the streets of the town give a lovely display and people are frequently are seen gazing in amazement at the spectacle. The footpath work in progress is causing some disruption and extra dust along the street. The result of this work will enhance the entire street. The Hotels and Guesthouses look very well and these buildings have become landmarks in and around the town. The Catholic Church is a magnificent buildings and the setting forms a lovely backing to the town square fair green. St. Patrick's Church is also attractive and

particularly of note with the mature Yew trees and lovely coloured Myrtle trees. The church railings and that of the town park look very well. New building developments are noted and the sale of the garage premises opposite St Patrick's Church was noted. The Petrol station opposite the Garda station also appears to be closed suggesting more sites for redevelopment. The Rose Cottage and adjacent houses with historic Poor Clare connection adds a nice characteristic to the town. The pedestrianised area by Bridge Street looks very well and the pedestrian bridge is attractive. The Buildings at the carpark look well. The Tourist office and Courthouse are looking very smart now. Buildings along Henry Street with their individualistic styles contribute well to the fabric of the town.

Landscaping:

The very striking displays of containerised plantings in the streets form a distinctive part of the landscape of the town. These are colourful, well placed and well maintained. The Fair Green is well cared for and the large trees give a lovely green foil to the town. The Fair Green is well used and acts as a core to the town. Landscaping along the approach to the Pier is attractive - the grassed areas are well tended and give a neat appearance. The delightful riverside garden at the pedestrian bridge by Bridge Street is a great asset and suggests possibilities for all sides of the riverbanks at that point. Incorporation of trees as close to the centre of the town streets as possible is always desirable and any opportunities should be used. Individual gardens of private houses and the grounds of the hotels and guest houses play a huge role in providing good landscaping in the town – congratulations to all who contribute so well in this way. The open space park area on approach to the bridge (Sound Road) looks very well and forms a lovely entrance with the large sculptures in place. The Reenagross Park is makes beautiful strolling grounds. The approach and area of the stone circle appears a little in need of extra attention.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The coastline is invaluable as a wildlife interest source and every effort made to bring awareness and information as to how people can enjoy this facility is worthwhile. The Reenagross Park adds further to the opportunity for wildlife appreciation.

Litter Control:

Very good litter control was noted in the town. Some litter was noted on the main street and the Market area in the evening. However on an extensive walk of the town and surrounds the standard was shown to be consistently high. Continued campaigns are needed and all the initiatives to focus on litter awareness do pay off.

Tidiness:

A watchful eye needs to be kept on the little stream to the front of Rose Cottage. The Japanese knotweed has obscured the view of the stream now and a clearing back would be helpful to restrain this vigour weed. The Rock Street area – just behind O'Sullivan's Mountain Supermarket, materials have accumulated. The pallets as mentioned last year remain in place by the side of Hallisseys. Thankfully the sale of the garage holds hope for a brighter future of this prominent part of the town entry. The disruption of the paving works is taking its toll and hopefully this work will be completed soon so that this years complete tourist season will not be affected.

Residential Areas:

There is a wide range of residential houses in and around Kenmare – from the old terraced houses in vicinity of New Road, Parnell Place and Pound lane to the new estates and the individual houses along approach roads. It is good to see residential accommodation right in the centre of the town. The developments in the Forelands area are interesting particularly with the complete landscaping - leaving no scope for individual occupiers contribution. As with shops premises so too with houses it is the one or two along the street or road needing attention that stands out when the rest are of a

high standard. The kernel point of all residences regardless of size or location is the care and attention that individual house occupiers give to their premises and road frontage. Incentives that encourage better care are very worthwhile as the net result benefits the entire town's appearance. In general Kenmare has a high standard of premise maintenance.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads are in good condition. The Sneem exit has very attractive roadside verges, well maintained grass and shrubberies. The tarmacadamed footpaths were noted here. On all the exits the natural countryside is met with very quickly and it is good that there is such a fast transition. The focus of attention on the many back lanes around by New Road which appear to be opening up now will help to bring these areas to a high standard. The carparking areas at the national Schools are well surfaced and marked.

General Impression:

The high standards that we are accustomed to experiencing in Kenmare continue happily. It is a delight to stroll the street, proceed towards the pier walk and then around by Reenagross park and back to the town centre. The many new developments taking place need careful efforts to ensure cohesion with the existing town.

Second Round Adjudication:

The Rent an Irish Cottage Scheme on the Sneem Road looked well. There are a number of new housing schemes throughout the town, as there recently are in most towns and villages throughout the country, it would seem! These should be monitored carefully to ensure that they are of a design and finish, in terms of materials and landscaping that are suitable to the character of the town. It would be worthwhile to look at your signage, in terms of fingerpost signs, and try to achieve a consistency in style and design, in order to reduce the cluttered effect that these give to roadsides. This has been successfully achieved in other centres that have, as Kenmare does, a high level of visitor numbers. The sign to Timber Products near the bridge on the Sneem side of the town was broken and should be repaired. New tiles advertising Heritage Sights of the town, were admired in a number of locations. There were one or two empty buildings along the streets, such as O'Mahony's and Mc Carthy's, on Main Street. Hopefully these will be restored to their former glory in the not too distant future. The Landsdowne Arms Hotel looked quite fresh. An unusual ceramic step to Chleo's, on Hawthorn Street looked well. Hallissey's looked neglected in its prominent location and the Social Welfare office should be repainted before next year's competition. A rusty litter bin looked