

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ennis** Ref: **68**
County: **Clare** Mark: **288**
Category: **G** Date(s): **24/07/2006**
07/08/2006

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	49
The Built Environment	50	39
Landscaping	50	40
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	29
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	35
General Impression	10	9
TOTAL MARK	400	288

Overall Development Approach:

Ennis is welcome to the 2006 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your excellent submission which was most interesting to read, particularly the section in your book Caring for our Town entitled "Sixty of the World's Great Places". The committee are to be congratulated on their achievements to date and particularly on gaining the cooperation of the various development agencies and organisations and the local schools. The adjudicator enjoyed the exhibition in the Clare Museum and was most impressed by its access ability for all.

The Built Environment:

Ennis town has a wonderful built environment and many attractive shopfronts and indeed some of these were considered for awards including Brogans / O Brogains. A premises behind the O'Connell monument would be greatly improved in appearance if its three plastic neon signs were removed and its individual lettering straightened, this is the MF Casey premises. The Ennis Cash Company would also benefit by a face lift given its location in the heart of Ennis. The upper stories of the Kielys premises and Bradys Lane is in need of attention also and some shabby buildings overlooking the car park at Abbey Street are in need of attention. The Kings Bar and Carvery premises have been considered for the shop front award.

Landscaping:

The square enclosed by the Temple Gate Hotel and the Riches of Clare Museum has been beautifully landscaped and it being maintained to the highest standard and was greatly admired at the time of our visit. Your public art trail is appreciated also and was being enjoyed by the community during inspection. Stands of mature trees together with colourful flower displays in both beds and containers strike a nice balance throughout the town and are complemented by numerous examples of beautifully landscaped grounds to both private and civic buildings.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

What a pleasure it was to experience your wildlife right in the heart of the town and to witness the public enjoyment of your ducks and geese on the river. A word of warning here, some people feeding the wild fowl disposed of the bags they were using in the river, which is detrimental of course to wildlife. Perhaps some signage regarding the dangers of this might be considered. Your wildlife display panels are informative and serve to heighten awareness and appreciation of wildlife, however they looked a little the worse for wear and could be refurbished. Well done on the maintenance of the wildlife garden at De Valera Library. No doubt the planned school trips to the river walk and the wildlife garden will be a success.

Litter Control:

Litter control was good overall around the town, however some places were better than others, for example O'Connell Street was cleaner than Parnell Street. The litter consisted mostly of cigarette ends and small scraps of paper. Some litter was noted in the river also, this has been referred to above and some takeaway litter was noted on verges, however this was not significant. We wish you well in the provision of CCTV cameras at two of your recycling centres in order to catch those dumping materials here.

Waste Minimisation:

Your Composting Workshops organised by Ennis Town Council in association with the Tidy Towns Committee are an excellent initiative and we note the increase in demand for composters. It is good to note the segregation of litter during clean ups. To perform at your full potential under this heading it will be necessary to devise ways of minimising the amount of waste generated in addition to collecting for recycling, your Race Against Waste brochures from the Department are an excellent source of ideas under this heading.

Tidiness:

Both Brady's Lane together with Merchant's Square were poorly presented lanes. The plastered wall of the latter being spoiled by graffiti, a third lane in the same street was in need of refurbishment also. Well done on your signage and redundant poles initiative, hopefully this will bear fruit in the not too distant future. The overall appearance of Ennis town was one of tidiness.

Residential Areas:

Quite a significant number of residential developments did not have nameplates, perhaps this could be addressed at some stage. Work in progress was noted on a number of new housing developments, hopefully new residents will mean extra hands for the Tidy Towns effort. St. Flannans is a charming row of cottages on the Clare Road, however a number of boundary walls here were in need of attention. Well done on the organisation of a spring clean for residential estates in April together with Green Areas Competition in early summer and the Best Kept Garden competition. It is initiatives like these which make a significant difference to the overall appearance to a town.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road and footpath surfaces were generally good throughout the town and attractive kerb stones were a feature of the town centre, especially in Bank Square. Your activities regarding monitoring of approach roads is acknowledged together with your regular meetings regarding a strategy for dealing with derelict and development sites. Reference has already been made to laneways, it is important that these are as nicely maintained as main thoroughfares. Street furniture looked well and it was a pleasure to note the wirecap free aspect of the town centre.

General Impression:

The difficulties involved in presenting the town to a high standard are acknowledged, particularly the difficulties of through traffic and an increased population. Ennis looked beautiful at adjudication this year and lived up to its performance when it achieved the National Tidy Towns Overall Winner Award. We wish you well in the implementation of your planned work programme.

Second Round Adjudication:

The 2nd Round Adjudicator was pleased to have the opportunity of returning to Ennis not having visited for some years. So much seems to have been achieved here in a relatively short period of years. O'Connell Street looked well on the day of the visit and the many hanging baskets and window boxes brought much colour to this important spine route in Ennis. It is a pity however that nearby High Street does not seem to have been given the same degree of attention in terms of landscaping. The many narrow lanes, some quite short in Ennis help to give character to the town. A few of these lanes were a little untidy such as Thompsons Lane where litter was also noted. The apparent lack of litter control on the day of the 2nd Adjudication visit

was a disappointment. Litter was noted on the approach road from Kilrush on the left hand side in the general area of the Campus Garage. Closer to the centre of Ennis litter was noted again at Linnane's Terrace. In the River Fergus opposite River Lane litter and other rubbish was a feature. In the centre of Ennis litter also featured. Cigarette butts are a problem for Ennis as they become lodged in pavement cracks and other crevices. On O'Connell Street poor road surfaces were noted in places where the road meets the kerbs and some pavement kerbing was cracked or broken. The street signs with the blue and white colour scheme are most attractive and it was great to see the Irish languages used on these signs. Among many buildings that caught the eye was the Town Hall. When this building is next being repainted there is potential to use a stronger colour to highlight window and door detailing. Landscaping is one of the very strong features of the town and the landscaping at the Cathedral looked fresh and crisp on a warm day. On O'Connell Street the attractive support poles painted black for the hanging baskets were added to the streetscape. The approaches to the town were well presented as were residential areas.