

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kenmare** Ref: **339**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **285**
Category: **D** Date(s): **18/07/2006**
10/08/2006

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2006 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Overall Development Approach | 50 | 47 |
| The Built Environment | 50 | 37 |
| Landscaping | 50 | 36 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 50 | 28 |
| Litter Control | 50 | 37 |
| Waste Minimisation | 20 | 5 |
| Tidiness | 30 | 19 |
| Residential Areas | 40 | 29 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 50 | 38 |
| General Impression | 10 | 9 |
| TOTAL MARK | 400 | 285 |

Overall Development Approach:

Kenmare is welcome to the 2006 National Tidy Towns Competition. Kenmare enjoys a wonderful location on the Kenmare River and Kenmare Bay and is also well located on the Kerry Way. The town has a wonderful cultural and environmental heritage and the community in Kenmare obviously values their heritage as is evident in the overall maintenance and appearance of your town. Well done on your work with local schools and on the Green Flag status for four of these. Your hands on approach is certainly paying dividends.

The Built Environment:

The beautiful streetscapes in the centre of Kenmare are one of the town's most attractive features, together with distinctive and well presented shop fronts. Discourage the positioning of posters in windows and doors as this can spoil an otherwise attractive presentation, this was evident on both The Square Pint premises and The Post Office premises. The canopy on the Randles premises looked quite poor and should be replaced with the open ended straight edge retractable type of canopy which are more traditional. The curtilage area of the Credit Union could be improved upon. Both the Library and the Garda Station and other public buildings were presented to the highest standard. The view of the church spire against the backdrop of wooded hills along Henry Street is one of the most pleasing aspects of Kenmare. Well done on work achieved for this year's competition.

Landscaping:

The entrance to the town from the N71 approach road was defined by well maintained verges, stands of mature trees and attractive shrubberies, however an overgrown and weedy corner to the planted area marking the entrance to the Business Development premises was a little unattractive. Landscaping at churches and schools, together with the landscaped village green, are characteristic features of Kenmare. Your beautiful waterside park on the Castletownbere road has been considered for the Landscape Award. Stands of mature

trees were admired at many locations in Kenmare and on approach roads and the adjudicator was surprised to see the Rowan in berry so early in the season. Well done on the planting of trees along the Main Street and Bridge Street which hopefully will become well established and provide food for wildlife and a heritage for future generations. We wish you well for your plans for Reenagross Park and the introduction of new species.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The meadow of wild flowers on the N70 approach road looked wonderful at the time of our visit. The foreshore area of the bay and the pier were beautifully presented and were being enjoyed by the community, well done on the ongoing maintenance of both of these areas. We wish you well in your plans to keep access to wildlife at the rear of the pier and at the stone circle together with access to Cromwells Bridge. The Reenagross sign was partially obscured by the vegetation, perhaps it could be repositioned.

Litter Control:

On the day of inspection only three pieces of litter were noted on approach roads, all of which were take-away litter. One piece was noted in the town centre. No doubt your involvement with schools, together with your seven day street cleaning operation, plays a major role in this success. We wish you well in your campaign to have cigarette containers placed outside public houses. Congratulations to the pupils of schools for their participation in the Clean Up Day of beaches.

Waste Minimisation:

Your recycling point was being maintained in a tidy manner and appears to be being well used. We note from your submission your organisation of a lecture on composting and eco-friendly practices at your local school; hopefully Kerry County Council will provide extra bins for the disposal of organic waste for private households. Your waste minimisation and recycling for businesses seminar has been noted as has your plan to target self-catering, B&Bs and hotels regarding same. Try to identify ways in which the amount of waste generated by different sectors of the community can be minimised, in addition to collecting for recycling. Congratulations to Pobalscoil Invhear Sceine for their Green Flag initiative.

Tidiness:

A large number of building sites were noted in the town and on approach roads, all of which the adjudicator was happy to see were well contained with no overspill of untidiness into the public realm. Weedy footpaths were noted to the new housing development out the road towards the railway station (according to your map). The enclosure to the Kenmare Crash Repair premises was quite good. Well done on the refurbishment of the railings at the square and repainting of signs. Fly posting was not a problem in the town at the time of our visit and we note your on going initiative regarding the ducting of overhead service cables. We wish you well with the new traffic management plan.

Residential Areas:

It was a pleasure to note that the new development behind Henry Street and into Market Square echo's the existing terrace of charming older dwellings in their designs. The holiday homes development on the N70 look well, together with other dwellings which feature natural stone boundary walls. An attractive terrace of two storey dwellings on the entrance from the Kilgarvan Road featured neat hedgerow boundaries. It is good to note that developers plant trees and shrubs in their new development as part of the development itself. Hopefully new residents will understand the amount of voluntary labour that goes into keeping Kenmare clean and will participate in the Tidy Towns initiative.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The Neidin namestones are a nice touch at entrances from approach roads, stone walls are an attractive feature also. The footpath along the N70 was in need of scuffing to remove the build up of gravel and a few potholes were noted along this road also. It is suggested that the footpath on the N71 be extended out to the nameplate. Try to reduce the number of signs which feature at the corner of the junction with the N70 as there are so many that it becomes impossible to pick one out. Congratulations on the wirescape free aspect of Henry Street, no doubt Shelbourne Street will enjoy similar treatment in the not too distant future. Car parks are well presented and car parking in general is well organised however in this adjudicator's opinion there is too much on street car parking and car parking along Shelbourne Street should be organised on a side to kerb basis to reduce the negative visual impact. Street furniture, including lampstandards, are nicely presented. The footpath leading to the Stone Circle is in need of refurbishment and perhaps an interpretative panel could be placed at this feature for ease of understanding.

General Impression:

Kenmare is a wonderful town which enjoys a wonderful range of natural amenities together with culture heritage and an attractive built environment and has much to offer the community, travelling public and the

tourists.

Second Round Adjudication:

The vast amount of Self Catering accommodation development and other residential accommodation is overwhelming in and around Kenmare. You are now facing a new era of a huge discrepancy between seasonal and off season resident numbers and this is already reflected on the 'bursting at the seams' traffic congestion in the town centre. A 5 p.m inspection found a town jam packed with visitors and the ending of market day also. Movement in and around the town was bordering on the chaotic. However, no marks are lost or gained for such problems which are outside the scope of the Tidy Towns committee. To your credit the town was litter free, almost in total and the great amount of colour from hanging baskets and various types of containers is praiseworthy. Henry Street offers a plethora of well presented shopfronts, many with attractive traditional features, e.g., Virginia's, Sue Designer Knits, and Kenmare Gift Shop to name but some. The Garda station has been long admired by this adjudicator and is probable the best presented in the Region. The signage in and around Sneem is causing problems and the maze of finger signs at the Sneem Cross is a mess, and probably a traffic hazard also. As always the church and adjoining schools are superb. The stone plaque dedicated to Fr. Michael Murphy at the Ionad Oidhreachta sums up your wonderful achievements for recent years and we commend all concerned for a great performance in Kenmare this year.