

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Lauragh** Ref: **344**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **208**
Category: **A** Date(s): **16/07/2006**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2006 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Overall Development Approach | 50 | 35 |
| The Built Environment | 50 | 25 |
| Landscaping | 50 | 24 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 50 | 20 |
| Litter Control | 50 | 34 |
| Waste Minimisation | 20 | 2 |
| Tidiness | 30 | 16 |
| Residential Areas | 40 | 20 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 50 | 26 |
| General Impression | 10 | 6 |
| TOTAL MARK | 400 | 208 |

Overall Development Approach:

Lauragh is welcome to the 2006 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission which included your three-year development plan both of which facilitated adjudication. Lauragh enjoys an excellent location on the Beara Peninsula and on the banks of the Oinseach River. The village is surrounded by heavily wooded areas also, all of which combine to endow the village of Lauragh with wonderful natural amenities. Your three year development plan is interesting and it appears that you have a very clear focus on how you would like to proceed both within the competition and for the development of your lovely village also. Well done on the co-operation you received from Kerry County Council and the completion your project for 2006; we note the role played by South-Kerry Development Partnership. Congratulations also on the increased signage as regards traffic management.

The Built Environment:

The church is perhaps the most beautiful feature of the built environment, although the An Sibin is nicely presented also and was being enjoyed for a drink on a warm summers evening by visitors. Work accomplished for this year for gates, gateposts, seating, and the fence at the car park is acknowledged. We wish you well in your planned projects for the built environment over the next two years

Landscaping:

The hanging baskets with flower display was pretty, however this type of landscape is not that suitable for Lauragh given the beauty of your natural setting; however these look fine on private premises. At the time of adjudication Failte had been planted out in bedding plants which this adjudicator feels might have been more appropriate if dwarf box hedgerow or some other evergreen hedgerow was used for the reason mentioned above. Weed growth was a feature in the stone bed at the junction. We note that for 2007 you are exploring

locations suitable and available for the planting of the native species of trees and find this commendable as it is a more appropriate type of planting in public places than flower beds. We wish you well and every success on the possibility of the restoration of the Old Well and Limekiln. Be careful regarding hedge cutting; ensure that it is undertaken outside of the nesting season.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your stands of wild flower, wild grasses and native plants are perhaps one of the most attractive features of your lovely village. The committee is obviously aware of the diversity of flora and fauna within the immediate hinterland of Lauragh, perhaps this could be published on an illustrative interpretative panel for the benefit of the general public, including visitors to the area. Have you considered developing nature trails through the woodlands area and Sli Na Slainte.

Litter Control:

Litter control was excellent at the time of adjudication there being no visible litter present. Well done on your participation in the National Spring Clean and a big thank you to the local schoolchildren for their contribution to this undertaking, also we note your rota for continuous clean ups throughout the season and your promotion for anti-litter awareness with the school and consider these activities are largely responsible for your litter free status.

Waste Minimisation:

Your recycling point was neatly presented and well located in the car park of the church might you consider some enclosure for it?; preferably of timber in the interest of visual amenity. Your participation in the Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and now Rethink, is an excellent approach to waste minimisation as it is requiring all of us to rethink our attitude to waste. We look forward to charting the result of this in your community over the next few years. It is wonderful to be able to point to one tangible effect at least of the involvement of your children in the National Spring Clean, this being the disappearance of silage plastic wrap in your river and your harbour. Well done on the distribution of the Small Changes leaflets, together with leaflets promoting home composting. No doubt your talk on the subject of composting by Kerry County Council Environmental Awareness Officer will bring about the desired changes.

Tidiness:

A number of untidy entrances and incidental areas were noted throughout Lauragh, which is not unusual for rural areas. Building materials were noted at the church car park, which looked a little untidy, no doubt these would be removed upon the completion of construction work. We note the activities of the Tidy Towns group in looking after the tidiness of public areas and in particular to roadside verges, this approach lies at the heart of the Tidy Towns philosophy.

Residential Areas:

The standard of presentation is quite good under this heading, the committee is aware of the need to encourage residents to pay particular attention to their boundary walls and fences and most importantly to take responsibility for the area immediately outside of their boundaries. No doubt your new residents will be welcomed into the life of the community and in return, will play their role in the care and enhancement of the environment of Lauragh and its hinterland.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Car parks were in need of resurfacing, road surfaces are to a reasonable standard. You are aware of the value of stone walls constructed in the traditional manner and we look forward to this development over the next few years. Additional seating can be provided to add to your stock of street furniture. The road signs at the church (the large panel sign), looked a bit battered in appearance and would benefit by some work. It would be a good idea to minimise the number of signs on the entrance from approach roads and to accommodate all of these on one stand to cut down on visual clutter. Your plans to make all signs in the village bi-lingual is commendable. We wish you every success in the creation of a children's playground and encourage you to develop this as an adventure sports playground constructed of timber, rather than a tubular painted steel type.

General Impression:

The village of Lauragh is a tiny settlement, which enjoys an idyllic setting where natural amenities are plentiful. The challenge to the committee will be to develop the village in as natural way as possible so that it continues to sit well into its landscape whilst at the same time managing growth and change.