

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kilkenny** Ref: **398**
County: **Kilkenny** Mark: **284**
Category: **G** Date(s): **28/06/2006**
11/08/2006

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	48
The Built Environment	50	39
Landscaping	50	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	27
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	36
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	284

Overall Development Approach:

Kilkenny is welcome to the 2006 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your well thought out submission which facilitated the adjudication process. Kilkenny is a city of arts, culture, crafts and festivals and is a major tourist attraction with over two hundred thousand visitors per annum to Kilkenny Castle. This presents a major challenge to the Tidy Towns Committee to maintain the existing high standards which have been achieved over the past number of years in the face of a growing population and increasing tourist numbers. Well done on your close working relationship with your local authority, the business community and voluntary organisations as well as fellow citizens. It is good to note that your Tidy Towns strategy involves continuous evolution and fine tuning and of course your success in former years in Entente Florale and Ireland's Best Kept Towns is acknowledged.

The Built Environment:

Your many buildings with architectural merit are noted and the attention and maintenance given them is acknowledged, those responsible are to be commended for the successful infill and weaving of modern Kilkenny into the historic city. The Zuni Restaurant and Town House enjoys a wonderful presentation and has been considered for the Architectural Award. The latter is just one example of beautifully presented commercial premises. It was good to note the absence of inappropriate signage in most areas. Other premises which were admired include the O'Faolin premises and the Kilford Hotel, however posters in the window of the latter premises detracted a little from its overall presentation. The Kilkenny River Court Hotel may need to be painted soon to maintain a fresh appearance. The railings of the Glendine Inn premises are in need of rehabilitation. The Duggan Steel Group commercial premises has been considered for the Architectural Award.

Landscaping:

Congratulations on your designation as a representative of Ireland in Entente Florale this year, flower displays both in containers and flower beds at numerous locations in the town and on approach roads were admired for their colour and the cheerful ambience they created. Stands of mature trees on approach roads and elsewhere in the town were appreciated for their grandeur, hopefully those to the roadside boundary of the old mart will be retained upon its redevelopment. Incidental spaces in Irishtown enjoyed an excellent standard of planting also and St. Canice's Hospital grounds make a significant visual contribution to the town in terms of visual amenity. Most of the roundabouts had been nicely landscaped however some which have been completed more recently are immature but can only enhance their areas over a period of time. Well done to those hotels that sponsor roundabouts and particular areas. The river bank walk with its young trees and attractive street furniture located across from the market yard carpark is a fine amenity of which the city can be very proud of, together with the Lacken Walk.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The choral extravaganza which joined with Bird Watch Ireland for the Dawn Chorus in May of this year sounds like an exciting event and well worth the effort of being out of bed at 5:55am! The installation of bird boxes and bat boxes in both New Park fen and Kilkenny College fen by Bird Watch Ireland and the KKB group will serve to enlarge bird habitats and bat habitats in Kilkenny. Your urban parks with their meadow flowers, trees and shrubs are beautiful and will serve not only to enhance the flora of the area but also to heighten awareness of its value within the population, together wildlife panels and viewing area along the canal. Your work on the cleaning of streams and bridges in the canal walk area is acknowledged. Well done to the children who competed in the children's wildlife competition.

Litter Control:

The town centre was litter free, the only exception being some scraps which were noted in Irishtown and some trapped in a rough roadside boundary near the Dublin roundabout. A few scraps were also noted on the roadside verges of the Carlow road also. The numbers of visitors to the castle alone, being in excess of 200,000 per annum, creates an enormous pressure in terms of maintaining Kilkenny City litter free and your goal to collect clean litter on a daily basis is acknowledged. Your litter management strategy is effective and we note annual awards competitions plus initiatives such as "Name and Shame" and your use of "picker uppers". In addition to which your activities involving the local authority, not to mention the freefone litter line, are all playing an important part in keeping Kilkenny beautiful. Well done also to the school children who participate in the litter free schools programme and the anti-litter slogan and environmental awareness competitions.

Waste Minimisation:

Congratulations on the CCTV coverage of James Street carpark and commendations are also due for your Fair Trade status. Your participation in the National Spring Clean, together with your kerbside green collections and the activities of the schools in relation to recycling are acknowledged. Well done to your local authority for their free collection of Household Hazardous Waste and the many bring banks around the city. To reach your full potential under this heading in the competition be as creative as possible in identifying strategies aimed at minimising the amount of waste generated, in addition to collections for recycling. A suggested first step might be to work with each sector of the community to identify the amount of waste generated by each and then perhaps organising competitions for the most creative approach to minimising waste.

Tidiness:

Your anti-graffiti and "Going, Going, Gone" has resulted in a graffiti free city as none was noted by the adjudicator. Well done also on your gum buster cleaning / street washing along streets in the town centre. Numerous development sites had work in progress at the time of our visit however these were being reasonably well managed and no significant overspill onto the city streets was in evidence. The wire mesh enclosure to the Three Rivers Oil Depot should be replaced with solid screening to provide better enclosure for these commercial yards. Well done on the presentation of street furniture.

Residential Areas:

Well done to the residents associations of the forty six city estates that competed in the Residential Areas Competition in 2005. The new limestone estate sign names are a handsome feature. Your liaison with developers regarding the "taking in charge" for new estates is most effective as new estates visited looked very well. A terrace of on-street dwellings beyond the Mart were weather stained and would benefit from cleaning or painting. The same point can be made in respect of dwellings located near the Coillte premises. A terrace of cottages located at the top of Patrick Street had been nicely painted.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The Bennettsbridge roundabout was particularly admired with its good combination of mature shrubs and

colourful flower displays. Whilst the majority of street furniture looked particularly well the pedestrian hand rail barrier of the bridge over the Nore was in need of rehabilitation. A similar point can be made in respect of one sign "Kilkenny Ireland's Medieval City". Nicely painted fingerposts and traffic light poles were noted together with the wirescape free aspect of streets in the city centre. A service pole at the corner of Ormond Street and Patrick Street, together with another at the corner of High Street looked particularly unsightly and in the event of further ducting and removal of poles these ones should be prioritised. Kerb stones to footpaths give a nice definition along your city streets in the town centre. We look forward to the completion of the McDonagh station development. The landscaping of roundabouts on the ring road and the Carlow road during the winter of this year is anticipated.

General Impression:

Kilkenny looked truly beautiful on the day of adjudication and is a credit to its citizens and in particular to the Keep Kilkenny Beautiful group who, on that day, had surpassed their initial objectives.

Second Round Adjudication:

There were outbreaks of litter apparent on the Dublin road on second adjudication day. Advertising hoardings also abounded, and these should be discouraged. The planting on roundabouts was admired for its simplicity and originality. There appeared to be a major construction project taking place at the railway station area on the day. Arts Week had just started on the day, which created a particularly vibrant atmosphere in the city. Windgap Cottage was admired for its wisteria clad façade and abundant floral displays to the front. Opposite this, Windgap Hill Amenity Area affords the visitor a marvellous view to the river and Castle below. The Church of Ireland had some splendid floral displays to its front area. Buildings were generally well presented, particularly at John Street and the relatively new ones that form Pudding Lane. Of note were Langton's and the Clubhouse Hotel. Indeed the many hotels contribute greatly to the overall standard of presentation. The core area formed by the AIB, Bank of Ireland and Hibernian Hotel looked impressive in limestone. The attractive terraced houses at Chapel Avenue were admired, for their fresh presentation and interesting corner detailing. The attractive and well-maintained graveyard on Patrick Street made a positive impression.