

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kilkee** Ref: **72**
County: **Clare** Mark: **256**
Category: **C** Date(s): **16/07/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	47
The Built Environment	50	36
Landscaping	50	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	27
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	24
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	256

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the concise but comprehensive entry form, brief review of action plan and the attached detailed town map which was extremely helpful in identifying relevant places within the town and its environs.

The Committee deserve great credit for being able to get the most out of the local community on ongoing basis. This has helped to keep Kilkee to the forefront of the Tidy Towns Competition over the last number of years.

Your involvement with Clare County Council, Kilkee Town Council and especially other local voluntary bodies has helped to ensure that proposed work actions and contentious issues are attended promptly.

It has been a while since this adjudicator spent time in Kilkee and one has to say the level of housing and other forms of mixed development that has and is taking place is staggering.

The proposed plan for a major development on the Dunlicky Road is hard to comprehend. One wonders can Kilkee sustain all this new development and the influx of larger volumes of people. The provision of a new sewage treatment is not the sole solution.

I am sure that is an issue that the Tidy Towns Committee has debated ad infinitum.

I would sincerely hope that the character of Kilkee as a pleasant seaside resort with charm is not interfered with. As an adjudicator I am obliged to judge what is front of me and make comments on proposed plans that the Committee have detailed.

The Built Environment:

The amount of additional building taking place has been commented upon, but it is incumbent upon the adjudicator to address the existing built environment in its entirety.

Part of the centre of town, especially in Gratten Street and adjoining side streets, has benefited from improved road surfacing unfortunately it is not consistent in other parts.

One was very pleased to see that a number of private houses that are being refurbished, one in particular in O Curry Street, have retained original features such as bay windows.

This is encouraging and will hopefully set an example for others.

The following commercial premises appealed to this adjudicator and these reflect the standard in general: Clar Ellash on the west ends of town fine premises with well maintained frontage and name sign as Gaeilge, Kilkee Thallasotheapy Centre in the aforementioned Gratten Street, The Kilrush Credit Union, Marrinans, Halpins Hotel and Lynchs in O Connell Street which I believe is now a B&B and O Neachtain which has a well designed shop front As Gaeilge comhsuil le Clar Ellagh.

The Church, Schools and Garda Barracks were all maintained to a very acceptable standard as well as public beach areas off the Esplanade up to the improved Hodges Green.

The Library was little forlorn and the railings are in a poor state, but it is noted that this is due for refurbishment under the action plan list submitted.

There are a number of action items in your plan that fall under this category and one looks forward to coming back and seeing these improvements in place.

Also the number of derelict or unoccupied buildings look set to decrease as plans are a foot for the refurbishment of a number of these, the most significant is the old hotel (cant remember its name) at Wellington Square. It must be also a sign of the times to see that Nevilles is to be converted into apartments. Both the Golf Course and the Pitch and Putt Course at different ends of the town were well maintained and very busy to boot.

Landscaping:

The further improvements in landscaping terms of both Hodges Green and Allenders Field are to be welcomed as both, as landmark sites in the town, were in need of revitalisation.

The following are a few areas that could benefit from some additional appropriate planting arrangements.

There is a side area, some of which has a jaded shrub bed, in Castefields that could do with some nice sharp and colourful beds to take the bare look away.

The nice little planting arrangement at the green area on the west end, near the wall across from MacDonell Terrace, could be further enhanced by placing stone urns near the resting seats.

The rest points on the Cliff Road walk could also be looked at as possible planting locations bearing in mind the elements in from the Atlantic.

The shrub beds and tree planting in an area that may be Merton Square ? or adjacent to it needs to be revaluated and totally made good as it is in a poor state at the moment.

On the positive side of things some very nice stone beds were observed in front of the terrace of houses on O Connell Street and at the junction of Circular and Kilrush Roads.

The main streets that make up the core of the town could do with some more hanging baskets and other forms of planters.

Overall the standard was quite good but there are areas that need to be exploited better such as the Kilrush Road, the proposals for which are timely.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Kilkee has a myriad of areas that are havens for both wild and marine life.

The Committee is to be congratulated for endeavouring to promote wildlife conservation by way of being involved in organising lectures and other such events.

The actual work in cleaning the beach is also extremely helpful to the protection of marine wildlife. Making areas such as the charmingly named Canoe Green more accessible, especially to the older generation, also helps.

As regards the information notice boards depicting the wildlife and marine life such as rock pool creatures, the committee should approach the Council to upgrade these as they are becoming a little illegible because of dirty glass and fading print.

This might be an appropriate time to re design and upgrade the series and maybe add one or two more at the Burns Cove end of town

Litter Control:

The adjudication took place at a peak time in the holiday season and the amount of litter seen on a Sunday morning was relatively small.

Well done to the Committee for promoting the message of good litter control, to the local population for heeding it and to the transient visitors for using the appropriate receptacles.

Even the much-maligned Georges Head was not overtly littered.

Good to note the Scoil Realt na Mara, what an appropriate name for a school on the Atlantic Coast, has been awarded the Green Flag this will encourage the children to make their native place a better place environmentally.

An increase in mark here for a good effort on a busy weekend and one hopes that it stays this way.

Waste Minimisation:

This is a new category and one that contributes to the ethos of better waste management.

The Race Against Waste Booklet included in the original application package has the de facto set of guidelines that underpin this category.

The adjudicator notes the involvement of the School as part of its Green Flag conditions, but the committee should consult this publication to get ideas for the future and also to see what other projects other communities have undertaken.

Additional marks can be gained in this category as well as being a major contribution to the concept of better waste management

Tidiness:

The standard was a little mixed, while the central section of the town was relatively neat and tidy there were a number of establishments that had untidy side areas with barrels etc haphazardly stored.

Some shops had too much fly posting on windows and in some cases this took away from what were otherwise attractive fronts.

The development and improvement of the Well Road Car Park cannot come too soon as that and some adjoining areas were a little overgrown and untidy.

Residential Areas:

It was noted this year that the committee made a concerted effort to target short-term residents and owners of holiday complexes to do their bit to contribute to the Tidy Towns effort.

There are some people who have no interest what so ever and this was borne out by a comment overheard by the adjudicator from a well-heeled semi permanent resident.

This aside most places both established and new were well maintained and the following observations by the adjudicator backs this up.

St Patricks Terrace was good with just a few boundary walls in need of a little attention. Pairc Mhuire was as usual looking very well, nice green area with stone nameplate and well presented frontages and gardens.

Areas in the town such as Gearldine Place and Gratten Sreet were also very well maintained and the colours applied to the houses in the latter gave a vibrant look to the area.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The road surfaces in to the town have improved considerably in the last year as the road-surfacing programme by Clare County Council took effect.

There is still a lot more to do as outlined in the submission and a number of link roads especially the Dun Licky, are in a poor state of repair. The Dun Licky road is slightly dangerous for walkers who do the circular Cliff Walk.

The major development proposed for this area will in all probability mean that the condition will remain the same for the immediate future.

The other entrances were very acceptable without being spectacular.

The Keep Kilkee Tidy sign in blue on a background of white on the Miltown entrance shows support for the local football team.

General Impression:

Despite the major transforamtion that has taken place over the last few years, Kilkee still retains its appeal and poularity as a premier resort on the West Coast.

The Committe has done an excellent job in building links not alone with locals but with owners of holiday accomdation in the town.

The town has done consistently well in the competition over the years and hopefully this trend will continue into the future.