

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Tralee** Ref: **351**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **255**
Category: **G** Date(s): **21/07/2006**
10/08/2006

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	40
The Built Environment	50	34
Landscaping	50	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30
Litter Control	50	30
Waste Minimisation	20	7
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	255

Overall Development Approach:

Tralee is welcome to the 2006 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission with its excellent support material which facilitated the adjudication process. Tralee is experiencing growth and development at an unprecedented rate particularly in relation to its built environment.

The Built Environment:

The major part of the built environment of Tralee dates from the 18th and 19th century and many buildings still retain their traditional features. Pride of place must go of course to the beautiful building which houses your County Museum. Shop-fronts in the main shopping precinct of the town centre are nicely presented overall with an ever diminishing number of inappropriate signs however even the most attractive shop-front can be spoiled with the thoughtless positioning of posters in windows and doors. Attractive streetscapes can suffer in visual terms by the use of closed ended canopies and awnings rather than the traditional open-ended straight edged retractable type and solid roller type security shutters can have a deadening effect on streets at night as opposed to the open mesh type which allow the window shopper to view illuminated window displays. Tralee town features some of the best that 21st century design has to offer and many new developments were admired on adjudication day however it must be stated that large unfinished spaces were a feature of some retail park developments. A number of buildings have been considered for the Architectural Award.

Landscaping:

The new fountain at the roundabout on the entrance from the Dingle Road looks magnificent with its 19 powerful jets and commendations are due to the staff of the nearby Aqua Dome that maintain it so well. At the

time of adjudication landscaping to the Clashlahane roundabout had not been completed and the John Cronin roundabout was quite weedy. Trees planted in the road median of the North Circular Road do not appear to be thriving, perhaps the weed growth at their base is impeding their growth. The bypass road was admired and of course the Town Park looked magnificent with its rose beds in full bloom, its neatly maintained grassed areas and its stands of trees.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Canal Walk is a wonderful amenity for the town and it is a pleasure to note work accomplished for this year's presentation. Congratulations are due on the reopening of Ballyseedy Wood to the public for the first time in 25 years, it is important however that direction signs and access points are installed at appropriate places as it can be difficult for a visitor to the town to find it.

Litter Control:

Litter control was quite good in the town centre but less good on Pembroke Street and Matt Talbot Road and very poor in the newly developed Rathass housing development.

Waste Minimisation:

The key to a good performance under this heading is to establish ways to reduce the overall amount of waste generated within the community in addition to providing recycling facilities and encouraging their use.

Tidiness:

Weed control was quite poor over a wide area of the town on the day of inspection, it was especially bad on sites awaiting development, perhaps temporary enclosure as an interim measure would be a solution. The weedy base of a high stone wall to a group of ecclesiastical buildings was detrimental to an otherwise handsome presentation.

Residential Areas:

As noted above the Rathass residential estate was littered on the day of our visit with the overall effect of diminishing the appearance of an otherwise excellent development. The on-street Urban Terrace together with the cottages opposite looked attractive and the period dwellings located on the R551 are stately. A co-ordinated colour scheme is suggested for the terrace of dwellings on the North Circular Road. The An Sean Mhuilleann student and holiday accommodation is a handsome development and has been considered for an award.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads to Tralee are presented to a high standard and landscaping along the N21 is an attractive feature of this important entrance to the town. Reference has already been made to the presentation of roundabouts and work was in progress to the one at the entrance to the County Council offices, we look forward to seeing this development next year. The roundabout on the R551 from the Blainroe Heights Hotel was beautifully landscaped. Street furniture is attractive and being nicely maintained in most instances.

General Impression:

Tralee is a vibrant town with wonderful amenity features and exciting new developments. The town has managed to retain and nurture its heritage whilst at the same time managing change. Be vigilant regarding the timely landscaping and remedial works at the completion of development work otherwise an ambience of neglect may gradually encroach.

Second Round Adjudication:

An early Wednesday inspection found the town reasonably litter free and we commend the council for apparent early sweeping. It is some time since this adjudicator judged Tralee and the town has really developed. Well done on the many new parking areas which will help reduce the traffic congestion a little. The market square is at last looking really well. You might consider some moveable flower containers for '07: this

would soften the limestone effect. This area is further enhanced by the many well presented shopfronts. Well done to the high display of colour at The Old Market Place Pub: an example for others to pursue. We note what must be an exciting development at Ashe Street and look forward to the pedestrianisation of this area, which should boost the commercial advantage also. We hope the residents and traders will avail of this opportunity to make Ashe Street the most colourful in Tralee. You have pockets of badly presented open spaces in and around the town: the area outside The Kerryman is poor and is an ideal spot for some landscaping, also at Eleanor's Florist. The water fountain at Dan Spring Road is superb: would you consider going the extra mile by developing a flower garden at on this roundabout: it would really highlight this entry from the An Daingean approach. The flower containers outside Dunnes Stores are pitiful and need a new beginning. An excellent performance by one of the fastest developing towns in Ireland. The canal walk is a town amenity of distinction, together with the Town Park with its legendary Rose Garden. We look forward to better things in 2007.