

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Killarney** Ref: **340**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **298**
Category: **F** Date(s): **23/07/2007**
07/08/2007

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2007 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Overall Development Approach | 50 | 48 |
| The Built Environment | 50 | 37 |
| Landscaping | 50 | 41 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 50 | 31 |
| Litter Control | 50 | 34 |
| Waste Minimisation | 20 | 13 |
| Tidiness | 30 | 19 |
| Residential Areas | 40 | 30 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 50 | 36 |
| General Impression | 10 | 9 |
| TOTAL MARK | 400 | 298 |

Overall Development Approach:

Killarney is welcome to the 2007 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission. It is great to see the community once again coming together to keep Killarney looking so well kept.

The Built Environment:

The planned new development of the old Presbyterian is to be commended for its inclusion of the old building into the new and its apparent understated design which will fit well with the traditional buildings in the area. The painted chimneys on New st looked very good. The school along here was having a fresh coat of paint along its fence. It would be good to have a bit more greenery or grass at the front of the school but generally it was well kept. Generally New St was in good condition. One hanging basket needing replacing as it had expired. The tree boxes have been done in a nice wood to complement the area. It is also good to see the amount of seats available for people to rest at. The Town Hall is well painted. The new toilets are well designed and a pleasant design. The new building that incorporates Killarney Credit Union and Park Court apartments and retail units is an unusual modern design and does not truly fit with the other surroundings. Perhaps once this project is completed and landscaping is in place it will interact more with its surroundings. The roof top garden is a very good feature and the balconies look good. The Scots Hotel is a great building with its incorporation of wood into the design. The train station building is very well maintained. We look forward to the completion of your new leisure centre. Gaetecht school very fine example of combing colour and art with neatness and functionality. Good to see native trees planted in this area.

Landscaping:

Fire Brigade is very well landscaped and maintained. The new plantings on the Tralee road look very good.

The park outside this at the 100km sign needs to be maintained. The area around the chairs looks fine but to the right there is a part which has had old grass clippings and its a bit boggy. The sign also needs to be replaced and the left over metal objects removed. The stone entry needs to be fixed as this could be quite dangerous. This park has a lovely view so it would be great to tidy it up a bit. Perhaps you can get a local business to sponsor it. New tree plantings along some of the smaller roads are very tastefully done and do not take away from the natural surroundings. It would be good if the stone wall on Port Road could be cleaned off a bit. The cathedral grounds were immaculate. The new playground by the river is very well done and it is great to see it situated in such natural surrounds and also encourages the family to take a walk together along the river before heading off to the play ground. The landscaping of the railway station was very good. The new industrial estate on the bypass looks well kept.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It was well noted the environmental camp the National Park is running for children during the summer. On entry to the Riverside walk from the National Park there is a green space that it would be nice to have a picnic table or a seat so people could relax and enjoy the space. The trees framing the walk are beautiful and it is great that this has been made wheelchair accessible. The width also allows for walkers and cyclist to pass each other comfortably. The walks less formal continuation pass the sports grounds and into the wood would be great to be able to be completed by accessing the road via the footbridge at the roundabout. The foot bridge currently is not useable and there does not really seem to be a final designation of the path. We walked until we couldn't get any further. It is noted that you are working further on developing this path and we are very excited about seeing its completion in the future. There was a little bit of rubbish in the river but generally quite good.

Litter Control:

Overall the town was litter free however there a few problems evident on adjudication day. The river area up by the Tralee roundabout contains a bit of litter including a wooden pallet. The streets in the main areas were relatively clean considering the amount of tourists that enter the area. Side streets were also quite clean. The bring bank was overflowing and many bottles had been stacked at the front because of this. There were also 16 bags of dumped rubbish.

Waste Minimisation:

The composting scheme where hotels in Killarney separating their organic waste and presenting for collection then have it given back to the them as a soil enriched is a great project that benefits everyone. The use of extra bins for organic waste for residents is also extremely helpful in reducing the amount of landfill. Well done on both of these. There was a little bit of rubbish around Ross Castle.

Tidiness:

The post were removed to allow entry to the mall but the coverings over the holes were not put on. This presents an EH&S issue so its needs to be promoted that as soon as the posts come out for entry the covers need to go over the holes as we saw someone trip on the open hole. The usage of stone and wood on new buildings gives Killarney a cohesive feel as it joins together both the old and new architecture. Generally the town is very well kept and it is obvious great pride is taken by the residents and local authorities. The disposed brush clippings need to be cleared away from the Garda station but generally this looks well. Killarney Enterprise Centre looks quite run down and all the buildings are very different to each other. Painting them all the one colour would boost the appearance and make it feel more like a "centre". Generally Ross Castle was well kept except for a bit of litter and one of the signs needed fixing.

Residential Areas:

It was great to see all the estate signs in Irish. The road resurfacing at Park Drive Estate and the parks and entry looks good here. However, the rest of the road has not been completed and this will look good once it has been finished. Generally all the estate areas have been well landscaped and looked after. The inner residential & B&B areas are well maintained with some wonderful examples of private gardens. Pinewood Estates sign could be more visible. Chestnut Drive very well kept. Green space opposite Gaeltacht school great to connect to the estate.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Good to see footpath extends all the way to the outskirts of town from Mallow direction. The road from

Kilcummin is generally well maintained however the wall on one side could be fixed up a bit to look neater. The wall on the opposite side is good. It would be great if the footpath could be extended to the park at the 100km sign on the Tralee road to encourage people to walk out and utilise it. Where the path on the roadside of the river meets the roundabout, many people are cutting the corner on foot and bicycle. It may be worthwhile just making this small section an official path and paving it as it will be difficult to stop people not taking the shorter route and it makes it look a bit untidy which is a pity as the rest is so well done. Parking was an issue in town but your focus on cycling and walking would greatly assist reducing this. The walk on the road side of the river is very well done and the seats dispersed along it and great for encouraging people to stop and enjoy the view as well as offering resting spots for those who are less able. The crossing to the National Park might be better suited coming from the car park next to the cathedral as most people were still running across traffic to get to the national park as they had parked their cars in the cathedral car park. The new pedestrian crossing were well placed and highly used. Some of the walkways to cross the roads were confusing as they didn't have zebra markings or lights but they had been painted. Therefore some pedestrians crossed them without looking as they thought they had right of way and others didn't. The same was with motorists with some stopping and others just driving through. This is a safety hazard particularly with all the international tourists in the area who may not be aware of its unofficial crossing status.

General Impression:

Killarney's objective to bring nature back into the city is very well realised in several of its projects. Killarney is to be commended on the work it has done to encourage alternatives such as cycling and walking to get around town and has made these such an assessible and pleasurable option. Killarney has also worked hard to keep its traditional feel whilst allowing new developments to be constructed. Most of these fit in well as they focus on a stone and wood feel and allow the city to meld seamlessly between the old and new. There are some areas that have been outlined above that need to be addressed, mainly with certain areas that have some litter or other small changes. We look forward to the completion of some of the activities you are undertaking.

Second Round Adjudication:

The old Irish saying "Ni neart go cur le cheile", which is given front page importance in your 2007 submission, sums up the enormous sense of team work that prevails among your committee members. The Committee has succeeded in blending the inputs from public bodies, town business people and the greater Killarney community and creating a platform for the town's laudable achievements in both the National Tidy Towns Competition and Entente Florale.

The very comprehensive submission has addressed each category in great detail and this shows the desire to achieve even greater success in the competition. Unfortunately it is not possible to resume this rather large document in this short summary, suffice to say that it was studied in detail by the adjudicator.

At this juncture it is important to recognize the practical work of the Local Town Council in all aspects of Town Management. This was very much in evidence on the day of the 2nd adjudication when, despite the large volume of visitors, the landscape maintenance section was availing of one of the few good summer days to undertake weeding and thinning of shrub beds in key locations of the town.

The original adjudication referred to the advent of some new initiatives such as cycling paths and better town access for walkers, I would concur with this as it was quite pleasurable to traverse the fine streets and surrounds of Killarney on a day when it was full to capacity with visitors.

There has been major changes in the overall built environment in Killarney over the last five years, the developments in the hotel sector alone have been quite staggering and it was noted that the landmark Plaza Hotel is being earmarked as per planning notice for further refurbishment.

The proposed Old Presbytery development looks very interesting and one needs to visit the website to get a better insight of plans.

The Mall which is in the heartbeat of town is well maintained and a number of shop fronts have been upgraded in a tasteful manner adding to the attractiveness of that core area.

The Railway Station, in the opinion of this adjudicator, is one of the two best presented of its kind in the country so credit is due to the local staff of Larann Road Eireann.

The standard of shop front presentation was excellent and the following are just but a few by way of examples that appealed to this adjudicator "Trevyards and "The 98 Bar" both on High Street and Husseys Bar and Town House Accommodation with very attractive colour scheme enhanced by fresh floral arrangements.

Both the Garda Barracks and the Public Library are indicative of the high standard of modern design in public buildings. Other public and ecclesiastical buildings were also well maintained.

Internal lane ways are a feature of Killarney and the tidiness of areas such as Hilliards, Market and Chapel Lane is exemplary.

Signage for the most part was clean and visible but like other tourist towns certain points have too many and this type of multi signage on one pole effort serves to confuse more than to help.

Landscaping/Planting is the strength of the town and it would be neigh impossible to do it justice in this piece except to say that all public beds were well maintained and these were complemented by some exceptional

private gardens and other forms of planters. Good to note that the great musician Johnny Leary has been remembered at East Avenue junction green area.

Litter control on what was a busy day was very acceptable and it is noted that you have engaged with the local community on a number of new initiatives to counteract potential problems.

The standard under the residential category was also very good and residents associations are working in tandem with the committee to ensure that these standards are maintained at all times.

The Deenagh River was very clean and the information notices on different species of wildlife such as the Daubentons Bat are practical contributions to the Wildlife and Natural Amenities Category.

The approach roads and roundabouts well maintained although one can do little about obtrusive advertising that seems to be part and parcel of approaches into main towns now days.

Will be back to Killarney in the near future to re visit the many fine walks that are available to the public.