

Tidy Towns Competition 2007

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Tralee** Ref: **351**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **269**
Category: **G** Date(s): **25/07/2007**
07/08/2007

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2007
Overall Development Approach	50	42
The Built Environment	50	37
Landscaping	50	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	31
Litter Control	50	30
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	16
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	269

Overall Development Approach:

Tralee is welcome to the 2007 National Tidy Towns awards. Thank you for supplying such thorough maps and directions as it greatly assists in ensuring we see all the points mentioned in your application.

The Built Environment:

Much work has been done on the inner city landscape to improve pedestrian access. The new bus shelter building is well designed and has been entered for your architectural award. It would be good to see some outside seating here though as several people were sitting on the ground waiting for buses. The plan to expose the old abbey complex under plexiglass is an interesting project that we look forward to hearing more of. The Irish language signs on new estates look well and assist in keeping tradition alive in the area. The Indian Castle Restaurant is a great improvement though some other buildings in this street still require attention. However, many buildings in the area are to a high standard and this area will greatly improve if shops continue to renovate. With the growth of Tralee it would be expected that several of the derelict buildings will be filled. The new developments such as Centrepoint and the bus shelter although modern, have been designed tastefully. However, It is important for Tralee to retain its history and traditional shopfronts as well as this is part of its character.

Landscaping:

The work that has been undertaken to rejuvenate the roundabouts is greatly recognised and all those marked on the map were visited. Of particular stand out quality is the new 5 metre tall Gaelic Football memorial at the Claslehan roundabout on the N21 approach. This is a unique and visually appealing work of art that has also been well landscaped. The Peace sculpture in Castlemorris Park at Cloghers is also an interesting commission and it is always exciting to have works of art present in public places. The Garden of the Senses was being enjoyed by several children and adults on the day of adjudication. The pieces in this garden are

visually appealing as well as allowing interactivity by visitors. The Tralee Town Park is an impressive collection of different areas from shady old growth trees to impressive rose gardens. Information on the plant species was very informative. It is noted in your development plan that you are working towards developing the existing fountains. This is a necessary task as one of the fountains had a fair amount of litter on the day we visited. The old famine burial plot, "Gods Acre" was in the process of major renovations on the day of adjudication. It is good to see the inclusion FAS workers in the restoration of a part of history that should not be forgotten.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The riverside walk development will be a great asset in allowing nature to be accessible to those in the community and particular with its linkage to Ballyseedy Wood. The Tralee Task Forces plan to protect natural reserves whilst developing complimentary adjoining public amenities is to be commended. It will ensure Tralee does not lose its natural link to the natural world whilst encouraging residents to participate in nature. The establishment of the Nature Observation Point and the removal of overhead cables in this area is a great development in working towards these goals. It is noted that Tralee has continued in its tree planting particularly visible along the N21 approach and the Bracker O'Regan link road. Although there are signs pointing to Ballyseedy wood, they are only from close to the actual woods and it can be difficult to find when coming from central Tralee.

Litter Control:

On the day of adjudication there was some litter present in the square which particularly collected in the tree base areas. Much of this litter was cigarettes so having a receptacle for smokers to place their butts in several locations in the square may help reduce this. It is well noted that an effort to educate the community is being undertaken to prevent litter, rather than just clean it up when it occurs. The First Friday Cleanup is a commendable undertaking and it wonderful to see several different groups involved.

Waste Minimisation:

Tralee is to be commended on its work to reduce waste and has had great success in the amount of recyclables received. It is important to ensure that schools, businesses and residents are provided with education on this process. The Bring Bank did not have any dumped rubbish on the day of adjudication, however, there was a bit of general litter in the area.

Tidiness:

The front area of Mhic Easmiann Gaelscoil required some weeding but in general the school was well kept. It is noted that a large focus for CE workers is on weed reduction in the town. It is great to see you receiving support from local businesses in providing sponsorship for training and equipment for this undertaking. No flyers were present on the day of adjudication. In seats in the town square require painting to brighten them up as their paint is peeling. There was also so rubbish in the entry to Ballyseedy and some of the fence posts had been broken this area.

Residential Areas:

A great effort has been undertaken to improve the appearance of many of the estate areas. The new Marina Development is visually appealing and the access areas to it allow for people to walk into town. Annes bungalows have been wonderfully landscaped. The planting programs undertaken by residents of Manor Village, Kileen Wood, Knockmoyle and Ballinorig Estates is a great initiative to actively encourage pride and responsibility for their areas as well as increasing the general appeal of the town.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The new footpath on the N86 is a great feature for accessibility and allows pedestrians to walk alongside the water. The improvement of back lane areas such as Courthouse Lane in the city has been undertaken to a high standard. The work undertaking is encouraging for people to walk rather than drive around inner Tralee. It was also noted that several restaurants have outside tables that would provide a relaxing and appealing place to sit now that traffic is not able to park in these areas. Table placement was also good as it did not interfere with the pedestrian walkway. The main approach roads were all in good condition. There does seem to be some congestion present on the road down from the Bus Station to the N86 as traffic could not get out onto the main thoroughfare

General Impression:

Tralee is a town that has seen great growth and is now going through a period of transition. It is well noted that efforts have been made to not only make the town more visually appealing, but even more so the changes that make the town more liveable such as the improvement of pedestrian access in the centre of the town and the linking of the town to its natural environment. The work towards ensuring footpaths extend to the

outskirts of town and new developments is commendable as sometimes residents in new outlying estates can feel cut off if they do not have this. This all provides for promoting a pleasant community to live in. We look forward to watching as Tralee continues its positive development.

Second Round Adjudication:

Tralee has certainly seen significant infrastructural changes in the last three years with more to come as outlined in the development sites map included with the original application. The Capital of the Kingdom has become very attractive to major developers which suggests a confidence in its commercial future.

The major city type development that is in progress at the junction of John Joe Sheehy Road and Edward Street is something that could not be envisaged some years back as it would seem totally alien to a town the size of Tralee.

On a personal basis I still find such sized developments a little out of sink in large rural town.

Its been some time since one had the pleasure of traversing the town and environs in detail, a task which needed a reasonable level of fitness given the level of expansion that has taken place in the outlying areas. The improvements that have occurred under the built environment are in the main very impressive and in keeping with the original town architecture. The Square has been re developed in a very practical manner and is now an attractive focal point for both visitor and locals to meet and sample the café atmosphere that prevails.

The plans to re house the Museum from its present location in the Ashe Hall, which coincidentally was undergoing a facelift on the day in question, is a brave move but personally I welcome it as it needs its own identity in a central location. The developer of the new shop development at Ivy Street deserves credit for providing excellent ramp facilities to accommodate people with mobility problems.

The following premises were noted for their unique attractiveness; The "Kerryman Premises" and " Benners Hotel" re furnished in a tasteful manner," The Alamo Palace" and "The Blasket Pub" on Castel Street and it was also good to note that Vales Sportsfield traditional pub on Boherbue is still holding its own.

On the outskirts The Manor West Retail Park was very well presented and with good access and exit points.

The Town Park houses one of the best tended public rose gardens in this Island,credit to the town council gardening section for maintaining this and the park in general to such a high standard.

Entrance roads have been further enhanced by prudent planting, the addition of gravel paths and sculptures such as the Kerry Footballer on the Clashleahane Roundabout.

The standard of both litter control and tidiness was quite good for such a large town with room for further improvement.

Anti litter measures put in place by the committee in conjunction with the Town Council are having a positive effect and this need to be continued and expanded upon.

Residential estates were in the main very acceptable it would be remiss to highlight individual areas in this short summary except to note that all were visited which was rather demanding on the body system.

A very good performance by Tralee in this year's competition and a testament to a very proactive Committee. You are wished well for the future.