

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kilrush** Ref: **77**
County: **Clare** Mark: **297**
Category: **D** Date(s): **07/07/2008**
23/07/2008

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	48
The Built Environment	50	39
Landscaping	50	41
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30
Litter Control	50	38
Waste Minimisation	20	17
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	30
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	9
TOTAL MARK	400	297

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you Kilrush TidyTowns Committee for your entry on behalf of Kilrush to the 2008 TidyTowns Competition. Welcome to the 2008 TidyTowns competition and well done on the quality of your submission.

Thanks to your Committee of twenty-two people who take the time and effort to attend your monthly meetings, in addition to other TidyTowns events. Your Committee and partnership organisations are doing very worthwhile work for Kilrush, a town with a population of less than 5,000 people. Your Committee plays an active role in the long-term development of Kilrush as a commercial, tourist and residential centre of excellence. Well done to all concerned.

Thanks also for the detailed submission on TidyTowns activities and for the town map. These were very useful documents.

Your ongoing partnership work with many organisations including, Town Council, Fás, Shannon Development, Chamber of Commerce, ESB, County Council, Teagasc, the Schools, Vandeleur Walled Garden Group and the local businesses, and all those that have supported your activities is of obvious benefit to all. This is a vital ingredient in the success of TidyTowns activities.

The work of local people, residents, business people, schoolchildren and others is to be praised. It's easy to see that the TidyTowns Competition over the years has generated a philosophy of participation of the local community involvement and a united effort with the local authorities and State Agencies.

I wish you all the best with your planned activities into the future. Keep up the great work.

The Built Environment:

A kaleidoscope of colour is how best to describe the wonderful display of the many excellent and well presented public and private buildings in Kilrush. To this adjudicator the blends of the many and varied combinations of lovely bright prominent colours on the buildings worked to perfection. Kilrush, in the opinion of this adjudicator, has changed for the better over the past number of years and the economic success of the town is reflected in many of its public and private buildings. In addition the ongoing development of such projects as the Marina has assisted greatly in that success. Congratulations on the Teach Cheoil Project, on the restoration of the old Church of Ireland building as a venue for live traditional music. I look forward to August 13th/15th and Eigse Mrs.Crotty at this venue.

The quality and excellence of the various buildings that are so much part of Kilrush impressed this adjudicator. Public buildings that impressed included: The Church with its magnificent stained glass windows, in particular the one above the gallery; the lovely Grotto opposite the Church; the Town Hall; the Garda station; Post Office. Vandeleur Gardens is an absolute jewel. Private sector buildings that left a positive image included: Queally's Super Valu; Kelly's Meat Store; Miniters; Kilrush Credit Union; AIB; Considines; Norma Jean; Bank of Ireland; A. Ryan & Sons; O'Luanaigh; Ryan's Delicatessen and Quality Meats; Glynn Mills; The Haven Arms; The Central Pharmacy; Leo McInerney Victualler; K. Mescall; Embellish Interiors; Central B&B; Silver House; Monument Hair; Kelly's Bar and Restaurant; The Corner House; Central Shoe Stores; Monument House-Rico's; De Brougha; Boutique BiBi; Linda's Fashions; Bourke's General Drapery Stores; and John O'Shea. There are of course other commercial buildings not listed in this short report that also deserve mention and have all contributed to the success that is Kilrush.

Many of the private residential houses in the wide streets have wonderful colourful fronts, which add so much to the positive impact of the town. Many of the townhouses of Kilrush are quite splendid. Frances Street and Henry Street both stand out. The apparent absence of intrusive wirescape of overhead wires also greatly helps.

The vista down Frances Street to the harbour area is a wonderful feature.

Some of the sculptures also left a positive image on this adjudicator. These included; the Dolphin Sculpture and the Gatherer of Seaweed at Cappa Pier. Some negatives included; derelict buildings, in particular the old Convent complex; former ESB building, and the old Cinema and Dance Hall.

A major challenge now is to maintain the healthy balance between the "old and the new". This is not an easy task.

Landscaping:

The splendid colour of Kilrush is further enhanced by the high standard of landscaping throughout the main streets and the Market Square. There are some nice plantings of staked trees with appropriate metal surrounds. The Marina and Harbour areas are impressive, in particular the little area where the Dolphin sculpture is located. The planted hanging baskets on the bridge are lovely, as indeed is the little linear park with seats on the road to Cappa. These are some examples of nice landscaping that impressed this adjudicator. The planting and use of timber and Marine theme at the Tesco location looked good. There is also some nice landscaping evident at Cappa, the shrub bank at Galleon.

As stated above, Vandeleur Gardens project is an absolute jewel

Well done to all involved in the various locations for good landscaping in the individual elements that gel to make Kilrush look well. The residential areas of the town also put so much effort into their own gardens and the result is mainly impressive and of benefit.

Overall, the work on this area over recent years has paid dividends.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The wildlife habitats of the floating Crannog raft dwelling for the ducks is a lovely feature at the harbour. Well done to all concerned.

The ongoing research into the flora and fauna of the area will only bring further success. Projects that are so positive include the Cappa Wildlife Identification board, and the nature reserve of and the sowing of wild flowers.

The setting up of Biodiversity and Exercise walks could add to the amenities for locals and visitors alike. The harbour and Marina areas have a huge wildlife impact as the habitat for fish, ducks, geese and swans.

Kilrush is well served by the development of an excellent footpath/road structure through the town. This is

great for the walker, jogger and those people that appreciate these facilities just five minutes away from the town centre. Some further potential for The Sli na Slainte walk to add to the Dolphin Trail?

Cappa and the view across to Hogg's Island and Scatterry Island are a magnificent facility. Well done on the work to date.

The involvement of the schoolchildren in appropriate projects such as your Biodiversity project is so very worthwhile.

Litter Control:

Kilrush town centre was in general litter free on the day of my visit and obviously the work of TidyTowns Committee is paying dividends. The roads and the commercial premises areas were clean and litter free. Well done on the Litter Survey of February last carried out by TidyTowns Committee in conjunction with the Community School. Also well done on the Litter Management Plan.

The Golf Club, Vandaleur Gardens, Cappa and the Aylevarroo Holiday Park areas on the outskirts of Kilrush all looked tidy and neat.

Congratulations on the initiative at Cappa, Leave only your footprints and Bring your Litter Home

Waste Minimisation:

The purpose of this category is to encourage TidyTowns Committees and the local community to get involved in projects that will reduce waste and encourage recycling. Projects could include community guidance on methods of reducing waste such as segregating litter during clean-up events.

The drawing up of a minimisation programme in association with the Town Council and the Chamber of Commerce is to be applauded. The focus in 2008 of Energy Conservation is so appropriate in the current climate of rising prices for energy!!

The involvement of the different Schools in the Green Flag Schools Programme is super, well done to the Community School on its earlier Green Flag. Well done to St Senan's Primary School on its initiatives to segregate waste and its policy of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. The involvement of the private businesses and residents in recycling initiatives is also to be congratulated.

The Energy and Water Conservation leaflets are excellent.

Tidiness:

In general Kilrush looked tidy on the day of my visit. There are of course always pockets of untidiness that could be better. These include the parking of beer barrels and other retail goods on footpaths.

Residential Areas:

The older houses help retain the small town character and charm of Kilrush and these are maintained to the best possible standards. The terraced Townhouses are quite splendid with some wonderful colour selection for painting the front of these houses.

Congratulations to all concerned on the upkeep of their residential areas.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The access road to Kilrush from Ennis looked neat and tidy and inviting for the visitor. The Golf Club complex helps in no small way. Indeed the footpath helps also. I would hope that new cyclepaths are being constructed in appropriate and suitable roads for the encouragement of cycling as a leisure and safe activity. I failed to see any evidence of cyclepaths around and about Kilrush?

The town centre was in general clean and tidy with some nice landscaping by planted hanging baskets.

General Impression:

Kilrush is a wonderful waterside Heritage Town with many unique features and splendid buildings throughout the town, The Marina and Harbour areas are excellent. The outskirts of the town has some lovely places to visit including Cappa, Vandaleur walled Gardens and the Aylevarroo Holiday Park. I really enjoyed my visit and look forward to further visits maybe for some traditional music in August!

Congratulations on your 2008 entry to TidyTowns Competition and good luck for the future. I look forward to further visits to your town.

Second Round Adjudication:

A sunny day greeted the second adjudication visit and enabled the many charms of this delightful and historic seaside settlement to be enjoyed to the full. The shimmering sea closing the view closing the view from France's street is a special sight augmented by the many colourful freshly painted houses and shops on either side-the post office was receiving its latest coat of paint during our visit. At the end of the road the marina itself was very well presented, orderly and tidy. Perfectly or nearly so- the warped gate at the entrance needs to be replaced. Boat yards are notoriously difficult to present as neat locations but removal of the grass, weeds and spoil at the entrance area would certainly help.

The small-scale model of the ancient abbey and round tower on the way to the Walled Garden of Vandeleur caught the eye. But so did the breach in the wall at the entrance gate to that splendid example of the gardener's art and skill, which to even adequately describe fully taxed my vocabulary of superlatives. The very rare surviving example of custom made original tiles on the hardware merchant in Henry Street are of special importance and well presented. Shop owners need to have regard to the overall effect on their presentation of posters they display in their windows-one kind soul in the same street had allowed no less than 14 such which effectively obscured the impact of his own message. The many well made and suitable located historic display panels are an important and most welcome addition to the street furniture. The empty but potential development sites, the stalled work on existing projects and the long term problem of the former convent remains as does Griffins Shop and the fine but now closed up house on Frances Street. Imaginative solutions such as the use by Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann of the former church when coupled with the thinking that created the splendid leaping dolphin mural on the 1899 National School building may supply some of the answers to these intractable difficulties.