

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Knock** Ref: **78**
County: **Clare** Mark: **260**
Category: **A** Date(s): **28/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	39
The Built Environment	50	33
Landscaping	50	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	23
Litter Control	50	32
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	35
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	260

Overall Development Approach:

We were pleased to welcome Kilmurry McMahon Community Group to the 2009 Tidy Towns Competition and thank you for the completed entry form and sketch map.

There was some confusion regarding your entry as we did not receive a copy of last year's report and the adjudication area was not obvious from the entry form. Not to worry, we did finally realise that, although the name of your group refers to Kilmurry McMahon, the actual work you had undertaken was in the village of Knock.

With such a small population, it is excellent that you have 10 people on your committee and manage to hold monthly meetings. Judging by the presentation of Knock during our visit your hard work has been paying dividends, well done to all involved.

It is great that FÁS has been supporting your work and that you communicate with the wider community by holding Public Meetings. Liaising with teachers is a good idea but local school children could also be encouraged to get directly involved in various Tidy Towns projects.

We noticed that you did not submit any 3 or 5 year plan with your application. We would encourage you to prepare a very brief plan that would help your Committee to focus on key projects which could be developed within specific timeframes and would ensure that the charming Village continues to progress within the Tidy Towns Competition.

The Built Environment:

Your entry form had no comments under this category and we felt this was a missed opportunity to draw attention to any issues causing concern or indeed, to highlight positive aspects of Knock's built environment. One thing we noticed was that the neat 'Welcome to Knock Village' signs were not bilingual – perhaps this could be a future project for consideration.

Knock is a very attractive Village nestling along the Ferry Road and enjoying a lovely position overlooking the Shannon Estuary. We observed a good mix of long established properties located mainly within the centre of the Village with some appropriate newer development on the outskirts. Buildings were generally well maintained and a credit to their owners

The two piers, old and new, and Cé Cnoc area were lovely amenities to be appreciated by the local community and visitors alike. The Fisherman's Hut was an enticing watering hole with a lovely stone wall, good parking area and picnic tables/benches at the rear.

The Village has managed to retain its old world charm while extending a welcome to new, appropriately sized development and we hope that it will continue to succeed in maintaining the equilibrium

Landscaping:

There were many wonderful aspects to the landscaping throughout the Village and the overall affect was superb. We admired the neat bedding plants highlighting the Welcome signs; the little parade of timber containers, brimming with bright flowers, on guard alongside the well built stone wall; the lovely hanging baskets; the magnificent flowerbeds on the grassed verges and the excellent stone-walled flowerbeds outside the pub and at the car park across the road. At Cé Cnoc we were impressed by the bog oak, colourful flowerbeds, well staked new tree, lovely wooden furnishings and planted containers.

Congratulations to everyone involved in the growing of plants and in creating all the eye catching displays.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It is good that an area has been identified for the promotion of wildlife and we wish you well with the project. One suggestion which might be useful is the undertaking of a survey of existing habitats (plants, tree types, hedges) to check if the appropriate food chain is available for the wildlife and birds that you want to attract. If there is a need to adapt the planting, your wonderful tunnel and cold frame could come in very handy. Perhaps the local children could participate in the project with guidance from a teacher or local wildlife enthusiast.

Litter Control:

During our visit most of the village was clear of litter but we did notice a few items on the roadside across from the pub. It is good that you have managed to get County Council sponsorship for the bin collections.

Your entry form did not give any information about the litter control programme which is undertaken – it would be worthwhile giving some detail regarding frequency of litter picks/clean up sessions, who participates, etc as this category is not just marked on the cleanliness of a village or town but also on the litter policy adopted.

Waste Minimisation:

In your entry form you indicated that it was the intention to get a composter. Just a word of caution regarding your composting plans - collective community composting is illegal without a licence so it would be important to consult the County Council for guidance. What is normally recommended is composting by individual households.

Another project which you might consider would be the organisation of a waste minimisation workshop with the co-operation of Clare County Council (this could be organised as part of a Tidy Towns Meeting for the community).

Tidiness:

Opposite the sign for Knock Pier we noticed that there were considerable overhead wires and we would

recommend that efforts be made to persuade service providers to consider putting those wires underground. The piers and Cé Cnoc were beautifully presented.

Signage in the Village was generally clean and in good condition and weed growth had been tackled throughout the village. The pub car park and grounds were very clean but perhaps the pub sign could be freshened up.

The overall impression was of a caring community taking pride in the environment and we congratulate everyone on their efforts.

Residential Areas:

On arrival at Knock, we were impressed by Oaklands, a very attractive elevated development of detached properties with lovely boundary walls and green areas with young trees. The new homes blended well with existing properties in the area. Two lovely semi detached homes overlooking the Piers also caught the eye. Older properties within the Village were also very appealing with good paintwork, neat gardens and many fine displays of hanging baskets and window boxes. We were amused by the cute display of little ornaments, including the toadstool, hen, wheelbarrow and dog over the window and doorway of one property.

Well done on the standard of care and attention being lavished on the homes of Knock.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road surfaces in the area were in fairly good condition and the approaches to Knock Village from Killimer and Kilmurry McMahon formed a very inviting picture. The 'Welcome to Knock Village' signs with the lovely flowerbeds beneath reinforced the invitation. The superb stone wall leading towards the heart of the Village, the immaculate green areas with their colourful flowerbeds, the excellent Cé Cnoc amenity and Piers were all very impressive.

Congratulations on the excellent presentation.

General Impression:

Your report didn't tell us why your tunnel and cold frame had to be relocated but we hope that the new positions are proving successful for you. We applaud your initiative in growing the plants for use in the wonderful displays throughout the Village. It is an excellent project which should give inspiration to many other towns and villages, particularly those taking part in the Tidy Towns Competition.

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to Knock and we wish Kilmurry McMahon Community Group and the community of Knock every success for the future.