

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kenmare**

Ref: **339**

County: **Kerry**

Mark: **327**

Category: **D**

Date(s): **27/06/2017**

26/07/2017

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	49	48
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	44	45
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	39	40
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	33	34
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	21	21
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	65	65
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	40	40
TOTAL MARK	450	324	327

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Kenmare is most welcome to the SuperValu National Tidy Towns Competition, it was a pleasure to experience again what your lovely town has to offer. Thank you for your submission with Tidy Towns Plan and map; although the map is good it is general in nature and does not specifically identify this year's projects in a way appropriate for adjudication purposes. Ideally projects should be colour coded and cross referenced to a brief description in the entry form. The committee appears to have established and maintained a good working relationship with an impressive range of groups and bodies committed to community development. Communication methods are appropriately varied and activities engaged in enhance community development opportunities.

Built Environment and Streetscape / An Timpeallacht Thógtha agus Sráid-dreacha:

Kenmare's built environment is impressive in the use of colour and its general maintenance and once again the Landsdown Arms Hotel was particularly admired for its positive contribution to the visual amenity of the townscape. The towns architectural heritage appears to be in safe hands! Well done on work accomplished for a number of premises; both the GlenAllen and Sherry Fitzgerald premises were a work in progress during the adjudication period. It is a pleasure to note the bi-lingual nature of signage throughout the town and of course the presentation of street furniture. Work on derelict sites and buildings in addition to those that are occupied is laudable. Planting at the roadside pergola on Shelbourne road looks quite promising this year. Footpath congestion might be considered within the context of universal access; the publication "How Walkable is Your Town" might be consulted on this and other access issues. (universaldesign.ie)

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Lavender tubs at strategic locations throughout the town are a nice touch however pride of place under this heading must go to the magnificent Reenagros Park with its many facilities and delights. Again, the question of accessibility (buggies, wheelchairs, seating etc) might be considered especially along the woodland walk. While awaiting the digitization of park information a few signs with details of the duration of trails and walks might be installed as an interim measure. The 1916 Garden of Remembrance is a joy to experience also; landscaping throughout the town is a satisfying mix of permanent and summer planting with an emphasis on native species where appropriate and plants to attract pollinators. Congratulations on the discovery of the Toothwort species! Trees are maturing well and green open spaces are being nicely managed. Kenmare is blessed with a wide variety of amenities. Remember that amenity development can be temporary as well as permanent and perhaps some undeveloped/ incidental sites could be used in this way as an interim measure pending development.

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fiadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádurtha:

Bio-diversity training is invaluable for the management of the natural environment and by extension for the wellbeing of the community; well done for making this available and for results achieved to date especially the many sites managed for wildlife and pollination. The identification and management of invasive species is to be applauded too and we wish you continued success; your 'vinegar' treatment of Japanese Knotweed is unusual, keep us updated on results. The pier and foreshore area was very clean and storm damage clean-up events are noteworthy. The proposed Kenmare Bay Marine Park & Wild Atlantic Way together with the proposed Peninsula Purchase project is exciting and we look forward to further developments in this regard. The children's playground on the Sneem entrance looks well. Your request for a toilet and litter bins at the pier are acknowledged and we anticipate a positive outcome.

Sustainable Waste and Resource Management / Bainistiú Acmhainní agus Dramhaíola Inbhuanaithe:

Kenmare's recycling sites are being well used and managed with no evidence of dumping. It is good to note the involvement of all schools in the Green Flag Programme and the take-up of the Green Homes initiative; the Green Business initiative appears to excite a healthy interest too in Kenmare. Given the track record of the town in reduce, reuse, recycle activities to date in addition to resource management it is now time to measure outcomes; try to quantify savings made and use as a tool for future goal setting and as a motivator by providing feedback. Aspire to becoming a Zero Waste town.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Litter control is excellent throughout Kenmare's town centre, amenity areas and approach roads. Tidiness issues are mostly related to unfinished surfaces and side areas and a small number of sheds and outhouses with rusted corrugated roofs away from the town centre. Well done on participation in the coastal clean-up. Work on street furniture and signage especially at the pier is commendable. Hopefully by the time this report is circulated the outdoor market issue will be resolved to the satisfaction of all; at the time of writing it is at the appeal stage.

Residential Streets & Housing Areas / Sráideanna Cónaithe & Ceantair Tithíochta:

A nicely landscaped entrance to the housing estate on the Sneem entrance was admired together with some beautifully maintained green areas to residential developments further on in this road. Ard bhearna residential featured lovely green spaces with trees and an area left for wildflowers (buddlia). Grassed areas to roadside boundary walls on the N71 look really well and on the R569 Kilgarvan Road. Stonework to properties within the vicinity of the recycling point and car park was admired. The terrace of brightly painted houses on the Kilgarvan entrance is favourably noted. The Lodges (a new residential development) features some nicely landscaped areas also. The provision of identification plates / stones for residential areas is noteworthy.

Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes / Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna & Lánaí:

Little or no wire-scape and lovely lamp-standards are a feature of the Sneem entrance to Kenmare. The same points apply to the entrance from the Kilgarvan road. Both the Skibbereen and Castletownbeare approach roads look well also however tree harvesting on the latter road looked a bit unsightly. Most road surfaces are good, some stretches of footpath particularly at the Kilgarvan Road need refurbishment. The management of street furniture is excellent. The pedestrian connection between the Pier and Reenagros Park is invaluable.

Concluding Remarks:

So much has been achieved in Kenmare to date that makes the town a delight to visit and of course to live in! it is hard to imagine it being better but of course it will be with the implementation of its many plans.

Second Round Adjudication:

Kenmare is a delightful place to visit on a sunny summers evening. We were most impressed with the range of attractions that could be seen and we very much enjoyed visiting each of the sites outlined on your heritage trail. The courthouse is a lovely building and it is great to see this in productive reuse as the tourist office and heritage centre. The Town Park opposite is a most attractive space with its lovely mature trees, pleasant seating areas, neatly trimmed grass and colourful corner rose beds. The Timothy O'Sullivan Auctioneers premises is another excellent example of a historical building being sensitively adapted and used for commercial purposes. We loved the Carnegie Library on Shelbourne Street and its diversification into an arts centre is a logical and welcome evolution. We admired the wonderful Holycross Church and we were delighted to find that the interior is just as impressive as the exterior. We were somewhat surprised to find that many of the historical buildings along Shelbourne Street such as the stone arch building opposite Tom Creans, the Garda Station and the old National School building had no information panels provided and we wondered if these will be provided in the future? It is also necessary to compliment the many shop and business owners throughout the town who have put so much hard work into presenting their buildings to a high standard. Like the first round adjudicator, we loved the colour scheme that has been employed and while it is difficult to pick out examples, a number stood out. On the square, we particularly liked Joules Boutique while the Bank of Ireland and O'Connors Bar impressed. On Main Street, Roughtys, O'Murchus, Sheahans, Tom Creans and O'Sheas deserve praise and the Landowne Arms Hotel looked bright and fresh. The buildings on Henry Street were similarly impressive with Virginias, Halliseys, the White Room and O'Donnabhans catching our eye. The challenges that you are facing with vacant buildings could clearly be seen during our visit and we urge you to continue with your proactive approach to resolving this issue.

The quality of landscaping was noticeably high and we liked the approach into the town from Sneem which brought

us past the 1916 Memorial monument located adjacent to the shrubs on neat grass verges. Like the first round adjudicator, we enjoyed the large lavender planters that could be found in key locations including the entrance to the bridge on Bridge street from the car park while the planters at the entrance to Neidin View looked well. The landscape treatment of our Ladys Well impressed as a good diversity of species was achieved here. The open spaces and natural amenity areas in the town are considered to be second to none. We very much enjoyed our visit to Reengross Park which is a fantastic amenity that offers stunning views of the estuary and surrounding countryside and we note that it is home to 14 different habitats and more than 300 species. Regrettably, we were unable to complete the trails due to a flooded pathway but we resolved to return a later date! Your ongoing projects here that comprises treeplanting, maintenance, monitoring bird and bat boxes, invasive species removal and hosting biodiversity talks prove that you both recognise and appreciate the value of this amenity and we urge you to continue this great work. Be sure to include the schools in your projects here were possible as this is a very effective way of raising environmental awareness. Well done also on your effective approach of transforming highly effective (and very enjoyable!) pedestrian links into 'pollinator walkways' and consider providing some signage to advertise this fact.

The standard of tidiness and litter control around Kenmare was exceptionally good with virtually no litter to be seen. A seating area overlooking the Holy Cross Church car park had some litter beneath and it is recommended that this spot receives some additional monitoring during your litter patrols. The standard of tidiness is very high and you are commended on your attention to detail with respect to maintaining signage, bins, street furniture and seats throughout Kenmare as this made a very positive difference to the appearance of the town. Further improvements are possible with respect to signage as a small number of the brown 'Kerry Way' signs around Finnegans funeral home were in need of attention and a sign pole with no sign could be seen at the bring bank. We are delighted to see that you have a green business survey and we look forward to hearing more about this next year. We also concur with the first round adjudicator and recommend that your focus in this category should evolve to monitoring the results of your waste minimisation and sustainable resource use actions are working out by quantifying how much waste they are diverting from landfill and what quantity of resources they are saving.

We would also like to commend the standard of presentation seen in the numerous attractive terraces of dwellings throughout Kenmare and compliment the committee and volunteers on the neat and tidy appearance of key approach roads into the town. A quick comment on your submission is also necessary. While the application is generally of a good standard, we concur with the first round adjudicator and point out that your map should always include all of the projects completed – this makes it easier to follow and ensures that nothing is overlooked. Congratulations to you all for another strong performance in the competition and we thank you for inviting us to assess your work. Well done again and we look forward to returning next year.