

# Tidy Towns Competition 2013

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Knightsdown** Ref: **342**  
County: **Kerry** Mark: **302**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **22/06/2013**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2012</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2013</b>
Overall Development Approach	50	43	43
The Built Environment	50	41	41
Landscaping	50	38	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	28	28
Litter Control	50	42	42
Sustainable Waste And Resource Management	20	12	13
Tidiness	30	20	20
Residential Areas	40	30	30
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	38	38
General Impression	10	8	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>302</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

Chomghairdeachas le Knightsdown TidyTowns for entering the TidyTowns Competition for 2013. Hopefully the experience will be encouraging and help motivate you further in the coming years. The adjudicator wishes to praise your approach to filling in the application form. You use the original application but paste your typed comments onto the relevant sections, all the time keeping the comments relevant to that particular category. The result is a concise resumé of work done. On the other hand your Three Year Plan can hardly be described as fit for purpose as it does not address the categories of the TidyTowns competition. The Plan does have the positive results of identifying the projects that are of most urgency to your committee, the description of each project outlining your objectives and likely source of funding. The latter being of vital importance when embarking on any project. One notes your cross generational support base, the younger volunteers being accompanied by 'the seasoned campaigners'. As well as dealing with the important agencies that help support your work, ad hoc support from 'generous people' is also welcome. Your engagement with the school seems meaningful, active and related to definite areas. Your positive comments regarding the improvements that the involvement of TidyTowns has had on Knightsdown must be a great encouragement both to those directly involved in the TidyTowns work and those who live in the village but are not involved in TidyTowns for their own good reasons.

### The Built Environment:

The built environment of Knightsdown provides a delight for the visitor, a sense of times past, an awareness of the way in which the face of this island, coastal town is changed by the circumstances around it. But one also senses the impact of your own native quarried stone in the built environment. It is to be found all over, on old and new buildings, on prominent gable ends but also in the construction of boundary walls. It is used as a wall capping on long lengths of roadway with a native style of capping. Of concern to the adjudicator is that where there have been breaches of this wall capping or where individual stones have fallen they are rarely, it seems, replaced in the crafted manner of their original construction. Be aware of the uniqueness of your wall construction. Change is evident everywhere in the built environment of Knightsdown yet the Royal Valentia retains much of its grand presence, the lifeboat building of 1869 still stands, but its functions have passed to its fine modern replacement. 1888 is the year of the Dwelling House and it still proclaims itself proudly in attractive colours. The buildings down at the harbour and the general appearance of the harbour is a credit to all involved. The strong painted colours brighten up the surroundings, the mural a credit to your perseverance and to your creativity, the flags on the strongly coloured hoarding appearing as natural as the seashore itself. The history of

this town is present in the streetscape and in the many memorials to 1847 or 1848. Forgive me for not mentioning the Heritage Centre, as my stand out experience of the built environment. That school of 1861 gleams in glowing colours and in its renewed sense of community importance. Another rarity is the design of the childrens' playground. If there had been anyone around to share the see-saw it could have been great fun.

### **Landscaping:**

I will follow the litany of happenings from your submission. Three acres is a major commitment. The work along the seafront makes a wonderful impression but you could allow the natural growth to come in a few more mower lengths, thus reducing the workload without reducing the visual impact. The mowing on the Altazamuth is also wonderful. The mix of wild and ornamental shrubs and plants along the hedge is a beauty. The adjudicator saw the trees and plants at the Church of Ireland but was confounded by the mosaic. I loved the two pedestrian entrances, one gate beautifully painted, the other enhanced by the sound of the flowing stream. Another water feature is out at Bachelors Fall, a remarkable piece of landscaping and what must be a lovely break for walkers. A highlight for the adjudicator is the treatment of the parish pump in the village. You use your native pencil gravel to great effect, as the bed at the top of Cracow Park is where the fencing and the hedging is an effective shelter and also visually attractive.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

You live in a wildlife haven, if you never lifted a finger. The shore is a treasure throve. All of the projects you mention are praise worthy in facilitating access to these treasures to the public. All also promote the welfare of the wildlife. One would like to hear more from you on wildlife welfare. The adjudicator is quite bemused by the lack of any mention of Gunnera in your submission, especially under this heading. The infestation was mentioned in last year's report. Apart from its prevalence in some areas that may not be accessible to you the adjudicator is bothered that it is now appearing in one of your pride and joy projects, the Altazamuth Walk. This adjudicator feels that there should be a mention of your position vis a vis this Giant Rhubarb for next year's adjudicator.

### **Litter Control:**

Your signage is attractive, frequent, highly visible and hopefully effective. Creating awareness is a major element of the litter control category. 'Pick it when you see it' is a worthwhile mantra and the adjudicator felt honour bound to do so. And it did happen that he had the opportunity to pick it up. Sorry. Regular clean-ups seem to be effective but there are stray pieces still. But you are doing well in this section.

### **Sustainable Waste And Resource Management:**

The adjudicator is breathless reading your list of activities in this category. That list shows that you understand the main aims of this section, waste reduction and resource management. Yet again your projects are clearly defined and achievable. For next year's adjudicator, include one new initiative that relates to the promptings of this year's revised handbook in this category.

### **Tidiness:**

This is a harbour town. One does not associate tidiness with such a setting but the work that has been done in the harbour area creates that tidiness. This is a feather in the cap of all involved in the planning of the present appearance of the harbour and of the area along the shore. Yours is not an empty boast when you declare that you keep your signage clean. There are challenges to the tidy appearance of Knightstown that you must find infuriating and there is no need to mention them as they are self evident and invariably a consequence of our building boom. Show the guilty parties this report and tell the people involved he is talking about them. There are many prominent gable ends around the town, some beautifully painted, others that bit shabby due to the lack of a rub of domestos or a coat of paint.

### **Residential Areas:**

There are so many residential areas around the village for such a small village. There are beautiful houses all along approach roads, along the shoreline, on the street and in the back areas. There is an age range of over four centuries. All combine to give Knightstown its own character. Some houses have another usage now as in the Tourist Office. The bright gates on three houses on the street help to bring charm to the street. Some houses have aged with greater dignity than others as the sky blue dashed house on the street. Another favourite of the adjudicator is a native stone finish encountered somewhere else.

### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Fáilte go baile an ridire even over at the new water feature gives a sense of belonging to the residents and the visitors alike. Fine houses line the roads. Unique walls form boundaries. Fine footpaths provide safety and definition to roadsides. Attention is given to grass verge cutting but the natural wilderness is given expression. All very good. There are building problems in some back areas. Fortunately these are not too prominent and the adjudicator had to march about to find these blackspots.

### **General Impression:**

The over-riding impression that the visit to Knightstown leaves on the adjudicator is the debt that the entire

community owes to Knightstown Tidy Towns Committee over many years. I read of activities from 1993. Changes in the employment situation over the decades in Knightstown have impacted both negatively as well as positively on the appearance of the village. The recent building boom also left its mark. If remedial action is not taken when major social change happens in a small community then quality of life suffers. The appearance of Knightstown suggests that there is a healthy habit of coping with change in this community. Your group are catalysts in the ongoing social changes.