



| A KERRY BUILDING CONSERVATION *project* |

A *Guide* FOR THE KINGDOM'S TOWNS AND VILLAGES





INTRODUCTION

A good streetscape is a safe and pleasant space with diversity of premises and features and is easy to navigate for people of all ages and abilities.

The informal pattern of most Kerry towns and villages readily provides scope for this rich engaging experience.

Our generous community spirit coupled with willing hands and some of the following advice can however significantly improve our laneways and streets to enrich the experience for locals and visitors alike.

Some works to public areas and buildings require specific permissions, licences or agreement of relevant agencies or property owners in advance of any project suggested by the following guidance.





STREETS AND SPACES

Our squares, laneways and streets are places of frequent adaption and upheaval. Proactive management is required to keep them tidy and inviting.

SPACE

Space for pedestrians is a basic necessity which has been lost to many of our towns and villages over time. Stakeholders should allow adequate breathing room for people of all abilities to move safely and relax in our urban settings. Perhaps another street installation or sign is not really required? Redundant signs, posts and bollards can be removed to reduce physical clutter.

WHEELIE BINS

Wheelie bins due to their number and size can unfortunately create an unpleasant public domain, ruining it for everybody. Owners and tenants can be encouraged to remove bins from public view in a timely manner. Where private storage is unavailable the bin area should be creatively screened to positive effect.

NATURE

Greenery brings visual interest, colour, sound reduction, and biodiversity, and enhances people's experience of the urban environment. Large trees in planter boxes can transform unpleasant hard surface areas and planting of permanent trees brings endless long-term benefits. If roadside space is restricted, consider co-operative planting with adjoining landowners whereby trees are planted beyond the public domain but still enhance the streetscape.

LIGHTING

Lighting once properly chosen and located can present a safe welcoming atmosphere, emphasise local landmarks and assist way-finding. Modern lighting options allow better control and subtlety in line with the Dark Skies movement. Renewal of outdated and oversized light fittings in public spaces will bring significant improvements in ambience, aesthetics, and efficiency.



BUILDINGS AND PEOPLE

Kerry's refreshing assortments of dwellings, shops, pubs and offices are the physical backdrop to our urban activities. Well-presented facades and streets contribute to civic pride and pleasure.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance is by far the most efficient method of keeping our streets in good order. Regular window cleaning, washing of walls and painting are simple ways of contributing positively to the public realm. At roof level, timely repairs and removal of weeds and debris prevent more serious damage and unsightly staining. Neighbouring building owners can share costs by working together.

SIGNAGE

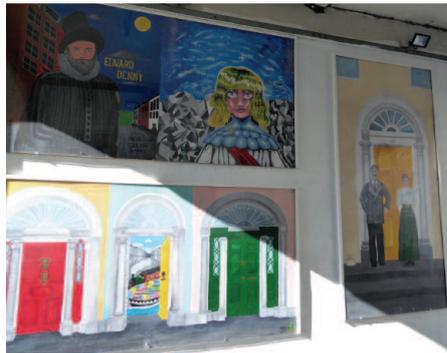
Signage is far more visually successful when it is well considered and of good quality rather than poorly designed, oversized and repetitive. Simplicity and awareness of scale will enhance the overall setting. Obsolete modern advertising and notices should be removed where feasible.

COLOUR

Don't be afraid of colour! It has always been used to enliven our county towns and villages, a tradition which is equally relevant nowadays. The interplay of strong colours is especially successful on smaller buildings whereas more subtlety is required on larger structures. A carefully chosen colour can bring individual identity to a property while also contributing with its neighbours to a vibrant streetscape.

WIRING

Wiring and service installations should be located to minimise visual clutter which degrades the public realm. Wiring routes and fittings must be considered by stakeholders and not left to haphazard installation. Remove unused wires, satellite dishes and decorations to present a cleaner appearance.



VACANCY AND TRANSITION

The natural evolution of our towns and villages throws up adjustments of occupancy, use and condition which often diminish general appearance. However such upheaval can instead be harnessed for overall community visual gain.

SHOP WINDOWS

Windows which are unused provide a valuable opportunity for display of interesting art, photographic, historic, or other material. Several premises can be used to create a visual trail which animates the locality. Such exhibitions can inform, educate and amuse; while linking with local groups, schools, and festivals.

ART

Artwork can transform construction disturbance into positive splashes of colour by using temporary hoardings as canvases for local artists of any age. Communities should show confidence in their artists of quality by commissioning larger scale murals on blank walls or gable ends. Don't forget local schools often have extraordinarily talented young artists too!

FAMILY NAMES

Family names on traditional pubs and shopfronts should be kept in place even when a building use has stopped or changed. Lettering in relief can be overpainted to avoid confusion but retained to quietly reveal some of the story of place and people.

CHARACTER

Character in traditional buildings and streetscapes is expressed in the simple but robust materials used. Stakeholders should strive to maintain craft and individuality by always promoting repair rather than replacement. A freshly painted old window or cast iron downpipe, even if imperfect, maintains character whereas a cheap short-lived replacement degrades by hiding the building's age and history.



HERE TO HELP

Our urban settlements sustain us by providing for our commercial activity, socialising, business and facilitate enjoyment of shared community and family occasions. The care we devote to these special places is a worthy investment in people and community who will reap the rewards of beautiful urban spaces.

Individuals, property owners and community groups should not be at a loss for advice, help, grants and assistance which is available from the contacts listed below. Please engage with us so that we can all work better together.

CONTACTS AND ADVICE

KCC Planning Office, Tel. 066 718 3500

KCC Housing Department -
Repair & Lease Scheme for Reuse of Vacant Properties, Tel. 066 718 3645

KCC Conservation Officer, Tel. 066 718 3793

KCC Arts Officer, Tel. 066 718 3541

KCC Biodiversity Officer, Tel. 066 718 3500

KCC Shopfronts Design Guidelines Docstore:
kerrycoco.ie/KCCWebsite/planning/shopfront.pdf

Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland, Tel. 01 676 1703
The Heritage Council, Tel. 056 777 0777

Government Conservation Advice Series - Maintenance





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Victoria McCarthy, Architectural Conservation Officer, Kerry County Council.

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