

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kilteely - Cill Tíle** Ref: **251**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **311**
Category: **A** Date(s): **07/07/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	36	37
Streetscape & Public Places	80	43	44
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	44	45
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	31	32
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	19	20
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	63	64
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	31	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	36	37
TOTAL MARK	550	303	311

Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu don bhliain 2023. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo. Adh Mór. What an achievement to have almost 30% of the community actively involved in Tidy Towns activities & projects. It is indicative of a vibrant community spirit. The number of organizations with whom you interact speaks volumes as to how well the community is knitted together. The bilateral support of other local community groups, local agencies and businesses is imperative to get projects from idea inception to completion. There are some interesting groups & well done on involving those whose medical conditions might otherwise prove isolating – an interesting item for inclusion in the Tidy Towns newsletter as more communities might consider establishing, with assistance, such a drama group. There is no doubt that Kilteely know how to enjoy your downtime with all the varied range of activities available for residents. Your varied forms of communication ensure all generations are catered for & no media channel is overlooked although it would appear to be a long hiatus on social media postings as there are none since late last year. Perhaps one of your younger community members might take up the task of social media postings on the newer platform, Instagram while someone older restarts the Facebook page. Close engagement with the youth of Kilteely is essential for the future of the village & it is heartening to see you work with two National Schools in the parish.

Streetscape & Public Places / Sráid-Dreach & Áiteanna Poiblí:

Accessibility within a village is essential for all residents irrespective of their level & means of mobility thus the planned new floodlit footpath out to the GAA field linking the village is fantastic news. Dereliction has blighted many villages & towns & provided a visual eyesore that is not easily managed by Tidy Towns groups. Limerick is fortunate to have a local council who is proactive in their approach & is compulsorily acquiring derelict properties. We see they have proposed acquiring 2 derelict sites & property at O'Callaghan Avenue & Smith O'Brien Avenue. It is also great to see a sale agreed sign on another village centre property. It would be hoped the refurbishment in time of said properties would provide accommodation & improve the streetscape. Many Tidy Towns groups are completing an audit of derelict & vacant properties & then, as you have done, liaising with the local Council on proposals for returning them to residential or commercial use. It is remarkable how additional tree planting in an area of hard surfacing can alter, for the better, the visual impact as at the Church. It is, no doubt, disappointing to you that two of the hornbeams have failed. Presumably you have plans to replace these trees. It is great to see the parking area attended to with repaving. A little late at this stage however there is an excellent publication providing guidance on how car parks can be managed to help pollinators. It is worth a read. <https://pollinators.ie/how-car-parks-can-help-pollinators/> The coordinated colour palette & standard of maintenance of the commercial properties is an excellent example of how businesses add to the panorama of a streetscape. Well done to both Aherns & Hanleys. The KDI façade has a

complimentary colour façade however the broken windows do detract from the overall image. The community buildings – the Church, Day Care Centre & National School – were looking spic & span on adjudication day. Kiltelly is fortunate to have their amenities within the village environs. The Community Centre's doors would benefit from some attention to enhance the overall appearance. Kiltelly is fortunate that the “newer” buildings added to the streetscape have retained the vernacular style that enhances rather than detracts from the village.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The location of the graveyard within the village is a wonderful space on so many levels & walking through one can see such a rich heritage of local families. The Jubilee Garden located as it is in the Church grounds provides a meditative space for the community. At this stage in its maturity, it would be worth a relook at the area as some shrubs are reaching the end of their life span, others need pruning as they attempt to overshadow & crowd out adjoining plants. It would be possible to take slips from some to propagate for future planting schemes. The cobblelock in the circular area needs attention to present it to its optimum potential. It would be lovely to see the seating here receive the same treatment as those across the road under the chestnut trees to knit together the village colour theme.

How fortunate Kiltelly is to have mature, healthy chestnut trees. One wonders how old the one nearest the village, as its diameter is sizeable! Have you ever considered a Tree Protection Order (TPO) for this grouping?

Breen's Corner is an excellent example of appropriate landscaping with the farm machinery & equipment, trees & wildflower areas set against the backdrop of agricultural buildings. There is the real feel of a cottage garden here. A backdrop of verbena or hollyhocks, both pollinator friendly perennials & easily germinated, would enhance the long wall here. One wonders about the need for the 3 containers outside here, they seem surplus to requirements. Thank you for the pictures of spring flowering bulbs here – another one to consider adding are muscari – great for pollinators, tolerant of all soil conditions & multiplies over time.

Your project at Cluain na Fhia is remarkable & a fantastic example of a community mini park achieved in a relatively small space. The meandering path, trees, pollinator friendly planting, sustainable seating, etc all provide a space to savour. On adjudication day, it was obvious several of the trees were not performing well & there will be replacements required. Some of the ties had snapped as the site certainly experiences strong winds. There appeared to be herbicide use on the border between the grass & the stone chippings, as the same linear strip was experiencing dieback while the rest of the lawn was a healthy green. It was lovely to see the clusters of perennials pollinator friendly planting & the verbena clearly loves its location behind the seating. The path at the end was washed away in the centre due to the recent torrential rains. This may be an issue to address regarding runoff diversion.

As referenced by last year's adjudicator & addressed by you in your submission, the number of containers throughout the village is considerable. We understand that locally there is a grá for them however the resources required in terms of people power & water consumption especially during this month of June places an onerous task on those responsible for their maintenance. Kiltelly is so fortunate to have wonderful backdrops of stone walls & well-maintained entrances with space for in the ground planting.

Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality / An Dúlra agus an Bhithéagsúlacht i do cheantar:

Congratulations on winning the Limerick Bee Friendly in Bloom category at Going for Gold. How fortunate to be chosen as a wild card & then to win the top prize of €5,000 in that category. Well deserved.

It is heartening to see you adopt the “No Mow May” initiative & work your influence on the GAA with positive results. The graveyard with its short meadow was a delight especially as some areas have been designated & left as long meadows. This is not always an easy change to communicate with the local community so well done.

Kiltelly is fortunate to have so many wildflower areas around the village in addition to perennial planting & it was noticeable on the visit insects visiting these clusters. We are relieved to see you are judicious in your source of wildflowers to prevent the introduction of invasive species.

The Green Schools Programme for National Schools provides an ideal way to foster awareness of the local environment & it is great to hear Kiltelly are commencing work on their biodiversity flag. Their results of their endeavours will be eagerly awaited next year.

It is a delight to see the line of mature chestnut trees across from the church & the seating in green to match. What a wonderful place to sit & experience nature in spring as the flowers of these trees are a rich source of pollen & nectar for insects. The information boards here on local biodiversity are an excellent reference point for both residents & visitors. In last year's submission you referenced a biodiversity survey at the graveyard, it would be worth advising us of the results & any changes noted, year on year. Also are the bird & bat boxes erected to date occupied & if yes, by what species? There are a lot of volunteer groups that are happy to do “walk & talk” workshops in communities e.g. Bat Conservation Ireland <https://www.batconservationireland.org/irish-bats> BirdWatch Ireland's Limerick branch <https://birdwatchireland.ie/> The Barn Owl Project <https://www.thebarnowlproject.ie/> to reference just a few.

Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:

Clearly around water usage you as a Tidy Towns group are setting an excellent example with your rainwater harvesting system at the Community Hall & at committee members' premises. Your local shop is to be commended on taking on your request to sell fruit & vegetables loose than ones that are prepackaged. With the results of your surveys, it would be great to see a focus on using this knowledge to promote a reduction in the consumption of water & packaging – more refuse & reduce than recycle. There are lots of strategies available & check out Voice Ireland <https://www.voiceireland.org/> & My Waste for campaigns like Upcycling Challenge; Reuse Month, etc <https://www.mywaste.ie/why/>

It is fantastic that you have the skills within the community to propagate plants, grow from seed, transplant & make your own compost. This type of self-sustaining community gardening is commendable. Have you the opportunity to run workshops at the allotments or plant swaps, etc? Those of us who are gardeners can assume that everyone knows how to grow plants however these skills appear to have missed a generation. Thus, passing on those skills is essential & creates greater community involvement. Your reference to molasses grit to control weeds is a new idea & one your adjudicator has not heard about previously. If you find this method successful, do consider a short brief on it for the Tidy Towns newsletter.

Delighted to hear the local GAA has entered the Green Club. We will be interested to know how they use the toolkit & what work; besides wildflower areas, they undertake. They have the ability under this programme to add significantly to Killeely's biodiversity & sustainable practices.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Killeely is to be commended for the high standard of the village. On adjudication day there was not an iota of litter to be seen & your Community Employment Scheme employee was industriously sweeping paths & attending to communal areas. The TLC8 is a wonderful initiative & a great way to engender interest in the community in maintaining a litter free environment. It would be interesting to know if you are seeing an increase or decrease in litter collected, year on year. The standard of street furniture was excellent – freshly painted, washed clean & visible. An annual audit of street furniture is a good strategy – redundant poles, obsolete signage, blocked gulleys, discarded safety equipment etc. In a few areas, the footpaths are becoming a little degraded & would be worth bringing to the attention of the local Engineer prior to work commencing on the planned floodlit walkway to include it in the schedule of works.

The Bring Banks were pristine & it must be one of the most artistic sites this adjudicator has even seen – the murals depicting local & pastoral scenes create a lovely backdrop.

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

Hillview Drive's raised bank on the right-hand side of the entrance is a stunning example of what impact landscaping can have in a housing estate. Well done to you on your work here with the residents.

Cill Bhride is beautifully maintained & wonderful to see the planted beds with flowering shrubs fronting the greens & along the entrance driveway. In hindsight, a better substitute hedging rather than the photinia would have been beneficial for wildlife although it does present glossy green and purple-red foliage.

Ballyvouden Crescent is fortunate to have a lovely green space fronting the estate. They have an incredible opportunity for an edible hedge inside the boundary wall in addition to more trees. There are a number of volunteer led groups aiming to create mini forests & working with community groups, residents' associations & school. Check out Trees on the Land <https://www.treesontheland.com/> Easy Treesie <https://easytreesie.com/> Many local councils participate in the annual National Tree Week & make trees freely available to interested communities. It would be a good way to interest the residents in the various estates & perhaps have the school children involved. A suggestion would be to have a community tree-planting event with advice on hand for novice gardeners – a tree for each child. The village residences are well maintained in the main & there are some incredible gardeners.

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

The Dromkeen & Hospital approach roads have a lovely sweep on both sides with well-maintained gardens, landscaped terrain, hedgerows, stone walls & farm entrances.

The stonewalls on the Emily approach road backed by hedging & pastureland create a lovely pastoral panorama. Are there plans to finish the road to the stonewall at Cluain An Fhia or are you intending to plant that narrow strip? The L5055 will be enhanced by the planned floodlit walkway from the GAA field to the village.

Concluding Remarks:

It was a joy to visit Killeely for the first time. The pride the community demonstrates in their village is apparent from the approach roads & you are maximizing the potential of your natural bounty. As your plans progress & projects come to fruition, the impact these will make on the village can only be to the benefit of the community.