

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kiltimagh - Coillte Mach** Ref: **533**
County: **Mayo** Mark: **334**
Category: **B** Date(s): **04/07/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	42	43
Streetscape & Public Places	80	46	48
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	46	47
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	43	44
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	17	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	65	66
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	32	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	34	35
TOTAL MARK	550	325	334

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.

Welcome to the Super Valu Tidy Towns Competition for 2023. We thank you for your entry, and wish you all the best in all your future work. Good luck.

Kiltimagh - Coillte Mach, a small town with a population of 1000 people – has entered the competition for the last 20 years and has a committee of 6 members with support of another 12 volunteers.

- Your committee meets weekly to organize the weekly cleanups and maintenance projects.
- Support is received from Mayo Co.Co. CE Scheme, RSS, Kiltimagh GAA, Genfitt Ltd, Diamonds Hardware, Chris Glynn Outdoor Gym Equipment, Kiltimagh Town Improvements Committee, Paraic Horkan (Horkans Garden Center), John Brennan Flowers, Coen Tool Hire, Cathal Gilmartin Machinery and Kiltimagh IRD LTD.
- You communicate with the public mainly through WhatsApp Group messaging, TT Facebook page, Local Newsletter and the Community Notes in the Western People.
- You have a strong relationship with Murt Dunleavy from the St. Louis Community School and the students are heavily involved in the restoration of the Railway Station for the Velorail project. They are also involved in the Willow Summer Festival in the new Amenity Park. Work has just started on Phase 2 of this project. You also work closely with the staff and teachers of Coláiste Raifteirí and St. Aidan's National School as part of the 'Trees on the Land' project.
- It is pleasing to read that new businesses wishing to relocate to the area have cited the Tidy Towns as one reason why they have moved to Kiltimagh. It is noted that two companies the Photonomi Group and the Brogan Group have indicated that they were very impressed with the work of the local Tidy Towns group.

The black and white map attached to your entry form was of good quality. However, when printed some of the road names and landmarks were difficult to read. For next year it would be good to improve the map to make it more user friendly. This makes easier for the adjudicator to navigate around the town and aids the assessment process.

The quality of the application form was very good. The photos included were helpful, providing context to the various projects completed. Thank you for including photos highlighting projects carried out under each category. The contents of the comprehensive 5-year Tidy Towns plan has been noted and this provides a very good blueprint for the future development of your town. It may be helpful to include some specific target dates on the plan in the future, to improve its overall effectiveness and to help monitor progress on its implementation.

The adjudicator's assessment is based on a recent site visit and the contents of the application form, which is suitably concise at 22 pages long - well done. The text inserted on the form is also easy to read. The use of headings in bold text and bullet points for some of the longer paragraphs will however, help to improve the readability of the entry form. Distinguishing the new text added to the form, from that already on the form could also

be considered in future years.

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

- It is noted that extensive works are continuing on the railway station at Kiltimagh, including restoration works on the signal box, painting of murals, fences and lamp posts etc. You have also completed a range of enhancement works in the centre of the town and these are making a significant impact on the overall presentation of the streetscape. The adjudicator noted the extensive programme of festival events taking place over the summer months, including 'The Race to Glory' cycle race, for which colourful bunting had been erected across the Main Street.
- The adjudicator commenced the visit to Kiltimagh on a cloudy but pleasant day in early July. Aiden Street was resplendent with colourful shopfronts and the wonderful library building here was especially admired. The Raffeirí civic space was beautifully presented with colourful seating, nicely painted bright wooden planters, floral displays, flag poles and a sculpture feature. One feels this area could be improved by removing some car parking spaces to increase the overall space available for pedestrians. In addition, it would allow some of the metal bollards which detract somewhat from this area, to be removed. The cycle repair station here was positively noted.
- Some highlights noted on a walkabout of the town included the premises at Gilmartin and Murphy Solicitors, Cill Aodain Court Hotel, Teach O'Hora's Bar, Hair Image, Macks, Byrne's Meats, The Tavern Bar, Ryan's Bar, Shannon's B&B and Butchers. This list is not exhaustive. Perhaps consider a small reduction in the extent of on street car parking on the Main Street, to enable the future provision of footpath build-outs – this will allow for the introduction of suitable tree planting and floral displays along the street and improved walkability and access for pedestrians and cyclists. It was good to note that extensive refurbishment works are now underway at the Church of the Holy Family. The nearby Saint Louis Community School building was admired, whose frontage greatly improved the visual aspect here. The colourful residential properties along Chapel Street also added significantly to the visual quality of the streetscape in the town.
- The Community Centre is an important local amenity in Kiltimagh. The rear façade of this building is visually prominent along the street. This area and car park could be enhanced with additional tree planting, where space is available, to soften the visual impact of the building when viewed from the street.
- The existing burial ground on the Balla Road looked very well, with a handsome natural stone wall boundary along the road frontage. Saint Aidan's National School was adorned with a freshly painted and colourful facade and the attractively landscaped access road.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

- The new Kiltimagh Amenity Park is a major project listed under this category and it is good to note that the proposed plans have now been officially approved, to enable preliminary works to commence on site. The adjudicator is pleased to note that some wetland areas exist on the site and these will be protected as part of the overall scheme. The Amenity Park was visited and the works completed to date including drainage, the installation of perimeter footpaths, pond areas and visitor seating were noted. The adjudicator looks forward to the completion of this major park amenity for the town in due course.
- The Kiltimagh Community Garden was visited and the attractive seating area provided here complete with natural stone paving, recycled plastic seats and herbaceous perennial planting beds enhanced this area. The attractive wall mural in the garden was prominent when viewed from the nearby main road.
- The Sculpture Park and Kiltimagh Museum provided an interesting diversion from the main town centre and it was fascinating to stand on the former platform of the old railway line and consider how busy this area must have been in former times. It is hoped that the new Velorail project will bring new life back to this area. The newly installed planted area beside the signal box building was positively noted.
- The Wetlands Park area was visited and the adjudicator noted the extensive works carried out here to provide access to this wonderful amenity, which includes a range of wetland habitats and wildlife retreat areas which can be experienced by the public at close hand.
- The floral displays provided around the base of the trees along the Main Street added a welcoming splash of colour in these areas. The Kiltimagh info. point and paved area outside O'Hora's bar also looked well, complete with a restful seating area, signage, picnic benches, floral displays, and natural stone paving. The beautifully presented Grottos on the Swinford and Knock Roads were especially admired.
- A further reduction in Kiltimagh Tidy Town's overall use of seasonal bedding plants for your floral displays is an initiative that your committee could consider under this category for the future. Colourful and permanent perennial and pollinator friendly planting e.g., using plants such as *Alstroemeria* spp. can provide a good alternative to the flamboyant but labour/water/feed and energy intensive annuals such as *Lobelias*, *Begonias* and *Petunias* etc.

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

- It is noted that Kiltimagh Tidy Towns has been working closely with the Parks and Wild Life Service and Mayo Co. Co. in relation to local nature and biodiversity projects such as a bio-diversity programme at the Wetlands Park called the "Wet Lands Challenge". This is a wonderful project as it is very informative for schoolchildren to experience nature at first hand. "Pond Dipping", "Bug Safari", "Leaf Watch", and "Bird Hide" exercises are an ideal means of imparting a great sense of wonderment, knowledge and love of nature to children.
- Your Japanese Knotweed Eradication Programme is in its 6th year and you work closely with Mayo Co.Co to deal with this serious and ongoing problem.
- The Glór Mills Arts Center continues to run workshops on bio-diversity and have enhanced their site with native tree planting and the upgrading of walkways.
- The new Kiltimagh Amenity Park has many elements which will enhance local nature and biodiversity. Well done on the planting of 400 pollinator friendly plant species in the vicinity of Kiltimagh Railway Station.

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

- Your Facebook Page and WhatsApp Group provide regular updates regarding recycling from companies, such as Mc Grath Waste and Wee Ireland.
- To score extra marks under this category it would be good to look at developing projects directly related to local sustainability issues in the areas of waste, energy, and water. In the future when considering new projects under this category it is worthwhile to first consider how the proposed project will align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The information provided in the Tidy Towns newsletters and Handbook is very informative in this regard.
- You might in the future consider installing a community composter in the town. These are useful and provide a quantity of mulch to use on your planted areas, which will ensure rapid establishment of the plantings.
- Other areas worthy of consideration by Kiltimagh Tidy Towns for the future under this category, which is in keeping with the Sustainable Development Goals, include the development of small electric microgeneration schemes for Wind, Solar and Hydro in partnership with the Local Authority - these may also attract suitable SEAI or Leader funding.
- You might look at the provision of public e-car charge points and additional bicycle parking facilities or off-road cycle tracks in the town (perhaps along the old disused section of Kiltimagh railway line). Where there are deficiencies, you could suggest suitable locations where these could be provided in the short term.
- The Committee might also consider in the future initiating membership of the Sustainable Energy Communities programme run by the SEAI which includes engaging in learning networks, preparation of energy masterplans and local energy action plans etc. The following are useful links in this regard.
<https://www.seai.ie/community-energy/sustainable-energy-communities/><https://www.codema.ie/sec>

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

- Your main focus under this category this year was to do with work carried out in conjunction with the Mayo Co.Co Environmental Officer, to co-ordinate litter picking at various litter blackspots around the town. Great thanks are also due to Kiltimagh GAA Club who organized a major cleanup, concentrating on all the main and secondary roads leading into Kiltimagh as well as the Loop Walks that act as Loop Walks around Kiltimagh.
- It is noted that Tidy Towns carry out weekly cleanups around the town concentrating on litter and weed control. It is good to ensure all weed control is carried out by mechanical means without the use of herbicides. This work is coordinated with the CE Scheme and the RSS scheme, switching between weekends and weekdays depending on availability of volunteers.
- On the day of adjudication, the Kiltimagh town area was generally found to be tidy and litter free - well done to all those concerned with ongoing litter control initiatives.

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

- The adjudicator is pleased to note that Kiltimagh Tidy Towns works closely with the different housing committees in your local estates and that green areas are kept at a very good standard. Tidy Towns, CE Scheme and Kiltimagh IRD work in conjunction with the various estates to mow all the green areas, as well as all the grass margins which are cut on the various approach roads leading into town.
- The adjudicator called to several residential estates in the town including Altbawn Crescent, Sliabh Cairn, Station View and Foxfield Park. The general standard of maintenance and presentation of these housing estates was very good. Tidy Estates competitions are a useful way to help ensure a consistent standard of presentation between individual estates in the town can be achieved, and you may wish to initiate such a competition in future years.

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

- A very interesting project listed under this category this year involves the creation of Literary Trail for Kiltimagh celebrating Mayo poets. The limestone plaques erected at various locations in the village were noted positively and no doubt are receiving a lot of interest from the public.
- You have received funding for power washing and painting of selected areas e.g along the pedestrian lane linking Main Street and the Circular Road. Mayo Co.Co has undertaken major work on the footpaths in Kiltimagh over the last two years and work is still ongoing. A footpath from the town to the local cemetery is now completed. It is noted that the provision of suitable loop walks in the Kiltimagh area has been a great benefit to the health and wellbeing of the local community.
- On the approach to the town from Knock, the road is enhanced by private residences and gardens, stone walls and natural hedgerow boundaries adjoining the road. The attractive Kiltimagh name sign was noted positively. The industrial premises and the timber post and rail fencing are visually prominent along this approach.
- On the approach to the town from the Balla direction, good road surfaces and markings were noted. The natural stone wall boundary to the Kiltimagh cemetery and car parking area enhance this approach. A new footpath and concrete boundary walls have recently been completed along this section of road. The new walls are visually prominent here. Consideration should be given to providing some tree planting behind these walls to soften the visual aspect on this approach. The frontage of Coláiste Raifteirí is enhanced by an attractive landscaping scheme along the frontage of this property.
- Along the Swinford Road, this area is characterised by old well-constructed stone wall boundaries and an attractive Kiltimagh name sign, stone planter and Grotto area. The Cairn International Trade Centre which is a very pleasing modern style building, enhances this approach. Consider providing some tree planting to the rear of the existing concrete boundary wall along the road here.

Concluding Remarks:

Kiltimagh Tidy Towns has been very innovative and active over the last year and all your efforts continue to have significant impact on the overall presentation of the village and the lives of residents. Well done to all concerned and we wish you every success in the competition.