

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: Kill - An Chill	Ref: 1924
County: Waterford	Mark: 240
Category: B	Date(s): 29/06/2023

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	40
Streetscape & Public Places	80	37
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	35
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	20
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	45
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	20
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	25
TOTAL MARK	550	240

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.

Kill is most welcome back to the Tidy Towns competition after a hiatus of almost four decades. We are always delighted to see communities return to the fold & share in the collective spirit.

Your committee of 25 is one of the largest noted to date, well done on having so many community members interested in joining. The volunteer base you can call upon, in excess of 30, is testament to your community spirit.

The inclusion of all genders & ages within the committee provides a great base for ideas & discussion. What better way to know what the community wants you as a group to focus on than to ask them? A response rate of almost 40% is excellent & provides you with a great starting point from which to prioritize & plan. The collective engagement of local community groups is the best strategy for project completions as is your situation with 3 groups under one umbrella in addition to your relationships with other local groups. It is imperative to maintain good working relationships with local agencies as they have expertise & financial resources to assist on projects & general maintenance.

While volunteers are fantastic in giving of their time, the assistance of a Community Employment employee is a gift as they provide incredible assistance on the To Do List for a village environs.

While the focus is often on work, it is always great to have the fun times & down tool times. These events take significant resources to organize however they are much appreciated by the community & increase those bonds. Sourcing funds for planned projects is a time consuming & often disappointing exercise. However, keeping the goal in mind & with perseverance those funds will come in time. It is fantastic to hear you have been supported by Waterford County Council; Glanbia; local GAA club; Community Centre & local businesses.

There is no doubt you have all communication mediums covered, from traditional to social media. It is imperative today to have this spread in order to reach all generations.

We cannot emphasize how important is the relationship with local schools. Thus, it is heartening to hear it is a mutually beneficial one in Kill.

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

The village of Kill is surprising stretched out in all directions. The centre of the village has some lovely examples of vernacular heritage & some attractive, well-appointed business premises. You are fortunate to have the National School located within the village environs & it is very well maintained & presented. Similarly, the close proximity of the Community Centre & GAA grounds is a logistical gift in comparison to many communities where the amenities require transportation. The local Church is an imposing landmark & there are some high quality old grave markers in the adjoining graveyard in addition to the old ecclesiastical bell tower & ruins. Garda Síochána Station is a significant building, as it appears to be one of the earliest surviving civic buildings in Kill. It appears to be out of use on

adjudication day, is this the situation? You might provide updates on any buildings that are vacant & proposed plans in next year's submission.

It is interesting to see the changes in two decades having consulted the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. It would be an interesting project for a local historian or Transition Year student to provide updates to the records on file. <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/>

We look forward to developments in your plans for a new Community Park area at the Community Centre & hope to hear about its progression in next year's report. The drawings included in the application present an incredible community space cum garden with a wealth of amenities. It is very important that you consider biodiversity in these plans & focus on planting in the ground rather than containers.

There is a wealth of information on this section in the Tidy Towns Handbook & is worth consulting in advance of next year's submission. <https://www.tidytowns.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Streetscape-and-Public-Places.pdf>

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The restoration of the flowerbed close to the priest's residence was quite the undertaking given its size & proximity to the road. The results of your work are impressive. Well done on taking expert advice on plant selection & ensure when adding plants for summer colour they are nectar rich & perennials – good for the pollinators, less water demanding & more inexpensive in the long term.

The beds either side of the Church entrance provide colour in an area of hard surfaces & delighted to see nectar rich perennials included like lavender.

We note the clearance you have completed on a number of natural stone ditches due to safety concerns. As will be referenced later, it would be worth engaging with firstly, your Local Environmental/Heritage Officer & latterly, with groups who can assist with showing you how to repair or maintain the dry stone ditches e.g. <https://www.dswai.ie/> There is a multitude of wall friendly flora & fauna & your adjudicator has never seen as much of the wildflower, Navelwort, as on County Waterford's dry stone walls.

The pink roses blooming on the natural stonewall boundary of the GAA grounds presents a wonderful panorama on the approach to Kill. They look very healthy & obviously like their raised home with the protection of the hedge from winds.

Your work on the graveyard reseeding is seamless & no doubt welcomed by all those paying their respects to loved ones. It is always amazing how long we can look at something & pay no heed until some one or some group decide to take action & the results are well received by all.

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

Kill is fortunate to firstly be incorporated into the UNESCO Copper Coast Geopark & secondly to have two significant natural amenities within close proximity of the village, Ballinlough Lake & Kilmurrin Beach.

On the adjudication visit, we saw no signage regarding the Copper Coast – perhaps this was missed or there are future plans for an information board & map. It would seem to be a perfect opportunity to raise your profile.

With your location, you are in an ideal position to conduct surveys & provide updates on your social media feeds – Irish Garden Bird Survey commences annually in December & is an engaging & easy activity for households to get partake in <https://birdwatchireland.ie/our-work/surveys-research/research-surveys/irish-garden-bird-survey/>;

BirdWatch Ireland conducts other surveys that may be of interest – Irish Wetland Bird survey; Swift Survey; Irish Barn Owl Survey & many more <https://birdwatchireland.ie/our-work/surveys-research/research-surveys/>.

In this area, the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is a key document for all Tidy Towns groups & once assimilated you then have the opportunity to consider getting a Local Biodiversity Plan done in order to establish a baseline & prepare for future projects <https://pollinators.ie/aipp-2021-2025/>. There is a Local Biodiversity Action Fund available through your local Council by way of application & is well worth planning to have one completed for Kill in the not too distant future. There is an excellent publication for faith communities & as you have large green areas across the parish church, graveyard & residence there is tremendous potential here. <https://pollinators.ie/faith-communities/> Your Local Environmental Officer will be of immense assistance to you so make contact with them. The Tidy Towns Handbook provides lots of content on this area too. <https://www.tidytowns.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Nature-and-Biodiversity-in-your-locality.pdf>

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

What a fantastic project – the reinstatement of the village pump after 15 years. The work & number of local people involved was astonishing. It was great that you could restore the old pump albeit with the replacement of parts past their lifespan. One can only imagine the memories that came flooding back to those who reside in Kill & can recall using the amenity. It is ideally located & you have completed a great job on showcasing it & bringing it back into functional use for your watering needs.

It is wonderful to see that sustainable transport has been prioritized at the school with the installation of new bike racks & the addition of bollards for safety. It will be interesting to hear in next year's report if this amenity is encouraging more children to cycle to school. Many schools have a Walk/Cycle on Wednesdays (WOW) initiative. Is your National School part of the Green School's Programme? A brief synopsis from the school on their activities would be a worthwhile inclusion in next year's report.

Once you read through this section of the Tidy Towns handbook, <https://www.tidytowns.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Sustainability-Doing-More-with-less.pdf>

you will no doubt find your community, residential & commercial, are already doing lots in this area – rainwater harvesting; solar energy; reducing food waste; energy retrofits just to name a few.

Your local GAA club may be interested in the GAA Green Club Toolkit in order to assist Kill in implementing simple sustainable actions. <https://learning.gaa.ie/greenclub>

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Well done on assisting the "Guardians of the Copper Coast" with litter picks. Are these part of the Clean Coasts Big Beach Clean campaign that takes place in September annually? <https://cleancoasts.org/our-initiatives/big-beach-clean/> Clean Coasts have a number of initiatives & campaigns that you might consider adopting e.g. #BreakUpWithPlastic #2MinuteBeachClean to name just two. Even sharing these on your social media feeds will bring them to the attention of the community & may encourage more people to volunteer.

An Taisce's National Spring Clean is a great way to galvanize a community into action early in the year. Well done to Kill for carrying out two of these events. It will be interesting to keep annual records & see the change in number of bags collected year or year. Have you a facility to separate the litter into recyclables & waste to reduce what you are sending to landfill? It might be possible to use the Reverse Vending machine in Supervalu in Dungarvan for plastic bottles & aluminum cans.

There is an excellent initiative commenced in Wicklow, The Pure Mile Project, <http://www.pureproject.ie/the-pure-mile/> where members of the community adopt a mile of road to keep clear of litter. They assist with resources, award prizes, a selection of trees & certificates of participation.

As Kill is fortunate to have an engaged National School, they may be interested in adopting an innovative free programme that inspires children to actively contribute to their locality. The Picker Pals Project is a fun & engaging activity for children, teachers & parents. <https://pickerpalsworld.org/>

Dog fouling is a nationwide problem, not the canines just some of their owners. Well done on using the dog fouling stencils on the pathways instead of adding posters to poles & highlighting on social media. Some communities find that extra stencils in the areas where there is a persistent problem reduces the frequency of the fouling.

It seems unfortunate that the old ecclesiastical ruins are used as a dumping area for graveyard waste. There must be a more appropriate solution to storing unrequired materials – either dispose of appropriately or secure another area. It was great to see no litter at any location in Kill. The Bring Bank centre was litter free. Keep up the great work.

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

Ceol na Mara housing estate has a fine entrance & lots of green spaces on the drive in. There is great potential here for tree planting & climbers/edible hedge to camouflage the plastered walls.

An tSliabhán housing estate is well maintained & they too have lovely green areas where there are opportunities for further planting.

There are a number of volunteer groups working with residents associations, Tidy Towns groups & schools on the creation of mini forests. They work in a collaborative manner & many sponsored trees are available free of charge.

Check out Trees on the Land <https://www.treesontheland.com/> Pocket Forests <https://www.pocketforests.ie/> and Easy Treesie <https://easytreesie.com/>

The residences & gardens are generally well presented throughout the village & there is no doubting the pride Kill's residents take in their abodes.

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

The R681, towards Kilmeaden, new traffic calming measures certainly make an impact & it would be hoped motorists are adhering to the speed limit on this long stretch of straight road into the village. The verges here are let grow before the speed limit signs & then cut from there to the village. You might consider just cutting a strip the width of a lawnmower at the verge edges & allow wild flowers & grasses to grow inside thus reducing maintenance for you & providing space for wildlife. You did a fine job on the leveling & reseeding here.

On the approach road from Ballylaneen, similarly the traffic calming measures are to a high standard. It is lovely to see the hedgerows with grasses & blossoms allowed to flourish. As stated earlier, a one strip cut margin on the verges works well from a safety & accessible viewpoint. The dry stonewalls from all approaches create a lovely vista. The Dry Stone Wall Association of Ireland <https://www.dswai.ie/> a volunteer led group are a fantastic source of knowledge & do from time to time run hands on workshops on farms demonstrating how to maintain & repair dry stone walls.

The new Welcome to Kill signs are of an appropriate style & size & agreed they do create a sense of place for the village. They are a lovely welcoming sign for visitors too.

Concluding Remarks:

Kill is a lovely village with an amazing community. You have great plans for the future based on what the community has requested so you are off to an excellent start. Your maps are very clear & easy to follow & that is of immense assistance to your adjudicator. It is imperative that you read the Tidy Towns Handbook relating to the various eight categories & only provide information relevant to the specific heading rather than repeating the same information. We wish you well in the future & remember take your time to plan well.