

# Tidy Towns Competition 2022

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kealkill - An Chaoichoill** Ref: **2005**  
County: **Cork(West)** Mark: **318**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **13/07/2022**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	44	46
Streetscape & Public Places	80	37	39
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	42	43
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	31	33
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	24	25
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	63	64
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	31	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	35	36
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>318</b>

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

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu don bhliain 2022. 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 2022. We thank you for your entry, and wish you all the best in all your future work. Good luck.

Kealkill An Chaol Choill, a small village – has entered the competition for approx. 12 years and has a committee of 7 officer members with support of another 8 volunteers.

- The committee holds monthly meetings, with additional meetings when work needs to be planned i.e., for litter picks, planting, watering etc. and you have occasional afternoon tea meet and greet meetings at Collins' bar. Litter picks occur weekly plus meetings and walkabouts are held in relation to medicinal plants found in the locality.
- Support is received from Cork Co Council, Cuan Baoi Community Employment Teo, Burke's Gala, Collin's Bar, O Keefe's Supervalu Bantry, the Bantry charity shop and local residents.
- Social Media such as Face book, Whatsapp, Meetings & Meet and Greet events etc. are used for communications with your Tidy Towns Association members and the general public. This year you organized the 'darkness into the light walk' with others in the community and this helped to increase the awareness of Tidy Towns in your locality. You also organized a Cake Sale in June of this year.
- There is strong engagement with local schools and one of your representatives' visits schools and speaks to the students regarding the importance of litter picking, wildflowers, bees, and teamwork. You have established links to the local GAA club whose members assist with litter picks and clean ups, such as in the local graveyard.
- The voluntary work undertaken by Kealkill Tidy Towns has increased community interaction, enhanced the appearance of the village and enabled areas outside of the village e.g. Cousane Gap to be dealt with and has resulted in significant educational benefits – in the areas of climate, biodiversity and appreciation of the environment.

The map provided with your Entry Form was less than A4 size and is therefore, considered a little too small for a village the size of Kealkill. The lines on the map were also rather faint, making it quite difficult to identify roads and other features. You have provided a separate legend for the map, indicating the main features in the village. It would be good however, to provide a project listing with a precise description in each case, on a larger size map, with listed numbers referenced to the map. This facilitates easy navigation and identification of the completed projects on site by the adjudicator and the completion of the assessment process.

The quality of the application form is excellent and the concise text and small size photos highlighting the projects are very informative. The artistic logo for Kealkill Tidy Towns was particularly admired. The assessment is based on a recent site visit and the contents of the application form which is suitably concise at 17 pages long - well done. The text inserted on the form is also very easy to read. The adjudicator was very impressed with the level of detail and botanical and pollinator names/ information and the wonderful photographs provided as part of the Kealkill

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

- The adjudicator notes that your committee is currently discussing plans with Cork County Council for various improvements in the centre of the village including traffic calming measures, the installation of a pedestrian crossing, road resurfacing, digital speed signs and extending the street lights from the village to the post office. We wish you well in your discussions and hopefully the agreed works can be completed at an early date.
- The adjudicator visited Kealkill on a warm sunny morning in July. The first stop on the tour was the parking area in front of the Kealkill Community Charity Shop which appears to be closed? The overall presentation of these premises and car park requires some further attention - there are materials lying around and a large tree near the road which has died and it would be desirable to remove this at an early date.
- The nearby stream is a very attractive feature, with parapet walls on both sides of the road at Inchigearagh Bridge formed with concrete blockwork. It would be an interesting project for your committee to replace these walls with natural stone-work. The floral scheme created at the Cookstown Junction, which is maintained by your Tidy Towns volunteers, presents a very eye-catching and welcoming feature here and the Burke's Gala premises looked very well, attracting many passing customers.
- The Carriganass Castle site was visited and the adjudicator took time to read about the interesting history of this imposing fortress structure, adjoining the beautiful Owenbeg River. The areas around the Castle are maintained to an excellent standard and the signs provide a wealth of important historical information for the visitor. The vertical-bedded boundary stone walls in this area were particularly admired. For the future perhaps consider reducing the areas for grass cutting here, so as to provide areas for the establishment of wildflowers. This can be done in a managed way, so that it doesn't give the visitor an impression of neglect.
- The area in the vicinity of the single arch bridge over the Owenbeg River was visited. This area is also maintained to an excellent standard. It would be desirable to provide some additional seating here, so that the public can admire the bridge structure and capitalise on the wonderful views towards the river and castle.
- The kerb inserts which extend into the public car park on the Parkland side of the road do not encourage visitors to park here. Perhaps these could be removed so the car park can be made more user-friendly. The beautiful Kealkill name sign in this car park is obscured by the branches of some nearby trees. The adjudicator wondered about the status of the nearby Castle Field Motorhome Park, which consists of an extended area of hard surfacing adjoining the river?
- In the main part of the village, the newly created paved 'Covid' seating area in front of Collin's Bar was positively noted. The Brown Pub premises and Cupid's Cottage on the opposite side of road we're also nicely presented. Road surfaces and markings in the centre of the village are not to a good standard and this is hampered by constant very heavy and noisy traffic passing through the village.
- Car parking spaces are not well marked and it would be good to consider creating more defined parking bays in the main village area. This could be achieved, as part of the overall traffic management scheme for the village, by creating small traffic Islands and pedestrian retreat areas which can be enhanced and suitable tree planting.
- The adjudicator called to the Church of the Immaculate Conception and admired the presentation of the grounds here, which are adorned with many fine mature trees. The nearby Kealkill National School premises with its expansive car parking area and attractive floral displays, were also greatly admired.

### **Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:**

- The Parkland open space, which comprises 16 acres, continues to be a very important local amenity in the Kealkill area, which is much loved and utilized by the local community. The adjudicator visited this space and admired the range of facilities provided. It was pleasing to wander through the wet grassland areas following the route of the closely mown grass paths. The biodiversity noted in this area of grassland was quite spectacular and you are to be congratulated for the overall management regime implemented here.
- Reducing reliance on annual bedding schemes for your floral displays is a possible initiative to be considered for the future. Colourful perennial and pollinator friendly plants, e.g., *Alstroemeria* spp. can be used to very good effect as an alternative to the flamboyant but energy/water/labour-intensive annuals such as Begonias and Petunias.

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

- Your main project under this category this year is the Kealkill Tidy Towns Wildflower Project which the adjudicator notes has been maintained and improved upon extensively in the last 12 months. Well done to the volunteers who have harvested seed, grown seedlings from the collected seed and planted these in the flower beds around the village. You also intend to install insect and bee hotels at suitable locations in the village. It would be good to monitor this over time to see the level of insect activity around these sites.
- Your committee is no doubt aware that the New All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (AIPP) 2021-2025 has now been launched and it is particularly concerning that one third of bee species in Ireland are now threatened with extinction. As well as this Plan, useful guideline documents are now available to Tidy Towns committees to increase the numbers of pollinators in your local area, including guides which are specific to local communities, farmers, councils, transport corridors, sports clubs, businesses etc. Different 'How to Guides' are also available showing how to establish pollinator friendly planting schemes, pollinator friendly roundabouts, use of 'Managed for Wildlife' signage etc.
- This year the AIPP is focussed on gathering survey data to assess the impact of all the good work groups such as the Tidy Towns are carrying out across the country e.g, the Wildflower Project/ Kealkill Parkland. The National Biodiversity Data Centre has developed a new app to make this survey work easy for groups through the

use of 'Fit Counts'. FIT stands for 'Flower-Insect Timed Count'. FIT Counts are very simple and useful tool for TT groups to measure change in their local biodiversity, especially when they have taken action already for pollinators. By carrying out FIT Counts throughout the year and across future years, it will help track the impact of your actions on insect numbers and diversity as well as providing important data for the National Biodiversity Data Centre ([biodiversityireland.ie](http://biodiversityireland.ie)). It would be good to get local schools involved in these counts. Please follow this link for further information Flower-Insect Timed Count (FIT Count) - National Biodiversity Data Centre ([biodiversityireland.ie](http://biodiversityireland.ie))

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

- You mention a number of initiatives under this category including using hair provided by local hairdresser to keep snails, slugs and rabbits away from plants – no doubt this is a very sustainable way of preventing plant damage but I'm not sure how aesthetically pleasing this will be?
- You are taking steps to restore your rainwater harvesting system so that rainwater can continue to be used to water your plant and floral displays. Thanks, are also due to the local GAA club, who assist with local cleanups such as at the local graveyard.
- When considering new projects under this category it is worthwhile first of all considering 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.
- Other areas worthy of consideration by Kealkill 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 and these may also attract suitable SEAI or Leader funding.
- You might look at the overall availability of public e-car charge points and bicycle parking facilities in the village, and where there are deficiencies, 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:**

- We note that Kealkill village is not blighted by blocked footpaths, redundant poles, unsightly overhead electric cables or graffiti and your volunteers keep weeds under control, kerbs are cleared by hand using hoes.
- It is good to read that you organise regular for litter picks of the village to be carried out twice a week and that there has been a litter awareness campaign which included the erection of signage highlighting dog owners responsibly to clean up after their dogs.
- On the day of adjudication there were no issues to report with regard to litter or tidiness in the main part of the village of Kealkill - well done.

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

- The adjudicator notes that the residential areas of the village – e.g., Chapelhill court, The Forge, Mountain View, Lisheens all have their namesigns in place and the residents take great care of their own areas with most locations adorned with flower boxes & hanging baskets.
- The Cnocáin Rua development on the approach to the Church consisting of attractive stone fronted dwellings looked very well, with nicely maintained gardens fronting onto the road.

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

- Your flagship project in relation to the presentation of the approach roads into the village continues to be the Kealkill Wildflower Project, which includes a maintenance regime aimed at maximising local biodiversity. Planting, pruning and weeding is ongoing on all approach roads.
- Well done on installing street signs 'As Gaeilge' at Sli Na Scoille and Carrig an Easa. Your historic trails also remain a very important feature of the Kealkill area.
- A road sign located on the approach to the village along the R584 has been damaged and will need to be repaired/replaced in the near future.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

You are wished well with all the future plans for the management of traffic and parking in your village and with the support of the County Council and local Community, there is no doubt that significant improvements can be achieved in the village and environs, in the short to medium term.