

Tidy Towns Competition 2024

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kildorrery - Cill Dairbhre** Ref: **457**
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **371**
Category: **B** Date(s): **17/06/2024**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2023	Mark Awarded 2024
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	51	53
Streetscape & Public Places	80	47	48
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	51	52
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	36	37
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	24	26
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	70	72
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	37	39
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	42	44
TOTAL MARK	550	358	371

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

“Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara SuperValu don bhliain 2024. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo. Adh Mór....”

Thank you for your 2024 entry to the Tidy Towns competition. Your application form was detailed, informative and very clear as was your colour coded map easily followed with clear numbering of projects new and maintained which were also in sequence on your application form. The series of photographs included in your submission showing before, during and after shots of your projects was also most helpful. Such well-presented documents really do enable the adjudicator to concentrate on viewing the village and projects rather than endeavouring to decipher unclear instructions so well done. Your five year plan is impressive in that you have ticked almost every box for every year. It would be good if there was a little more information for the adjudicator such as what new projects were carried out each year, what progress and results were achieved in terms of completion, quantities etc. This information would also help any new members of the Tidy Towns committee and volunteers who may not have been involved three or four years ago. Thank you for noting some of the SDG's that your projects aim to achieve. These could be expanded somewhat as you are in fact achieving many other SDG's not mentioned. Kildorrery Tidy Towns is clearly a well-established, finely tuned group who play a very important part of the community life in the village. With a committee of 14 and a further 20 volunteers, you have a good number of people to share the work. Collaboration with the local associations, communities and schools is obviously excellent and together with extensive support from local businesses and agencies, this provides you with the perfect foundation to build upon and to carry out improvements to the village as well as maintaining those already in place. Communication follows the standard social media, community newsletter, notice board and word of mouth but also using a Community Mobile Phone which is a novel and useful idea. Engaging with the local press and radio station as you do is also very important. You are fortunate to have an active Scout Group in Kildorrery with leaders who promote and support your work and help to build awareness on all aspects of caring for the environment. Additionally, one member of your committee liaises with the primary school.

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

The village of Kildorrery might be thought to be unfortunate with its windy location on a hilltop plateau but in fact its position provides wonderful views over the countryside, the Galtee and Knockmealdown mountains and the Blackwater Valley. This adjudicator had not visited the village before, so it was a pleasure to take the time and stroll around viewing the many wonderful buildings and green spaces.

You are so fortunate to have at the centre, such fine buildings that are now available to the community. The Store, which is now used as a community hub, although closed during the visit, is a lovely building and the upgrades outlined indicate it is a comfortable space, much used. The front of the building had indeed been painted and the cart display was in place and looking splendid.

The Church and its grounds are very well maintained and the flower bed at the front really gives a great first impression on entering the gates.

The cemetery with medieval church ruins is sympathetically maintained and the information board, although a little hidden by the hedge, gives excellent background information. The newer section of the cemetery is neatly maintained, and this is understandable given that it is in more regular use. One wonders if a more sympathetic and aesthetically pleasing display of the ancient carved stones could be arranged. The Heritage Council have published excellent guidance on the conservation of heritage graveyards which might prove useful.

Throughout the village, buildings are beautifully maintained and the residential houses interspersed with the commercial buildings clearly make great efforts to ensure excellent upkeep and maintenance. Although one could mention excellent frontages on such commercial units as Ollie's Bar, the Thatch & Thyme Restaurant (with a delightful outdoor terrace) and the Irish tree Centre amongst others, it is important to highlight the high standard of the presentation of the residential properties too.

The grotto is indeed very well displayed and cared for – a lovely feature in the centre of the village. The GAA grounds which also hosts the recycling bins, was in full swing on adjudication day and it was good to note the buzz and hive of activity here. A planning permission notice for a synthetic all-weather training pitch was also noted here and hopefully this will come to fruition.

The newly painted scout container was looking resplendent and really did blend in well with its surrounds.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Your main project for this year was the planting of mature trees generously donated by The Irish Tree Centre. You have been wise in replacing some damaged trees or trees that were not thriving as well as planting trees in new areas in the Village Park and the housing estates. These were noted on adjudication day and they will contribute enormously to the biodiversity in your area. The first three years after planting will be important in terms of formative pruning, weed control, checking ties and stakes and if necessary, watering. This will need to be carefully managed.

The cart display at the Store was very effective and well presented. One wonders if the famine pot is a little underused however. Could it be moved to the centre of the gravelled area and planted with really vibrant perennials?

The display of the brightly painted milk cart in the car park is excellent with a choice of perennials that will benefit pollinators for a long season. Unfortunately, some bindweed is beginning to strangle the roses and this will need to be carefully monitored. There is also bindweed covering the roses at the front of the church and this too will need to be removed as much as possible.

The school and playground beside it were visited and found to be very well presented. Although tyres are no longer considered good practice as plant containers, nonetheless those used in the school are in good condition and brightly painted.

The Village Park is a fantastic amenity very well laid out and maintained. The willow tunnel is one of the best encountered by this adjudicator and the planting of perennials both eye catching and colourful. Do watch out for some of the tree ties which need to be loosened or removed.

To the right of the memorial under the trees are what appear to be old trees signs. These are now an eyesore and should be renovated if at all possible.

You have myriad planting schemes throughout the village which were noted and very much admired. It is fully recognised that the maintenance of these beds, which you are diligently carrying out, takes considerable time and effort so although you have not noted any new projects in this category, rest assured that the many maintained projects are taken into account.

Amongst those that particularly stood out were the aforementioned milk cart display in the car park, the planting scheme at O'Sullivan's petrol station, flower beds at Oaklawn, the entrance to Hillcrest and planting at the Post Office flower bed.

You have outlined details of work carried out on the approach roads and these will be addressed in the Approach Roads, Lanes and Streets category although a cross over between categories is acknowledged.

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

The Kildorrery Trout Anglers are doing a fine job of managing the waters of the Funcheon River which is such an importance resource for the locality. Great to know that stocks of water hens and mallard are abundant.

Well done for not even thinking of power washing stone walls- the amount of lichens, mosses and wildflowers noted on the walls was amazing and a microcosm of biodiversity in itself.

The Community Garden is likely the envy of many. There is a wonderful array of planting both in the polytunnel and out, companion planting, pollinator friendly flowers, borage, nettles and comfrey for making compost tea and a composting area that is very well managed. This is clearly a project that is managed by a team of nature loving residents and they are to be commended.

As members of Irish Seed Savers and by saving seed locally, this work also crosses over into the sustainability category and this will be taken in account. Well done for this endeavour and for taking advice if needed from the Irish Seed Savers. Would you also consider having a seed swop project – this is often a great way for everyone to expand their seed collection in a very sustainable way.

Your collaboration with the local school is to be welcomed and having a Tidy Towns Liaison contact will ensure a consistency of co-operation. It is good to hear that the school have their own raised beds for growing vegetables. Would you consider having a Junior Tidy Towns?

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

Under this category you have outlined quite a number of sustainable practices that are carried out as a matter of

course within the village. In addition, as new projects this year, you have now set up a book library and a Chat & Craft group.

Having won the Munster section of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan some years ago, you have built on the measures put in place and improved them every year and you are to be congratulated for your many excellent initiatives most particularly in the Village Garden.

It would be important to try and quantify the successes and results of your initiatives. This often helps to focus on areas that may need further work and dividing the category into the four headings of waste, water, energy and food can help the Tidy Towns Committee to break down the projects and methods already in use that are sustainable.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Congratulations on your 1st place win in the Large Village category of the Cork County Council Anti Litter Challenge 2023. Judging by the complete absence of litter on adjudication day, this was well deserved.

Your Picker Pal idea is wonderful and obviously a big success. This is another example of a crossover project with sustainability.

Well done also to the primary school for achieving their 6th green flag. Their waste audit and subsequent reduction in waste is perhaps an example of a suggestion for the whole village that can then be quantified as mentioned in the previous category. What else can be reduced or eliminated completely from the waste streams of Kildorrery residents?

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

There are many individual houses throughout the village, already mentioned in another category but it is worth repeating how impressive the maintenance, care and planting in many of these houses is.

Hillcrest Residents Association is doing an excellent job and the whole area is looking lush and green with plenty of pollinator friendly perennials and shrubs evident in line with the Wildway Design. The new trees are a great addition and it is good to know that the long bed by the wall will continue to be planted up as this is the one area that this adjudicator thought a little more planting is required.

Bearna Deara Housing Estate was also visited and admired. The entrance is indeed well maintained. However here too there is a long wall on both sides which would benefit from planting between and underneath the newly planted trees. There is one very dead tree here too which should be removed. One wonders if some of the grass could be left uncut to attract wildlife and increase biodiversity. There are plenty of areas that could be left to go 'wild' whilst still maintaining cut grass strips for ease of access. The single most effective and low cost action to support a vital biodiversity eco-system service is to reduce mowing of grass.

Well done to the residents of Bearna Deara for their litter picking work too. Here too there was no sign of litter at all.

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

This is a category that also has many maintained projects and indeed your work has paid dividends as all approach roads were found to be a delight to travel. Road signs were clear and easily visible, planting of trees, hedgerows and shrubs looked lovely and your reduced mowing save for a strip is also evident here.

Your concern at the volume and speed of traffic through the village is justified. It is suggested that you continue make representations to the Council in this regard.

The footpath from the village to Shreelawn picnic site was clean and clear and the site itself was looking very inviting. It no doubt gets a lot of use throughout the year.

Out by the Old Scart Boreen plaque, the Cul de Sac sign is in poor condition and would benefit a good wash.

It is good to see that you have reduced strimming of grass along the approach roads leaving just a strip mown for access, safety and to show that the banks are being maintained. This is the very best action you can take to improve biodiversity and by returning pockets of natural grassland meadows and verges, no matter how small, the benefit to wildlife is huge.

Concluding Remarks:

Kildorrery is a very lovely village which has clearly been enhanced by the work of the Tidy Towns committee and the many volunteers, residents and local community. It was a pleasure to visit and you are wished well in the competition.