

# Tidy Towns Competition 2025

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kildorrery - Cill Dairbhre** Ref: **457**  
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **383**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **11/06/2025**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2024</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2025</b>
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	53	55
Streetscape & Public Places	80	48	50
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	52	53
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	37	38
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	26	28
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	72	74
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	39	40
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	44	45
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>383</b>

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

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Bhailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2025. Go raibh maith agaibh as bhur iarratas a chur isteach. Maith sibh don obair atá déanta agaibh in bhur cheantar go dtí seo - guímid gach rath oraibh i bhur dtionscadail amach anseo. Ádh mór. Welcome to the 2025 Tidy Towns competition. It is clear Kildorrery community is well organised with the umbrella Kildorrery Community Development Association working in tandem with the Tidy Towns group. Such crossovers of members and vision ensures long term plans can be achieved for the whole community. The availability of a community office, open daily, is a fantastic resource as you have a focal point within the village. The number and range of organisations in the village speaks of a vibrant community and your interactions with them are critical. Clearly, new residents have a myriad of opportunities in which to engage and it is heartening that the Community Office actively interacts with them. The many events held in Kildorrery indicate an energetic community - annual vintage run; walk for autism; gardening courses; art camp for children to reference just a few. It is apparent from your submission that you have an in-depth understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and attending a masterclass provided further knowledge. You are indeed fortunate to have the assistance of the Community Employment Scheme who do a lot of the heavy lifting for Tidy Towns groups, are a valuable resource and were busy on adjudication day. Good partnerships, as you have, with the local county council and local development company are crucial. As your attached 5 Year Action Plan comes to an end this year, we assume you will be working on your next one later this year and we look forward to seeing it in the next submission. All communication channels are covered and you are to be commended that you have 370 contact numbers in a population of 372, remarkable. It is so important that we continue to use conventional means of reaching people - newsletters, notice board and local media. Having a dedicated member of your group liaising with the school and youth groups is a sensible strategy.

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

Kildorrery is fortunate to have retained many older buildings, both residential and commercial, retaining most of their original form and historic fabric. The water tower forms an imposing landmark and is of significant historical social value. Many of the shopfronts are of appreciable design merit with ground floor fenestration and elegance in tradition. The variety in the architectural craftsmanship of old contributes to the historical character of Kildorrery as do the retention of the old carriage arches, prominent keystones and raised lettering to fascia. It is great to see some of the more “recent” new businesses maintain a high standard of presentation of their shopfronts and it would be worthwhile ensuring all enterprises adhere to a similar standard with regard to shop signage, window design and shopfront refurbishments. Abbeyleix Tidy Towns and Laois County Council have an excellent “Shopfront Design Guidelines” publication. There are some wonderful examples of commercial facades that have recently been repainted and they add vibrancy and interest to the streetscape. Indeed the retention of stone walls within the village

adds character e.g. outside the Garda Station.

The Heritage and Wildlife Trail is an excellent resource for visitors and highlights at a glance how much there is within the village environs. It is commendable that you have brought back into community use disused commercial premises - an excellent example of sustainable redevelopment. We look forward to seeing the creative talents of the local primary school children on the exterior of The Store Hall. Older buildings present both opportunities and problems so well done on renovating the 1777 building for use as the Community Office.

The National School is well presented and once again the mature trees and landscaping at the front and rear softens all the hard surfacing. The planted stone beds at the front are a perfect example of how to add greenery and colour sustainably into a small space. The connectedness of the access within the village is a bonus for the children as it ensures safe passage to the playing pitches, community centre, playground, pathways and park.

The playground's colourful scheme is delightful and the facility was busy during our visit. Your plans for the new larger relocated playground make practical sense as the population increases. Do take your time planning and consider natural playground design. [https://consult.sdublincoco.ie/en/system/files/materials/3845/Natural%20Play\\_0.pdf](https://consult.sdublincoco.ie/en/system/files/materials/3845/Natural%20Play_0.pdf)

Many villages like Kildorrery have properties that are vacant or derelict. Unfortunately they do detract from the village streetscape however with the level of refurbishment and retrofitting taking place in the village centre, vacancy will not be a problem in the medium term. Your strategy of consistently questioning the HSE with regard to their plans for the Dispensary is the best method of addressing the issue. This, in conjunction with appeals to local representatives may provide a pincer tactic. Are there any plans for the former grain store/warehouse "Rockmills Furnishings"? Do you have a list of all derelict and vacant properties and are you liaising with the local Vacant Homes Officer in the council?

The Grotto is beautifully maintained and the raised planted beds attractive thus negating the need for the planted containers.

The Community Car Park functions well although some landscaping at the construction phase would have been beneficial to deflect from all the grey.

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

Your adjudicator was delighted to see the avenue of trees on the Mallow/Dublin Street and Limerick Road, a delight and an initiative more urban centres should adopt. As the Nature Restoration Law seeks to ensure a minimum of 10% of tree cover in every urban area, Kildorrery is well on their way. You are very fortunate to be able to avail of local expertise when pruning the hornbeam trees.

St Bartholomew's Church is beautifully recessed and the boundary walls, railings and gates are well maintained. The linear planted bed was awash with perennial colour. Following on from the Irish Bishops Conference in March 2023, all parishes were requested to set aside 30% of parish grounds for pollinators & biodiversity by 2030. The mown lawns in the church grounds could be left long and neat mown edges by the avenue thus facilitating this request. There are presently gaps between the kerbing and tarmacadam that is facilitating weed growth.

The graveyard's medieval history is enlightening, the information boards informative and the website a great depository of information. Highlighting the Heritage Council's Top Tips for caring for your historical graveyard allows the community to understand the holistic nature of maintenance. The curve of cherry trees and clover greens on the left hand side as one enters the cemetery presents a welcoming vista and could be replicated on the right. The recent seating is well positioned and a mown path to the seating could ensure a longer mowing regime for the remaining areas. Are there plans for planting on the mound by the private house's boundary stone wall? A more coordinated approach would be best for the disposal of grass cuttings and the area around the shed. A fresh look at the graveyard is required - climbers like honeysuckle or clematis to screen the block walls; repair of the boundary wooden fencing to the rear; planting of trees; etc.

The GAA Grounds are well located close to the centre and across the road from the National school. The shrubbery in front of the lovely stone boundary wall is maturing nicely and there is space for additional planting in order to reduce weed growth and provide cover in warmer weather. The containers in front are lost against the long expanse of wall. Perhaps replicate what the National School has done with their front planted raised beds. There are great plans for the grounds and on adjudication day it was busy with construction activity. We do hope the organising committee pays close attention to the Green Clubs Programme they have joined. <https://learning.gaa.ie/GreenClub> This programme dovetails nicely your Tidy Towns work under water, waste, energy use, transport and biodiversity. Also as you referenced parking in the GAA grounds, it would be wonderful to see soft landscaping included rather than a vast area of hard surfacing. Good examples include the National Stud and Japanese Gardens car park extension and Liffey Valley shopping centre, yes, larger projects however food for thought.

Well done to those commercial entities who have created nicely planted boundary beds to soften all the hard surfacing around their premises.

The Village Park is an excellent amenity for the community and thank you for including the photos of the spring flowering heathers. Whilst the preference is for mounded flower beds, we understand delineated border surrounds ease grass cutting and maintenance. There is much to admire - willow structures, long meadows with paths mown through, picnic zone, restful seating areas etc. In some shrubbery areas, additional planting would reduce maintenance and fill in bare areas. Encroachment of scutch grass is taking hold in some areas and requires attention. There are a number of trees and shrubs dead or dying that should be removed and replaced. Removal of the old tree signs will take time and once gone, will improve the area behind the memorial. The repair to the memorial will take time given the extent and location of the damage. A sweep of the entrance on the left hand side would remove grass clippings etc that are presently allowing weed growth.

The planting scheme throughout the village provides wonderful colour and it is good to see perennials and shrubs. The raised bed at the Post Office was producing some lovely wild strawberries. The mulching of beds has an aesthetic value and in light of changing climatic conditions its value for moisture retention and weed suppression cannot be underestimated. Infilling with additional plants also helps. The use of the cart and milk churns are ideally located in view of the building's history and add stunning visual interest. We note your reasoning for retaining the

famine pot in its existing location - further potential damage should be avoided.

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

The Funcheon River is an enviable resource to have within the village environs and the work of the local trout anglers is commendable. It would be interesting to establish a benchmark through a habitat survey to determine the health of species along the riparian way. It is great, anecdotally, to hear water fowl populations are growing. A meeting with the local Community Water Officer would offer guidance. Are the new measures of the storm pipe diversion, the tree buffer zone and wire fencing a community led or county council imposed initiative to protect the river? Measures that protect the quality of the water and prevent pollution are to be applauded. LAWPro, whom you referenced in your submission, have an excellent citizen science programme that would be worthwhile considering either in conjunction with local groups or the school. <https://lawaters.ie/citizen-science/> There is funding available to community groups from the Community Water Development Fund <https://www.catchments.ie/community-water-development-fund-2025/>

It is heartening to see you publicise letting dandelions grow for the pollinators and pollinator friendly planting suggestions. This in conjunction with the mowing of grass edges, leaving stone wall vegetation intact and choosing native edible hedging demonstrates to residents how small changes can help the environment. The impact of the grass meadows at the Community Park was apparent on adjudication day with thrushes, swallows and blackbirds feeding there.

Again, a habitat survey would assist in determining if the bird boxes erected are assisting the local populations. The outdoor classroom at the local national school is a great resource. There is nothing quite as empowering as taking a seed, growing it and using the resulting output to create lunch or dinner - no doubt the soup and chips tasted sublime. They appear to be active participants in the Green Schools Programme. You might let us know in your submission what flag they are working towards each year. Did they avail of the free teaching kits for the Pollinator Project 2025 that you highlighted on social media?

There are many surveys that you can participate in as a community over the year and some of these include the Garden Butterfly Monitoring scheme <https://biodiversityireland.ie/surveys/garden-butterfly-monitoring-scheme/> the All Ireland Bumblebee Monitoring scheme <https://biodiversityireland.ie/surveys/bumblebee-monitoring-scheme/> An engaging one for families and children is the Flower Timed Insect (FIT) Count <https://biodiversityireland.ie/surveys/fit-counts/> At your level in the competition and with the work completed to date in this area, the identification of biodiversity species locally through ongoing monitoring and surveying is important.

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

The Reduce Reuse social media page is one busy site and it is remarkable the number of items getting another lease of life. It is an excellent example of what a small community can achieve. The primary school's second hand uniform sale is another great initiative in a similar vein. Fundraising for local amenities through a scrap metal collection ensures larger items can be safely disposed of and thus reduce the risk of environmental pollution in addition to the ease of disposal for local residents whilst contributing to a good cause. The Parents Association Clothes Recycling bin is the last resort for clothes that cannot be donated to charity shops or passed on, rather than end up in landfill. The creation of online campaigns around Secondhand September, Reuse October or International Zero Waste Day could provide projects for your Gaisce or Transition Year students.

Rural transport and connectivity has undoubtedly improved with the Local Link service and the addition of an earlier bus to facilitate more users demonstrates the benefit of user feedback. Despite the bicycle stands in place at the Community car park, they were not in use despite the school being open. Bringing the community's attention to projects like the Preloved Bikes Project, cycling club and the Ballyhoura Bike Week gets people to think about cycling and perhaps a trip or two less in the car.

The focus on reducing the energy output of the Oaklawn Community Housing is laudable and a positive start with the replacement of LED lighting. We will await with interest the results of the feasibility study for the installation of the solar panels at the same location. It is important to measure the savings in electricity from each of the measures completed in order to share with the community the benefits of these changes. The erection of solar panels on the GAA club house can showcase this technology. Do build on these by sharing the costs of installation, grants available and the savings in producing your own energy. The Scout group's plan to attach a windmill to their container to generate electricity is an interesting endeavour and we look forward to seeing it in situ next year. It is important to quantify your initiatives in terms of their successes or failures and the results.

The Community Garden is an excellent example of how to establish such a facility and offers opportunities to demonstrate fruit and vegetable gardening, reuse of materials, rainwater harvesting and different composting methods. While we visited, a teacher had a class there tasting fruit and learning about the various produce growing. The polytunnel offers an ideal venue for your seed or plant swops, courses, demonstrations on green manures and propagation etc. Highlighting tips on using the brown bin, plants that love coffee grounds etc encourages residents to think, reuse before disposal.

### **Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:**

We have to compliment the whole community on the litter free village we encountered during our visit. The swept streets and lack of litter created an excellent first impression. This is no mean feat when there are construction works, road works and house renovations taking place within the village environs. Regular sweeping of streets and roads ensures silt cannot build up and facilitate weed growth. There were a few places where weeds were trying to get established.

Congratulations on achieving second place in Cork County Council Anti Litter Challenge large villages category in 2024. This year, you are in 3rd place after Round 1 so a little ground to make up and a little competition should rally the residents.

The National School's focus on litter and waste for the attainment of their 6th Green Flag will have imbued the students with a sense of pride in the village in addition to an increased awareness of the harmful effects of waste on human and wildlife. Their engagement in the Picker Pals programme reinforces the message at home too. It is fantastic to see sporting organisations and other youth groups partake in the collective responsibility for litter collection like the cubs, beavers and GAA club.

Unfortunately, we could not access the recycling area on adjudication day due to the construction work in progress. We would recommend an audit of all street furniture - road signs, road markings, gulleys, poles, commercial signage, posters etc. It is a significant volume of work initially however once mapped it is an annual box ticking exercise. For example the yellow junction box road markings are faded outside the community car park entrance and the children crossing signs need replacing near the school. Any areas identified can be raised with the local county engineer and planned for repair, replacement or removal whilst some you will be able to deal with locally.

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

Oaklawn estate has a wonderful outlook over the community park and the residents clearly take pride in their homes. The flowering beds in front were blooming & the nepata, lambs' ear and roses were attracting lots of bees. Some of the beds do require some attention as perennial weeds are taking hold. The ESB substation is intrusive visually and perhaps a mural would camouflage it.

From walking around the village, it was apparent many houses have had their facades freshly painted and it greatly enhances the visitor's first impression of village residences who display a pride of place. Hopefully, other property owners will follow suit.

Hillcrest estate has an inviting entrance with nice landscaping treatment that is slowly rendering the block wall invisible. The rose campion plants were producing a wonderful display. Again here the ESB substation would be less obtrusive with an art installation. The longer mowing regime on the green areas is allowing more clover and daisy to flourish for insect life and is more visually appealing for residents. Allowing the ivy to grow on the block boundary walls helps lessen all the grey and again adds mini areas for biodiversity.

Bearna Deara estate's entrance with the colourful shrubbery is attractive as is the curved driveway with the mature trees. Some pruning will be required on the right to prevent obstruction of the estate sign and removal of brambles before they take hold is advisable. There is a dead tree on the driveway that should be removed and replaced. A graveled area at the top of one green is spilling over into the road and looks unsightly. The space allocated to green areas offers fantastic amenity space. There are opportunities for further tree and orchard planting.

There are a number of organisations that collaborate with residents associations and community groups in establishing native tree groves and mini orchards. Some of these include DC for Bees

<https://www.hostinireland.com/orchardsinthecommunity> Brown Thomas/Arnotts Afforestation Initiative run by Crann <https://crann.ie/afforestation-initiative/> 100 Million Trees Project <https://100milliontreesproject.ie>

These projects could assist the estates in planting alongside long walls and creating small groves with existing trees where the grass could be kept long to encourage wild flowers and grasses. As can be seen in both estates, volunteer tree wardens are required as the first 3 years of a sapling life will determine its survival. This work is not onerous and consists of checking stakes, ties, ensuring the tree is watered during hot periods and early warning of disease. The Irish Tree Centre could provide a demonstration for those interested.

Are the residents associations aware of the Amenity Grant funding that is available from the local council?

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

The approach road from Mitchelstown is striking with the avenue of trees on either side morphing into a lovely shrubbery from which the panoramic view of the hinterland can be seen. The stone walls here coming into Kildorrery are very well maintained.

The Rockmills approach benefits greatly from the Irish Tree Centre's nursery and the lush green hedging on both boundaries. The linear beds here were receiving a covering of mulch during our visit and the impact was much admired.

The approach from the Limerick road is enhanced with the picnic site at Shreelawn with the planted beds, wildlife information boards and seating. The road surfaces from this direction would benefit from resurfacing and some of the speed signs need replacing. The repair of the footpaths on this approach is welcomed.

The Mallow approach's wide expanse benefits from the boundaries of mature trees, stone walls, grass banks left long to one side and the apt display of farm paraphernalia and information boards. This area was busy with walkers and lovely to see the seating available here. The row of carpet roses in front of a stone wall as one entered the village was striking.

There is definitely a need for traffic calming measures from all approach roads and in the village itself.

The village bilingual stone signage reflects the use of local stone and is very well presented and easily read.

Overall the approaches to the village of Kildorrery are reflective of the natural surroundings and are well maintained without being curated.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

As a first time visitor to Kildorrery, we were charmed by the retention of heritage within the village and the incorporation of additional amenities for the growing population. You have ambitious plans for the future and an excellent framework on which to build. We wish you continued success with all your endeavours.