

# Tidy Towns Competition 2004

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kilcormac**

Ref: **382**

County: **Offaly**

Mark: **205**

Category: **C**

Date: **03/06/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33	30
The Built Environment	40	28	27
Landscaping	40	29	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	19	19
Litter Control	40	25	24
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	21	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28	28
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>200</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for an excellent submission, written with great enthusiasm and detail. You need go no further in outlining your aspirations for the future. You should now adopt this document as your environmental bible. Its attention to detail is impressive and the vision for a 'new' Kilcormac is praiseworthy. That said, plans are only as good as the effort applied to them and in this respect we wish you well in your endeavours. The adjudicator would also like to refer to the A3 size sheet outlining the character areas of Kilcormac. This is a very succinct illustration of the town and a valuable outline that should prompt improvements. Your involvement with OCC and other relevant agencies is commendable and must be matched with community involvement. Tidy Towns is and will remain a community endeavour movement and all the success centres draw heavily on community commitment.

### The Built Environment:

The town has a plethora of large and small buildings with a great mix of old and new. This can be difficult in getting a balance, hence the need for good planning. You are fortunate to have the involvement of the local history society in view of the great numbers of period buildings associated with milling in particular. Public buildings were well presented and many have good landscaping. The Health Centre is neat and tidy but the timber fence needs replacing. Scoil Mhuire will be commemorating 40 years of education next year and might consider marking the occasion with an environmental project. The ballroom referred to last year is now way below acceptable standard. The

entrance to Mc Donald International is very poor and proprietors should be approached with regard to improvement.

### **Landscaping:**

You have numerous open spaces ideal for landscaping and providing opportunities to create colour. This is best done in consultation with residents of the various areas. As a committee you should consider tree planting in square and main street. This is being done successfully in many towns and with appropriate planting can be very effective. You are endowed with an attractive river and you should use it to good effect. Apart from the square and main street the approach roads are all important and provide an introduction to the town. You should phase a tree planting scheme and plant shrubs that will give strong colour almost throughout the year. Such planting will also enhance wildlife. The large green residential area at Scoil Mhuire is demanding in maintenance and planners might embark on a plan for this valuable amenity area. Grass cutting on the Cloghan approach is good.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

You have numerous advantages in promoting wildlife in and around Kilcormac. The river area offers potential for generating increased interest in this category. Best to liaise with some of the schools and try and instigate a survey of local species. This might lead to the erection of a display board in the park at the riverbank. An organised occasional field trip for locals might further stimulate interest.

### **Litter Control:**

You mention the problems of litter control in your submission. This is very much a community responsibility and your efforts here relate to continuous campaigns of encouragement. On adjudication day the main street was well presented with very little litter in evidence. Adequate litter bins strategically placed, coupled with a programme for collection is essential to conquer the challenge of litter control. In general, litter control is improving throughout and people will respond to campaigns: however, the provision of recycling depots and reduction in our use of plastic bags do contribute to litter control.

### **Tidiness:**

You have serious problems with large and small derelict and unoccupied buildings, most built in the 19th century. The problem is compounded by the historic significance of many of these buildings and the envisaged use for their future. You should consider a town trail with simple leaflet illustration, keyed up to a series of signs and plaques. Such a development would soften the negative effect of so many derelict buildings. You should concentrate on the main street in the short-term and try and get the traders to row in with you in your endeavours. A bright, freshly painted main street would set the scene for a new Kilcormac.

### **Residential Areas:**

Your policy of organising residential teams is good and will lead to further success. There are many examples of very good individual effort in all estates. All estates should be well defined with well designed bilingual signs. Like most towns you are experiencing a lot of new development. New house builders should be encouraged to finish well and complete landscaping. You have many good traditional shop fronts in main street worthy of presentation and some are still in use as residential buildings. These form an important part of the traditional fabric of the town, especially in the town centre. Some shops are using signage inappropriate to the traditions of the area and should be encouraged to tone down their signage.

## **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

In general, approach roads and the Birr approach is benefitting from tree planting of previous years. The entrance by the VEC school is marred by the unsightly mill building on the left hand side. It should be said that the new two storey house opposite the school is excellent and provides a good image on this important approach. The timber fencing on the Ballyboy approach should be replaced with a beech hedge. Boundary wall on the entrance to Páirc Naomh Cormaic is badly in need of attention. The green triangle near the National School is very well presented but the rusty corrugated roof opposite is unsightly.

## **General Impression:**

You are a new committee with ambitious plans and intentions. Your challenge now is to bring the community with you. Your plan outlines how it can be done and what is required. You should get busy in the autumn and plan a work programme for the following spring. Kilcormac is a town with great potential, an interesting history and an important location on the midland traffic route. We wish you well in your efforts.