

Tidy Towns Competition 2006

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kildare** Ref: **100**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **165**
Category: **E** Date(s): **08/07/2006**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2006
Overall Development Approach	50	29
The Built Environment	50	26
Landscaping	50	22
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	13
Litter Control	50	15
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	9
Residential Areas	40	18
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	22
General Impression	10	5
TOTAL MARK	400	165

Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator would like to welcome Kildare to the 2006 Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for the very detailed Reports that were a great help on adjudication day together with the excellent map marking the key areas of your attention. All these areas were visited on adjudication day. The 5 Year Development is a very clear straight forward document as it should be. It is now time to move the Plan on to cover the years 2007 to 2011. The adjudicator noted one of your key targets this year is to raise community awareness of the Tidy Towns concept. The idea if a Junior Tidy Towns Competition is excellent and have you considered having two senior cycle students on your Tidy Towns Committee as full participating members? You seem to have good local support for your work and with a committee of ten people there is obviously good interest in Tidy Towns in Kildare.

The Built Environment:

that at the moment this area is little more than a poorly organised car park with interesting heritage buildings. Heritage should be allowed to dominate. It is therefore recommended that you start discussions with the Local Authority about this concept. St. Brigid's Square suffers from the same difficulty. It is recommended here that all cars be removed from the Square and this it is fully landscaped using both hard and soft landscaping with heritage information panels about Kildare. The area near here opposite the CYMS needs some definition and landscaping might be considered here also. Indeed both areas should be considered as part of the one Plan for this part of Kildare. The nearby St. John's Academy stone buildings are of visitor interest. The Heritage Centre building appears to be lost in the middle of so many cars and a lot of graffiti was noted on the Dublin side of the building. The Cathedral is a beautiful stone building with a really interesting heritage display inside the door. It is a pity that a visit to the Cathedral has to be marred by the terrible litter on the narrow lane to the left of the entrance to the Cathedral grounds. At the National Stud entrance off the main road the railings need to be repaired and repainted. The CYMS uses a great colour combination of cream and brown and the yellow

plants blend perfectly. It is however recommended that the two railings be painted black. At the Railway Station the grass is dead in many of the narrow kerbed grass strip areas. The Daniel Boland premises that occupies an important corner in Kildare is well presented and signage is used with commendable restraint. The Spar premises and adjoining apartment block needs urgent painting as the whole building looks rather drab and dull. The timber facing on the apartment section of this building also needs attention. The Bank of Ireland building was admired as brick building well proportioned with interesting door and window detailing. In overall terms while there are some poor shop-fronts in Kildare the overall appearance is encouraging.

Landscaping:

The many flower boxes and hanging baskets bring a good sense of colour to Kildare and add interest. The property owners have made great efforts in this regard and they are commended for this. The Waybridge is a good project and your committee obviously has put much work into this project. The adjudicator wonders why it is not possible to get into this grassy area and why the old building cannot be removed. However the real issue here is the really terrible littering and a lot of the litter is 'aged'.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It is important that your Tidy Towns Committee would examine further the wildlife potential of Kildare, and see what you can achieve in terms of making your area even more wildlife friendly.

If you have not already done so, the starting point is to have a habitat survey carried out of the wildlife in the Kildare area. Suggested habitats to be considered include the following –

- Urban habitats – gardens, waste ground, walls, graveyards, hedges
- Wetland habitats – ponds, lakes, canals, reed marsh, bogs
- Woodland habitats – forests, hedgerows, plantations, parks
- Grassland habitats – roadside verges, parks, wet meadows, dry grasslands

The survey should produce a species list for each of the habitats relevant to the Kildare area. This need not be an expensive survey. Perhaps there is a knowledgeable person locally who might undertake this task for you. Basically the survey would identify the animals, plants, birds, fish that inhabit the Kildare area and their associated habitats. It should be remembered that to carry out the survey properly that it will probably take a year so that all habitats can be assessed at different time of the year. Using the results of the wildlife survey your next step should be to draft a straight forward Plan to preserve the identified habitats in the Kildare area, and investigate the possibility of new ones. For example perhaps there is an old Pond in your area that is disused, but with a little work could be an important area for wildfowl. It is most important to try and involve your local school children in this project, and in many schools there is probably a teacher who may have an interest in this area who would be willing to get involved. As part of the actions to be undertaken in your Wildlife Plan you might like to consider the provision of some weather proof display panels in Kildare, illustrating and explaining the wildlife in your area. This has been done very successfully in many towns and villages in Ireland.

Litter Control:

The adjudicator notes that your committee this year is putting emphasis on litter control. On adjudication day litter control in Kildare was extremely poor. Approach roads were littered and along the streets and smaller black lands quantities of litter were noted. Quite a lot of this litter appeared to be 'aged', that is that it has been around for some time. What is the litter collection strategy for the town? The 30 new bins for Market Square is certainly a step in the correct direction. The very poor situation in regard to litter at the Weighbridge area has been mentioned elsewhere in this Report. The adjudicator is of the view that it is important to get the litter situation under ongoing control before other major projects are started.

Waste Minimisation:

This is a new category in the Tidy Towns Competition introduced in 2006. The purpose of this new category is to encourage Tidy Towns Committees and the community that they support to get involved in projects that will reduce waste and encourage recycling. Marks can be gained by Kildare for the promotion of best practice. This can include community guidance on methods of reducing waste, segregating litter during clean up events. You could also consider a partnership with local firms and businesses to encourage them to reduce unnecessary waste. The adjudicator would like to congratulate the two schools on achieving Green School Status. Well done on achieving the installation of the Bottle & Clothes Bank.

Tidiness:

On the Curragh approach the very untidy site on the left before the National Stud entrance need urgent tidying up; it creates such a poor initial impression of Kildare. On Creamore Road / Academy Street the large blue gate need to be painted. This part of Kildare was quite untidy on adjudication day with litter and weed growth. The yellow building with the shuttering also needs repainting. Another very untidy area was noted on the Monasterevin road near the Kildare RFC and the Chris Ryan notice. In terms of repainting the corrugated iron shed on White Abbey Road needs attention. Quite a number of the directional signs in Kildare need to be power washed. On leaving the Cathedral building a very untidy area to the left with the large timber building was noted. Can this be screened from view of the Cathedral? The signage clutter opposite Daniel Boland needs some rationalization.

Residential Areas:

A number of estates in Kildare were visited and like many other towns of similar size in Ireland the standard is generally good. Ruanbeg Manor appears to be a very large estate that has a long entrance road. It is a pity here that the railings were not painted matt black. It is encouraging to see that town house development in Kildare is taking place as it is important to bring life back into a town after business hours. The abandoned Fairview Cottages (?) near Elm Park look quite interesting with their brick facades and interesting window details. Has anyone considered the restoration possibilities as it would be such a pity to seem them being knocked down at some time in the future. At Assumpta Villas the very long central grass area was much admired as this was so neatly presented. Some weeds were noted here at road boundary walls and some railings need to be painted.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The work on the Curragh approach road is looking well, but the badly damaged kerbing before Maxol need replacement. Well established landscaping was noted on the Monasterevin road though the adjudicator got the feeling that it was not receiving much maintenance attention. This approach however was not really up to standard. On the Athy road near the Abbey the post and rail fencing needs painting. The entrance area to the Abbey was also a little untidy. Much litter was a feature of the Rathangan road and generally the presentation of this approach road was poor; on the road to the Japanese Gardens the same situation was noted.

General Impression:

Kildare is an attractive busy town with a well organised Tidy Towns Committee. Unfortunately litter is a big problem to be resolved. The adjudicator would like to wish you well with your 2007 projects and planning.