

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kilteel** Ref: **1123**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **230**
Category: **B** Date(s): **07/07/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	27
The Built Environment	50	35
Landscaping	50	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20
Litter Control	50	33
Waste Minimisation	20	7
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	23
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	230

Overall Development Approach:

Go raibh maith agaibh go leir! Thank you to Kilteel TidyTowns and to the community you represent for having given selflessly of your time in working towards entering Kilteel in this 50th anniversary year of the TidyTowns Competition!

Kilteel is a small village with a "small" number of people involved. You do not state how many "small" is. Perhaps you may be able to increase your membership somewhat with the recent arrival of new residents from the new houses recently built. Apart from sharing workloads, new members bring their own creativity and individual strengths and insights to any organisation. You mention that you have developed links with many local community groups. It would be good if you could elaborate on this. How do you communicate with these groups, and with the people living in the village?

You mention asking your local authority about such things as replacing road signs. Again it would be good if you could elaborate on the meetings (if any) that you have had with the officials. Have you talked about your village to the Heritage Officer or the Conservation Officer of the local authority? Have you discussed your waste minimisation issues with the Environment Section of Kildare County Council?

The map submitted is very basic. It is important to supply a good map. It does not have to be an Ordnance Survey map, but it should be more detailed than the one supplied, and should show project locations as well as providing geographical/village landmark notes.

Whereas you have supplied a verbal action plan, you do not refer to any time frame. To make substantial progress in the competition a plan is required. A three or five year plan is recommended. A plan need not be

prepared professionally. However, you should try to get the views of the community at large when preparing the plan and take into account other plans for the area such as Local Area Plans / County Development Plans prepared by the Local Authority under the Planning and Development Act 2000. You do not mention anything about your local newsletter or your work with the Green Schools committee which you referred to in last year's application. You may be still involved with your local Green school as you were last year. It would be interesting and informative if you could elaborate on this involvement for us, as it is difficult to assess your strengths in this Category from the information supplied. This is a pity, as this work is probably on-going, but we have no way of knowing that. If you are not filling in the actual entry form on the copy supplied, you should submit information with the same headings. Otherwise you may omit some category information. You are very welcome to submit any additional documents you wish to, as well as this. But it is important to complete all the entry form information.

We endorse your approach to preserve and enhance the unique features of your village and its location. Kiltel is a lovely village in the East Kildare uplands with magnificent views available to the west.

The Built Environment:

Kiltel is a lovely village in a special location. Its dry stone walls are very much part of its built environment and it is wonderful to see how well you appreciate this unique aspect of your built environment. The walls are in safe hands. Your appreciation of the unique style of stone walling common in your area only, is also good. The walls are intact throughout the village and on most of the approaches, and we appreciate that they now need repair and resuscitation in places. We recommend that you endeavour as far as possible to ensure that any replacement is also of dry stone. Should stabilisation/bonding become necessary in places, it should be of sod and stone banking or lime mortar.

Your church is very beautiful and elegant. Its steeped pitched roof is one which will resist the winter snows, and because of this feature is also unique. It is a great focal point in the village. Well done on maintaining it in such an appropriate fashion. Both the structure and its surrounds are exemplary. Inside, the church is also welcoming, and a hymn sheet noted with "Bring Flowers of the Fairest" seemed so appropriate a hymn to sing in such unspoilt surroundings. The Stations of the Cross in Irish are both interesting and artistic.

The pump outside the church is beautifully presented also.

The old school is neatly kept, displaying its original date stone plaque proudly, as is the adjacent business premises.

Your archaeological sites are a great asset to your village. They are situated in their natural surrounds and have not been encroached upon in any way. We know that you appreciate this aspect of your built heritage well. The graveyard wall is a lovely built landscape feature. The gate at the "Fogra" sign needs painting, and its immediate area requires cutting and tidying. The gate at the castle by comparison is very neat, tidy, and well cared for.

We look forward to seeing more bilingual signage.

The new houses on the Rathcoole approach were admired. The presentation of all houses, individual, and in both housing estates is generally good.

Landscaping:

Kiltel has a distinct natural advantage in the fact that it is a village located in an unspoilt upland area overlooking lovely rolling countryside. Despite its proximity to the more urbanised parts of the county, the village has really retained its rural ambience with the maintenance of dry stone walls and hedgerows. The vegetation is native and unspoilt. Kiltel Wood is a lovely area of native woodland species. It is privately owned. The country lane which leads past the wood is a beautiful walk. Perhaps a sign restraining traffic from entering this section of the lane beyond the housing development would be a good idea. Maybe a Sli na Slainte route could be developed in the environs of Kiltel?

Your own landscaping of the village area, especially in the area of the church, internal and external to its grounds, and the pump area is very appropriate to the village. We are particularly impressed that you are not overusing the more urban landscape forms of baskets and tubs. The terracotta pots outside the church are very good both in content and type. The copper beech was admired. You do not need these in such a natural setting. Well Done! The road side in the vicinity of the old school / church is restocked with roadside semi mature plantings. This is excellent.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Kiltel, with its deciduous wood, and remoteness from polluting atmospheres and human disturbance is a

wildlife habitat supreme! You must build on this and maximise your efforts in order to progress in this area.

The trees of the woodland and the hedgerows all around are a wildlife lovers' dream. On adjudication date the numbers of flying insects and midges in the wood area was astonishing!

A logical place to start would be to carry out a very basic survey of wild flora and fauna in the area. Perhaps your local school could help you with this? Do you have a young person studying Environmental Science in a 3rd level institution from the area who might require a thesis topic? The provision of a survey and management plan contributes to the marks in this section. In last year's adjudication it was also recommended that you might consider erecting an interpretative panel close to your good wildflower area, so do remember to endeavour to do this for 2009! Findings made public on information panels would add to the enjoyment of your village for local and visitors alike, and would serve good educational purposes. Well done on your organic policy, and your general awareness re berry bearing vegetation planting.

Litter Control:

Not much litter was in evidence on adjudication day, apart from a flattened tin can and one piece of paper in the area close to the pub. Perhaps you could organise a litter seminar day with the local authority litter warden, and draw up a litter plan for the village. And perhaps with the increase in population occurring, you might discuss the possibility of acquiring a small recycling centre. Well done on your Spring Clean and weekly litter pick ups. You are blessed that you are able to keep the village litter free by doing this on a weekly basis only. It shows that people do appreciate the village – both locals and residents. Maybe you could let us have more information as to how many people get involved in these activities.

Waste Minimisation:

Waste minimisation is about more than not having litter in your village. It involves the prevention of litter accumulation in the first case. It is really what it says – to minimise on waste production before we, as a community, private or public create it in the first case. You might refer to the Race Against Waste booklet available from the TidyTowns Unit of the Department of the Environment, Heritage, and Local Government. Consider organising or attending a Waste Minimisation Workshop with your local authority. In your local school there will be opportunities to involve the students in an effort to work towards this end. You gave details last year of your work with the Green school, four miles away in this regard, but you have not indicated if this is on-going. We are only assuming that it is.

Perhaps you might prepare a flyer/newsletter on this subject? As a local community you could look at some innovative and simple ideas such as organising a "Bring and Take Day". This would involve using a local hall / community centre for instance for a day - where everybody brings items they have no further use for, but which other people might want (and which under normal circumstances they might get rid of as waste) and puts them on display. The corollary is that somebody else needs these items. No monies change hands. Website versions of this idea have been set up in places also. Another group collected all broken crockery, and made a mosaic in their local area. You can gain marks by doing some of these things for 2009.

Tidiness:

As one approaches the village one gets the first impression of Killeel as a village on a hill. The footpaths and planting give a gentle linear effect to the approach.

A wall, cream in colour, on property close to the church is in need of repainting. The walls of the house at the junction of the lane leading to the wood, at the church end, also need repainting. Opposite this were an abandoned caravan and cab partially hidden in the growth. This is a great pity in close proximity to the excellent church area. The black seat requires a coat of paint.

Gates in general need attention, and given a village colour perhaps - or any uniform colour - would look most attractive.

The junction of the Blessington Road approach was untidy and this road needs repair. The boundary sod/stone along the Blessington approach on the village side of the graveyard needs attention, especially as it is in the foreground of views to the historic sites.

There was no graffiti in evidence. This is good.

The house grounds and area around the castle were very neat and tidy.

Residential Areas:

The individual inhabited houses in the village and the newer developments are generally well maintained and landscaped. The newer estate is beginning to settle in, with houses occupied. The older estate is also looking

well. Some planting on the Rathcoole side of the new houses would help assimilate them in views to the hill as one approaches Kiltel from the North.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

In your submission you emphasise this aspect of your village, and this is good too, as this is the place where the visitor gets their first impression of the village . Just ahead of the speed limit on the approach from Naas/Rathmore there is a lovely stone wall with roses in abundance . The gate adjacent needs attention. There are well trimmed edges closer to the village with oxeye daisies. These are very attractive. There is a rusted remains of a frame of a sign on the left. The name sign Cill tSile was a little hidden with growth on the day of adjudication. A timber fence to the left needs attention and a wall beyond the speed limit requires painting. A site with cars inside could benefit from screening and the unoccupied bungalow site and roadside boundary/access area in the dip in the road beyond is also in need of attention. As already stated the Castle and adjoining farmyard are well presented. There are nicely planted splays here, with a good single storey house behind with evergreen hedge. On the other side of the road was attractive yellow flowering shrubbery, but also a poor gateway needing paint and weeding of splay. This appeared to be a field entrance. There are lovely views from this approach over the lowlands below, and to rolling hillside on the opposite side of the road. From this point in to the village proper is good, with good banks, hedging, and dry stone walls. An attractive traditional road sign is also in evidence.

The Blessington approach gives views over the historic sites, and the comments made already about this area and junction are relevant. The boundaries on each side need tidying and gateways also need cleaning in places.

The Rathcoole approach is uphill; the car wash barn could do with screening.

General Impression:

Kiltel has a great natural advantage of location and history. We know that you are aware of this richness. We would encourage you to seek the excellent advice which is available to you from your local authority on many issues – be it Conservation, Heritage, Environmental issues and others. You will also have the new residents to help you and to bring new ideas and manpower to your ranks.