

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kilcormac** Ref: **287**
County: **Offaly** Mark: **229**
Category: **C** Date(s): **13/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	36
The Built Environment	50	30
Landscaping	50	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20
Litter Control	50	24
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	29
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	229

Overall Development Approach:

Kilcormac Tidy Towns Committee is welcome to the 2008 competition. Many thanks for your completed application form, entry document and map, all of which were useful on the day. You would appear to have a good working relationship with the local Development Association and excellent support from the local community in terms of financial and practical support. Your relationship with Offaly County Council, Leader, Credit Union and the West Offaly Partnership are all to the good. The relationship you have with the local national schools seems excellent, of particular note being the active involvement of Transition Year students.

The Built Environment:

The Catholic Church and grounds looked well in stone. There were some neglected buildings opposite including an old industrial building and hand ball alley and a buildings which may have been an old national school adjacent to it? These could all be improved upon greatly. Some of the buildings on Main Street looked well, including O'Suilleabhain's with its attractive mural. The Texaco Garage on the Birr Road could incorporate more landscaping to soften its harsh forecourt area. The Fire Station, as mentioned last year, could do with painting. There are numerous plastic signs throughout the town which should be replaced by ones of a more traditional timber variety. The paint shop in an attractive old industrial building on the Birr side of the village was admired and an attractive old hall (possibly dancehall or cinema?) should be restored to its former glory, in its prominent location. The Midland Bar looked quite fresh and the ecclesiastic building on Main Street looked well. New industrial premises on the Tullamore side of the village were admired as was the entrance to the school and grounds on this side. The tin roof to the butcher shop on the square should be repainted before next year's competition in its traditional red colour. The Garda Station was quite fresh. The old chemist shop is an attractive shopfront and should be restored to its former glory – it is currently empty. The ongoing work you do in relation to the water pump and Binding Stone are laudable. Your submissions in relation to the Draft Development Plan are all to the good.

Landscaping:

The car parking area divided by kerbing and tree planting and flowers outside the GAA grounds will hopefully mature in time and the creeper will disguise the impact of the bare block wall in this situation. The mill wheel is an attractive feature on the Tullamore side of the village and the picnic area on the hillock below mature trees on this road was also greatly admired. There is scope for further work in this category of the competition as mentioned by last year's adjudicator. An ideal area would be to landscape the church car park and incorporate more landscaping at the town square. The spring garden and pump on the Birr side of the village was simply presented. The Silver Riverside area looked well but the railings at the bridge should be repainted before next year's competition. Another potential area for development would be at the water tower which looks a little harsh at the moment. The ongoing maintenance of areas such as the amenity area, the trees at the GAA grounds and the rockery rose beds on the approach roads is commendable. You would appear to have a good working relationship with the Residents Associations of Mooney Terrace and St Cormac's Terrace. The Adopt a Patch scheme appears to be an interesting and successful one. We look forward to seeing your future work at Broughal Road picnic area.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The ongoing maintenance of the Town Park, Silver Riverbank and walkway area are all to the good. Your connections with Lough Boora Parklands Group would appear to be strong and we wish you luck with the developments of the Boora cutaways area. Your plans in relation to seeking advice from local experts in relation to conservation sound like good and sensible ones.

Litter Control:

Unfortunately litter on the day was a problem with quite a lot evident along the main streets of the village and more along approach roads. The area in the vicinity of the school was particularly affected. The recycling bins look a little bit scraped and neglected and would benefit from either repainting or replacement. We were pleased to read of the success of the work you have been doing with local youth groups such as the National Schools, Transition Year students and the local Foroige group. The Adopt a Patch Scheme would appear to be successful also. We wish you luck in relation to the provision of new litter bins in the town.

Waste Minimisation:

You mention the recycling of litter picked during your clean ups. What other means have you used to communicate best practice in this area to local residents and businesses? What form does this take? How do you communicate your message? How do you deal with the waste that results from your own work? Do you compost grass clippings etc?

Tidiness:

The town was generally fine but could be improved upon. Weeds were a problem at stone walls on the Birr side of the village. Graffiti was evident to the nameplate sign on the Tullamore side. Do discourage advertising hoardings which can give approach roads a very cluttered appearance. Your work with Offaly County Council in relation to weed control, footpath maintenance and billboards is all to the good. Work on signage maintenance is also commendable. We look forward to the historical street signage. There were quite a few tin roofed sheds which were in need of attention-one on the road to the church and another in vicinity of Scoil Mhuire.

Residential Areas:

The new estates such as the Priory had a well landscaped entrance area and planted trees which will mature well. Glendine was another new estate that was admired. The houses on the Birr Road looked fine. A very attractive house was admired opposite the Garda Station. The stone walling to houses on the Tullamore side looked extremely well. You would appear to have a good working relationship with local residents associations. We were pleased to hear of the active interest that these associations are showing in their surroundings. Congratulations to St Cormac's Residents Association on their award in the County Council's Private Estates category of the Chairman's Awards. From your application, it would appear that you have had some problems with vandalism of flowers at Bridge Street?

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The Birr Road was quite overgrown as was the Tullamore Road. The former sported a new footpath. Being located on a main road like this has its problems but these have been successfully tackled by other towns and villages. Do ensure that approach roads look at their best as these give the visitor the first impression they have of the village. Some of the poles of directional signage on the Birr Road were rusty. We were pleased to hear that you maintain planting on approach roads. Your plans for improvements of the picnic area at the Broughal Road were read of with interest, as were the plans to liaise with the County Council regarding the re-surfacing of the central areas of the town.

General Impression:

Kilcormac is lucky to have such an enthusiastic committee. It is a village with much potential to succeed and do well in the competition with continued efforts. Good luck in this regard.