

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Killasmestia** Ref: **1215**
County: **Laois** Mark: **217**
Category: **A** Date(s): **23/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	29
The Built Environment	50	28
Landscaping	50	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	21
Litter Control	50	32
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	400	217

Overall Development Approach:

Congratulations on the successful ongoing maintenance of your village while a number of major physical developments are in progress. (Do you also have to cope with motorway construction traffic, one wonders?) This was this adjudicators first visit to Killasmestia and it struck one immediately as being an ideal neighbourhood – the kind of place the urban dweller longs for – though it is possible that some people in the village may have some reservations! It is difficult to make a fair assessment of an entry such as yours in a place where there is so little of everything and none of some things – such as a pub, a housing estate – in comparison with larger centres. The impression is of a vital community. Certainly, judging by your entry form and the appearance of the village, there is an abundance of enterprise and imaginative effort. It is good to read that you have fertile contacts with the School and the Parish Council and with business people.

The Built Environment:

Scaffolding was in place on one side of the church, which appeared to be emerging beautifully painted and probably with other improvements as well. The Parish House was newly painted in the same colour, as indeed was the Community Centre. There was therefore a nice sense of unity in these key buildings. The traditional-looking shop was pleasing. An immense development marked on your map as the Crèche was in progress; its completion will be eagerly looked forward to.

Landscaping:

The pump area with its stone wall, seating and planting caught the attention, as did the name signs on the main approaches. Have you thought of flowering shrubs rather than annuals in such spots as they have longer life and need less attention? Floral tubs gave colourful punctuation here and there. Flower beds were well nurtured. Trim hedges were a distinctive feature. (One wondered why the lovely beech hedge alongside the

Community Centre was inside the paling rather than outside? – not that it matters.) The graveyard looked interesting, with its free-standing belfry. Have you thought of bulbs for early spring flowering? – once planted they look after themselves and they make a good show at a dull time – daffodils along verges and bluebells under trees for example.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Trees are properly considered under this heading; there appeared to be several young trees, and the surroundings of the village are rich in superb ancient timber. The Mass Path is a fine idea both from a historical and an environmental point of view. In your next submission you might report if there are any school projects of a nature-study kind, such as making inventories of animals birds and plants, or paintings of natural topics. There appears to be a very lively school, judging by seeing the pupils and teachers on their way home.

Litter Control:

It is good to read that that you have litter picks several times a week. Have you identified where the litter comes from or who drops it? Clearly it would be preferable to stop it at source. There was very little disposable litter in the neighbourhood: congratulations.

Waste Minimisation:

It is a great step to have a bio-treatment plant. What becomes of the compost when mature? Is it shared locally? Clearly you are successfully promoting the idea of waste minimisation. Heartiest congratulations to the pupils of the National School for their green flag status, and also to the teachers and parents.

Tidiness:

The village is as tidy as one can expect with all the building work going on – in fact it is probably even tidier than last year. Kerbs and verges were very neat. A roadside gate near the big shed was in need of painting.

Residential Areas:

It seemed that most of the population do not live in the village – many school children were taking the bus at the end of the day. This is a difficult category to assess. Perhaps next year you might have a suggestion that a way could be found of including houses that are not precisely part of the village but in some way attached to it – a question made difficult by its vagueness. Certainly the impression when approaching Kilasmeestia is that the surrounding countryside is notable for its very well kept rural homes.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road surfaces are good and road markings excellent. Stone walls old and new were admired.

General Impression:

It was a real pleasure to visit Kilasmeestia for the first time and to experience, in the short time available, the vibrant atmosphere of a progressive community. Please give as much information as possible in your future submissions so that a suitable assessment can be made.