

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Kilbehenny** Ref: **1251**  
County: **Limerick** Mark: **222**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **22/07/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	36
The Built Environment	50	25
Landscaping	50	25
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	18
Litter Control	50	30
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	29
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>222</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Welcome Kilbehenny to the 2009 National TidyTowns Competition. Thank you for your completed entry form and the supporting documentation which included; sketch map of the village and Mill River Walk sketch; A Village Plan and Design Statement for Kilbehenny prepared December 2008; a letter from Ballyhoura Development Ltd. re 3-5 Year Plan; and circular re Workshop on Home Composting & Wildlife Gardening. Well done on the efforts of your TidyTowns Committee of eight people. Also well done for the work carried out by the twenty four volunteers. This commitment is very positive, which benefits Kilbehenny, a small village with a population of less than 200.

It was good to note that you have been assisted in your work by FAS, Limerick County Council, Cork County Council, IPCC and Ballyhoura Development Ltd.

Your communication strategy which includes the use of fortnightly public meetings, local press, regional press, and Church Notes to reach the community are very appropriate methods and from the list of events held during the year, it is obvious that there is a very good community spirit in Kilbehenny. Your engagement with the national school is also positive.

The Village Plan and Design Statement is the result of much positive input from the people of Kilbehenny and the Plan will contribute to the task of achieving the most appropriate further development of the village. As stated in the plan, "the idea is that the best of the past should be carried forward into a well-planned future". Again, as stated in the document, "your capacity to work together constructively will stand the village in good stead in implementing the Plan".

### **The Built Environment:**

In general, the commercial and residential premises throughout the village appeared in very good condition, and were well presented.

The Community Centre is in excellent condition both, outside and inside, and was a hive of activity at the time of our visit. The new gravelled car park area surrounding the Community Centre was also clean and tidy, as was the tennis court area to the rear. The landscaping feature in the corner, featuring a small lawn and shrubbery was attractive. Parts of the surrounding fence at the tennis court were in need of repair, however. It was positive to see a nice new litter bin outside, also. The caring nature of the community was illustrated by the defibrillator on the side of the centre; hopefully, it will never require use.

Dan Casey's Bar was well presented in a mustard yellow colour, the Murphy's mural on the gable end looked tidy, if a bit overpowering. It was nice to see the wooden pavement furniture complete with an old milk churn functioning as a litter bin outside. The Three Counties Inn looked very well painted dark red and black. The outside railings also looked well. Mag's Hair Studio was clean and tidy, painted in shades of light and dark brown. The Post Office was clean and well presented. The issue of the large billboards on the gable end of some premises deserves further consideration. Private houses on the main street were in excellent repair, as were many, if not all, on the outskirts of the village.

The derelict building, the former Creamery, next to the post office is in need of some attention and takes from the lovely appearance of the village somewhat.

The Catholic Church is set on an elevated site and looks quite well, surrounded by nice lawns, with the Grotto and its nice landscaping is a highlight. The bench area, surrounded by more nice landscaping here is an attractive feature. The stone boundary wall and nice pavement in front of the church look very well.

The Galtee Gaels GAA Club Grounds, which date from 1958, were alive with activity with GAA Summer Camps for local children taking place, which was great to see. The new Clubhouse for the Galtee Gaels is nearing completion, and will be a tremendous asset to the community when it is finished.

The school, dating from 1941, was currently nearing completion of its major expansion programme. This project again will add to the community life of the village and surrounding area, and was good to see.

### **Landscaping:**

The relatively new picnic area on the approach road from Mitchelstown is a nice inviting feature for the visitor. This grassed area was complete with two picnic tables, and a nice bilingual "Welcome to Kilbehenny" plaque, set in a stone surround. It was good to see the innovative approach taken in fixing these tables off the ground with metal supports, thus preventing the timber rotting, and the numerous standard trees looked lovely.

The linear flower beds beside the paved footpaths were generally in good condition, but these did require some weeding along the length of the shrubbery and flower bed.

The landscaping in the Community Centre was excellent, with nice displays of hanging baskets and planted containers. There is a very nice landscaped area including a pretty flower bed next to the spotless recycling depot.

Some lovely hanging baskets, containers and window boxes were in evidence throughout the village.

During our visit to the Mill River Walk, the 75 new trees planted, as stated in your entry form were not very obvious to this adjudicator.

The tree planting on the Cahir road was again to be admired.

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

The work done on the Mill River Walk area near the bridge is to be admired and this area has potential for further developments, which would benefit the community. It is suggested that you consider the construction of an Information Panel near the bridge for the benefit of the visitor. This would highlight the wildlife and birdlife to be seen in the river area and would generally enhance the experience of the river walk. The work outlined in your map of the Mill River Walk is quite comprehensive, and to maximise the attractiveness of the area appropriate information panels, set in the car park or near the Community Centre, would also help the visitor.

### **Litter Control:**

On the day of our visit it was good to see a gentleman in a high-visibility vest picking up litter along the Main Street of the village. In general, the village Main Street was clear of litter. Pavements were litter free, and litter bins were to be seen outside some commercial premises. It might be worthwhile to arrange to place new litter bins at different points of the village in order to maintain this very good standard that has already been achieved. The Foroige litter survey and the spring clean up week have obviously set high standards for litter control in Kilbehenny. The area around the Community Centre was in very good condition and litter free.

At the lay-by area on the new bridge over the by-pass, there were some plastic bottles and cigarette cartons discarded. While physically removed from the village, this area would benefit from the placement of a litter bin.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

Well done on your initiatives undertaken in 2009, which included the composting workshop, which was held in association with Limerick County Council, IPCC, and Ballyhoura Tidy Towns Network.

In our visit to see the National School, it was not possible to observe the Green Flag flying, as the major expansion programme at the school is nearing completion. Best of luck with the completion of this project. We look forward to our visit in 2010 to see the completed works and the Green Flag flying.

At the Community Centre, we observed the Bring Banks which were in excellent condition. The surrounding area was in pristine condition, without a single piece of litter, well done to all concerned.

### **Tidiness:**

It is positive to see the absence of overhead cables along the main streets in the village. Their absence adds to the streetscape of the village. In general, the village was quite tidy, with lamp standards in a good state of repair and the individual commercial and residential premises were neat and tidy. There was one area of potential improvement, where beer barrels were stored at the side of the Three Counties Inn. This may have been a temporary measure. While there are probably some commercial reasons for retaining large scale billboards advertising various products, it is suggested that the feasibility of removing these should be examined. The signage for the commercial premises, the directional signs, and the Stories from Times Past signage were generally in good condition.

Congratulations on the restoration project for the old house on the Church Road. It looks a wonderful restoration and a relic of times past.

The Ballyhoura Country Map in the car park opposite the Post Office is in need of cleaning.

### **Residential Areas:**

There were some lovely individual houses throughout the village either on the main street or individual bungalows set off from the car park. On the road to the new bridges, there were also some fine bungalow properties to be admired, as was the case on the Church Road. The Presbytery is an imposing house. The bungalow with the attractive wall and railing beside the Church caught the eye. The painting of the disused house en route to the Mill River Bridge was a very positive initiative. Well done to all.

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

The main road, running through the village, the N8, is in excellent condition, one of the benefits of the village being situated on a national route. The completion of the new M8 by-pass has resulted in a dramatic reduction in the volume of traffic passing through the village on a daily basis. Anecdotal evidence would suggest this figure was up to 9,000 vehicles a day. One of the very nice features of the village is the excellent paved footpaths running at both sides of the road, throughout the length of the village. There was some growth of weeds between the paving stones on these footpaths, which needs to be attended to before it becomes a bigger problem.

The church road was in excellent condition again, with the new footpath at the church looking well. Grass verges on the side roads approaching the village were generally well trimmed.

The old graveyard grassed area was generally in good condition.

The old water pump on the Cahir Road was highlighted on your map as an attraction for the visitor; unfortunately, it is in a state of disuse and repair, and should be taken on as a project for renewal in 2010.

The 60 Km/h signs after the new bridge need to be painted.

The broad main street in the village allows for ample car parking, making it easy to stop and visit the area.

**General Impression:**

Thank you for the opportunity to visit Kilbehenny for the very first time, this adjudicator enjoyed the experience. We appreciate the potential positive impact that the lack of traffic, due to the bypass construction, may have on Kilbehenny. This will depend, among other things, on the implementation of your Village Plan and Design Statement over the coming years. We wish you all the very best for your future participation in Tidy Towns Competitions. Well done to all concerned.