

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Kilmallock** Ref: **121**  
County: **Limerick** Mark: **271**  
Category: **C** Date(s): **14/07/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	44
The Built Environment	50	37
Landscaping	50	38
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	25
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	15
Tidiness	30	15
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	29
General Impression	10	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>271</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Welcome Kilmallock to the 2009 National TidyTowns Competition. Thank you for your entry form on behalf of your town with a population of 1,231. Thanks also for the very comprehensive 2009 document which incorporates; Welcome; Mission Statement; Brief History of Town; Local Area Attractions; Priorities for 2009; Three Year Plan 2009-2012 (actually that's 4 years); Addressing the 2008 Report; Medieval Festival; Colaiste Iosaef-Green Schools Programme; and a Map of town.

You have a long history of involvement in TidyTowns and your hard work over those 29 years is paying dividends. The support you receive from the Community Council; Residents Associations; the County Council; FAS; Traders Association is all very positive and is helping to make Kilmallock a better place to live, work and spend leisure. Your involvement with Ballyhoura Development in future planning will also improve further initiatives. Your Mission Statement 'To generate awareness, co-operation and enthusiasm amongst the people of Kilmallock in a concerted effort to enhance the natural and built environment of the town' is praiseworthy and well articulated. Your historic town deserves the efforts that the TidyTowns Committee brings to its ongoing care.

The promotion of community awareness and a 'sense of community' will help the integrated efforts of all for the benefit of Kilmallock. Your communication strategy is also positive and the more the message of TidyTowns is put into the media the better the result. Your strategy of regular articles in local newspapers, and Parish newsletters is good. You didn't state the numbers on your committee and how frequently you meet, but it's obvious from the submission that your effort and commitment are high.

### **The Built Environment:**

The town has a nice blend of historic buildings, old world commercial charm and exciting new residential developments. One of your stated Objectives is to 'Increase pride and morale in the community'. One of the best ways to meet this objective is to ensure that your buildings are in the best possible condition and up to best national standards. The historic monuments are impressive. One basic method of increasing their magnetism as visitor attractions is to improve access to these monuments and improve their immediate surroundings, and make more user-friendly. On the day of our visit, the front gates to the Collegiate Church and the Church of Ireland were padlocked and, thus, not open to the visitor. The little Museum was also closed after 2pm. Here consideration should be given to splitting the four opening hours between am and later pm. In contrast, the well presented Friars' Gate Theatre and Art Exhibition was open and most welcoming, our compliments to the excellent staff. Friars' Gate is a gem of a cultural development. Derelict and closed up old commercial buildings are an eye-sore and your efforts to find a solution to the problem are worthwhile. One possible short-term remedy is to organise for some of these premises to be painted as a temporary measure. Cost is a factor of course.

The many attractive buildings and monuments include the Dominican Priory, Friars' Gate Theatre, the Collegiate Church, Famine Memorial Park, Martyrs' Monument, the Fenian Cross, the Union Workhouse and the new County Council Offices and Library, the Catholic Church and the Church of Ireland both of St Peter & Paul. Blossom Gate and John's Castle are also imposing structures. Colaiste Iosaef is a fine mature building with well presented grounds. The six pillars painted red at the entrance are striking, with the flower boxes in matching red floral display. The wheelchair access sign was noted. It's a pity about the weeds at the front wall. The Fire Station in the Industrial Park looked clean and well maintained. The Teagasc building looked well. The FCA Hall seems unique. Nearby, the excellent structure of the modern Deebert Hotel is a fine facility for the town. Also, a most impressive and wonderfully presented building is Deebert House, with its stone structure and lovely garden of red standard roses, orange marigolds and mature copper beech trees. The Kind Hearts and Kind Deeds sign is a nice touch. Much necessary infrastructure exists in Kilmallock to make it an attractive town for visitors. There are many fine commercial premises in the town, including: the Xpress Stop Service Station, clean forecourt and well painted green and red, no visible litter and plenty of rubbish bins; Kilmallock Cycles stone building with the lovely flower displays in the stone beds; O'Brien's Ironworks (1940) complex looked well; the Shannon Development Business Park looked impressive, with clean signs and good entrance. Others to impress included: M.J.Feore; the Golden Mill Chinese Restaurant; the green building next door is an interesting feature; Wallace's Pharmacy; Kilmallock Credit Union; Abbey Laundrette and Dry Cleaners; Kenny's Barber Shop; The Old Stand Restaurant and Bar; Ryan's Supervalu; Cregg; Fitzgerald Electrical; Lynch's Bar; Ivans; Dansko Food Limited; Fitzgerald's Bar; Abbey Pharmacy; Centra; Orios Fashions, Harney's Pub; Risen Physiotherapy Clinic; Michael Daffy Car Sales; the Post Office; AIB and Bank of Ireland.

There are many residential housing areas and individual houses located in the town and on the outskirts.

### **Landscaping:**

There were some fine examples of good landscaping throughout the area. The first one to catch our eye on the approach from Limerick was the display of red roses opposite the Catholic Church, as was the lovely linear park of shrubs near the church, with the backdrop of young trees and the lovely stone wall. This created a good first impression.

There were many displays of nice flower beds around the town and some excellent displays of hanging baskets and window boxes on commercial and public buildings. Also good were the suspended baskets on the black lamp standards. The Famine Park was well laid out, neat and tidy, mainly grass and trees inside the park with lovely colour of the mainly yellow potentilla shrub near the most appropriate round tower gate pillars. The plaque to the victims of An Gorta Mor 1845-1850 is most thought provoking, in what seems, our current difficult economic time. The lovely landscaping of window boxes and baskets on the beautifully restored cottages in Water Street on the Bulgaden/Elton road is most praiseworthy. The new containers of colourful flowers on the bridge nearby are also very attractive.

The River Park is an attractive and generally tidy area, as was the area close to the Sister Arches monument. The raised stone bed at the Fenian Cross in front of Dansko Foods was impressive with a nice display of flowers. The individual evergreen trees close by fitted in well.

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

The River Park amenity area with its nice walk is an excellent facility with good footpaths, nice grassed area and nice trees by the river. A pleasant place. The Famine Park is also well laid out and a fitting tribute to lost generations. The Bridge area at Water Street is old world charm and an attractive area to visit. The Information Panel on the Kilmallock Loop Walks at the Fenian Cross is of benefit to the visitor and in good condition.

**Litter Control:**

Litter control in the town was generally fairly good, however, there were some small pockets of litter – a small amount in the Fenian Cross seated area. While litter bins in the town seemed to be coping well, it is important to ensure regular emptying of bins is organised.

It is good to note that you will be continuing weekly litter control evenings.

**Waste Minimisation:**

The Recycling Centre seems to have found a very central home at the Shannon Development Business Centre. It seemed in good condition, but are the opening hours of two days a week sufficient? Your planned strategy of raising further awareness by community education is positive. Also positive are your plans with the County Council and Irish Peatlands Conservation Industries to promote improved awareness.

**Tidiness:**

The absence of overhead cables and electricity wires in Sheares Street is a positive feature and the approach road from Limerick would also be more attractive, if the existing overhead cables could also be removed. This could be regarded as a medium to longer term target. The car park at the children's playground is in excellent condition. Graffiti was not an issue throughout the town. Many of the street names are set out on bilingual name plates with the town logo in evidence. If not already done so, this practice should be continued throughout the town. Town signs were generally in good condition on the approach roads. Some existing signs for monuments within the town need renewal, e.g. the Museum and the Dominican Priory.

Weed control in the town was generally good, but there were some small areas requiring attention including weeds outside the entrance walls to Colaiste Iosaef. Ad hoc plastic signs advertising business premises or forthcoming events should not be tolerated; there was one in evidence near the FCA Hall.

The old Library is not well maintained currently and regardless of the transfer to the new and exciting new premises, the old building needs to be painted and maintained. The public toilet premises are also in need of painting. The ongoing issue of the maintenance of the timber hoarding, which protects derelict buildings, is one to be further examined.

**Residential Areas:**

The town has expanded rapidly with several attractive housing developments in the area. Glenfield was well presented with young trees, well maintained green areas and its two sculptures of Sister Arches. Radharc na Coille is a nice terraced estate of houses, many young trees in evidence, nicely maintained grassed area and a good riverside location. It's a pity that the stone sign for Radharc na Coille has been defaced with blue paint. Ash Hill is also well presented with nice terrace of houses, mature trees and well maintained individual houses with good individual landscaping. Tiny Tots Crèche at Sycamore Drive looks a good facility in a well developed housing estate. One area that impressed is the small number of old cottages on Water Street that are lovingly maintained by their owners and in excellent condition. These are a credit to all concerned and are set off with some lovely landscaping of window boxes and hanging baskets of beautiful flowers. These former homes of the factory workers from another era are a lovely relic of times past.

Throughout the town there were many impressive houses with very well maintained gardens, which added to the positive image of the area. One potential long term problem, now common to many small towns throughout the country, is the one of unfinished housing estates. Kilmallock is no exception to this problem, a result of Ireland's current economic recession. Some excellently finished houses are surrounded by partly completed houses. Some of the roads infrastructure is incomplete.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

The Children's Playground is an excellent facility, credit to all. The Car Park is also in excellent condition.

Both, the GAA grounds and the Kilmallock AFC Grounds, are well presented and are good facilities for the town. There was a nice display of yellow roses at the back of the GAA Grounds. Signage at the premises of local public representatives could be more in keeping with the streetscape and surrounding premises.

Roads in the area were generally in good condition, but some signs are in danger of becoming obscured by various trees and shrubs. It is important that these are regularly checked.

There were many well built stone walls fronting properties. One area of concern is the poor appearance of the

entrances of some industrial estates on the outskirts of town. The grass area needs to be maintained on an ongoing basis at this time of year.

**General Impression:**

Kilmallock is an attractive and expanding town which is welcoming change, while retaining its history and charm. Congratulations to all involved in the continuing improvements under the TidyTowns umbrella. Best of luck in future TidyTowns Competitions, keep up the effort.