

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Killeigh** Ref: **596**  
County: **Offaly** Mark: **256**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **07/07/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	32
The Built Environment	50	38
Landscaping	50	38
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	16
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	38
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>256</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Go raibh maith agaibh go leir! Thank you to all the voluntary workers who have gone to so much trouble this year and in previous years to make Killeigh an ever improving place in which to live, work and to enjoy. It is very hard to see how you can function with only 4 members, so perhaps you should start a recruitment drive. Don't forget that people who live in adjacent rural areas may also like to help, as the village is their social centre. Two monthly meetings are really not enough to deal with the ever expanding work load.

You do not mention any agencies that support you. Have you approached any of these? We are sure that you would get a good listening ear and professional advice. How is your relationship with your Local authority? You can call on their services, Heritage, Environmental, Engineering, Architectural Conservation, Community and Development and so forth readily and easily. This compares poorly with the ongoing help you had last year. Is it that you forgot to mention it?

You hold public meetings to communicate your message. This is good, but there must be other ways that you could spread the word like local newspapers, radio, shop notices etc.

It is good that the school has achieved the Green Flag. Remember that the children are the residents of our villages also and have imagination and technological expertise!

Please do not leave any sections blank on your application form or we may miss some good work that you are doing or planning. It is a sure way to do yourselves an injustice.

You were asked last year for a map, and you have not provided one either this year. This is a pity, as a map can focus your mind on what you have, apart altogether from helping the adjudicator on the day of adjudication.

You seemed pleased with the feedback you got after the results last year. You should try to build on that success.

To increase your marks it is very important to prepare a Tidy Towns Plan. 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 Town Plans/ Local Area Plans / County Development Plans prepared by the Local Authority under the Planning and Development Act 2000/ County Heritage Plans/ Agenda 21 Plans etc. Unfortunately, not having such a plan automatically loses you marks in this section of the competition, as per the adjudication guidelines.

### **The Built Environment:**

Killeigh is a beautiful, small village on the main road from Tullamore to Portlaoise. And, although, it suffers from traffic pounding through, it still has quiet corners, and a village green which confers serenity in the middle of the noise.

You only make one comment under this heading: "Mick the Millar Memorial Statue project ongoing". But you give absolutely no other details.

The Village Green and its associated buildings are your greatest built asset, and you appear to cherish it, thus. Its landscape qualities set off the architecture. The house at the top of the Green (stone with brick window surrounds) has a lovely original doorcase. Its curtilage of stone wall boundaries and fine railings are well conserved. The jostle stone has been preserved and reset. You have succeeded in retaining the traditional wooden sash windows in many of your buildings on the Green. This is very good. The buildings are all well maintained and add so much to the place that is your historic village centre. The new two storey houses on the inner side of the Green maintain the scale and proportions of the existing buildings. This is also good.

The post office is neat, and the pub on the opposite junction "Doyles" is well presented also, as is the white house opposite. The cottage row on the top road along the Green is also very well kept by all owners/occupiers.

The Church of Ireland is a lovely building in a very unspoilt leafy land – quite a discovery sort of place, with its interesting separate bell structure worked on pulleys. The medieval graveyard beside is a most interesting ancient graveyard, and it is a pity that there is not some explanatory information there to read. The adjacent enclosure of Abbey Farm is most beautifully presented.

There is an interesting cottage beside Kinnity Pre School with the Geashill style Digby windows. Langton's frontage is clean.

The Catholic Church is kept well, but the parking area in front could do with some softening/landscaping. The school is neat and clean.

The Famine Graveyard is interesting, but its gates are in need of some care.

In the Green itself, there are the remains of the ecclesiastical site, which you have well interpreted. This area was the subject of an Urban and Village Renewal project.

The Seven Blessed Wells of Killeigh are well signposted, and are most interesting also.

You have all the "raw Material" to work with.

### **Landscaping:**

You say that the Green needs a lot of upkeep, and this is true. The lovely mature trees here and towards the Well are outstanding. The entire area is well cared for, and there are other nice areas of shrub planting around the village e.g. at the corner of the community centre boundary and in the traffic island, and between Doyle's and the Catholic Church. The rockery and shrubs at the school pull-in area were admired.

The stand of newer trees on the Tullamore Road is lovely.

You do not mention any planned projects. Your adjudicator last year suggested a tree planting programme of native trees and this adjudicator concurs. Have you discussed this?

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

You have left this section blank, so it is difficult for you to gain marks in this section. Your care of the landscaped areas which you have is excellent, and in so doing you are making the place attractive to wildlife. However, there is much more that you can do in this regard to increase the enjoyment and educational value of these areas. Perhaps, your local schools could also 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 wildlife survey and management plan contributes to the marks in this section. Remember to endeavour to do this for 2010! Findings can subsequently be made public on information panels. This more detailed information would add to the enjoyment of your village for local and visitors alike, and would serve good educational purposes. In relation to this, please be sure to put design research into the proposed notice boards themselves. With such a good environment in the village, be consistent in having such new street furniture designed in an innovative and appropriate fashion. And you should also ensure that the Irish names for all species are included.

You could increase your overall marks considerably by spending time on progressing this section, but do not rush this, as it is worth doing well!

### **Litter Control:**

There was quite an amount of individual pieces of litter around the Green, and in the Ball Alley. The bins in the Green were almost all choc-a-block with rubbish, because of this there was overflow rubbish beside the bin in one location. There was also litter on the footpath beside the bin, on the main road footpath.

You say that you meet once a week for a Tidy evening. We would think that, especially in summer time, this needs to be more regular. You do not say that you have any projects planned under this heading either.

There were some papers in the Famine Graveyard. There was a squashed plastic flowerpot and other litter on the footpath on this road also. The recycling area had quite an amount of litter under the bins, which looked poorly. There was also rubbish on top of the bins. The signage was quite grubby

### **Waste Minimisation:**

We are delighted that the school has the Green Flag, and are sharing their knowledge and experience with parents and others. Waste minimisation involves the prevention of waste 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 can also refer to the Race Against Waste booklet available from the Tidy Towns Unit of the Department of the Environment, Heritage, and Local Government.

You could increase your marks considerably in this section. 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 a local park. You can gain marks by doing some of these things for 2010.

**Tidiness:**

Generally, the village is not cluttered – in fact it is classically simple in form and treatment.

Generally, the road signs are in good order around the village, apart from the junction sign near the church which has been scrawled upon. The roads and verges are clean and weed free.

Your anti-dog fouling sign needs cleaning. The GAA/Community Hall boundary wall could do with repainting. The church could look brighter, also with a fresh coat of paint.

The old school house has a door and lower wall area badly in need of attention. The Green Flag at the school was a little torn, and there was a broken pillar at the school entrance.

The plethora of hanging baskets and signage, and on path objects at Langton's looks cluttered. Doyles had too many signs and lighting ,as well as a Christmas bell light. This took from what is otherwise a very well presented premises.

Some of the paving in the Green has become uneven.

The Ball Alley had a lot of graffiti. This was also commented upon by last year's adjudicator.

The seating and picnic table on the Green need new wooden parts, and we wondered what the purpose of the pole beside the seat was? It looked unfinished or decapitated!

You again refer to your Tidy evening, but again do not say you have any projects planned. We know that it is difficult with a small membership, but this is why we encourage you to find new members. Remember also that tidiness is about more than litter collection

**Residential Areas:**

Your houses are all looking well in the village and obviously everybody takes pride in the place. Your project here mentioned in relation to flower boxes "on the perimeters of the village" really belongs to the landscaping section. Your proposal is not focused on the topic either.

The small housing estate on the road beyond the turn to the Wells is very neat and tidy with a good grassy bank in front.

Willbrook Grove estate was finished well despite the fact that only two houses appear to have been built of 20 planned.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

The approach roads all looked well on adjudication day. As already commented upon, the signage is in good condition, and the verges were neat and weed free. It must be difficult to keep the main road litter free, given its heavy usage. You do not appear to have any proposed projects planned in this category.

The Tullamore and Mountmellick Roads sweep downhill into the village and afford lovely distant view of the village nestling in rolling countryside. Both approaches are very well cared for, given the amount of passing traffic. The stone wall and grassy areas on the Mountmellick approach were admired. The road from the south west is a very rural road with good local hedges, and the approach road towards the Catholic church is also very rural and unspoilt.

**General Impression:**

The general impression of the village is of a lovely village with a wonderful built environment and mature planting ,which needs more people time investment. It is an exceptional inheritance environmentally that will require on-going effort, which involves research, relating and actions.