

# Tidy Towns Competition 2012

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Owning** Ref: **402**  
County: **Kilkenny** Mark: **241**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **10/07/2012**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2011</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2012</b>
Overall Development Approach	50	0	25
The Built Environment	50	0	33
Landscaping	50	0	40
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	0	14
Litter Control	50	0	34
Tidiness	30	0	20
Waste Minimisation	20	0	4
Residential Areas	40	0	31
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	0	33
General Impression	10	0	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>241</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the filled up entry form. You did not include a map of the district which is useful for navigation of your area by the adjudicator.

It is strongly recommended that your committee could draw up a 3/5 year plan. The plan does not need to be an elaborate document. I suggest that a general meeting is the best way to approach the situation, and invite all the parishioners, clubs and organisations such as GAA club, Soccer Club, Macra Na Feirme, ICA and so on. If you simply write down all the suggestions put forward to make your place a better and safer place to live, then elect a committee and have a second meeting to refine the suggestions to practical goals, and that is your plan.

It is very important to have the parishioners informed of the plans and activities of the TidyTowns committee, and we find the best way of doing this is through the parish newsletter.

Later on you could have a meeting with Kilkenny County Council and establish if you are entitled to any support from the council.

Good to find you are getting support from the Credit Union and from fundraising.

We recommend that the TidyTowns committee have contact with the local school to assist the school in any way you can.

### The Built Environment:

There is very low density development across Owning consisting mainly of farmhouses and out buildings around the outskirts of the village, and there is limited commercial development. Anthony's bar is well presented. The school is well maintained and there appeared to be some works taking place at the back of it, a good size car park is at the back of the school. The Catholic Church is splendid with the lovely wall outside and I felt that this wall could be further enhanced by the growing of a creeper shrub on the outside. The rings

for tying horses long ago are great historical objects attached to the church wall. I admired the two substantial gates outside the church and at the entrance to the old graveyard.

Both of the graveyards are in splendid condition and a credit to the people of Owning. There is an old church ruin in the old graveyard and it is in need of attention. I advise you to contact the conservation officer at Kilkenny County Council and ask for advice as to what could be done with this quite historical monument. Owning Marion Hall 1988 is a well maintained faculty.

I was told by a local lady that the community of Owning are cutting the grass in the two graveyards and do not get any support from the County Council for so doing. In my view you are entitled to a maintenance grant for each graveyard from the Council, and you could contact sanitary services at the County Council about this.

### **Landscaping:**

There is quite nice landscaping at Connell's cross with a good selection of shrubs and flowers and I admired the roses in the centre, and there is a small attractive stone with the lettering Owning Mellac and I understand this means twinned with Mellac. This area gives a nice welcome effect to the village. There is also good landscaping outside the community hall. The householders in the village have a distinct pride of place attitude to their village as they present nice displays of shrubs, flowers, lawns and trees outside and around their homes.

Two small tubs of flowers outside an entrance to a farmer's field stood out.

There is a good selection of trees at the back of the school, notably birch. Some other fine mature trees are in the village and I liked the one outside the Catholic Church.

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

You have drawn lines through this category in the entry form. There is an abundance of wildlife here in Owning as there is in all similar villages around Ireland. You could form a sub-committee and get people involved that are interested in wildlife matters. For a start it could be interesting to establish what wildlife is in the area, and this maybe could be done through the school. Now I am aware that the teachers and management of the school have plenty to be doing, but perhaps you could have a meeting with the principal teacher and discuss the matter there. In other areas the committee work in co-operation with the school with many issues, and sponsor little competitions like an art competition or an essay competition where the children write an essay and tell us all about the wildlife around their homes. It could also be interesting if bird boxes and butterfly boxes were erected at the back of the school where the children could get a closer look at the birds and butterflies at different times of the year, and this could be done from your finances.

### **Litter Control:**

The district was neat and tidy with the litter fairly well controlled. I inspected the recycling bins at the community hall and the bins were tidy in a nice setting, but unfortunately the four bins were full up completely and this meant that some bottles were left on the ground. I was informed by a local person that of late the bins are not emptied on a regular basis and were left full for a long time? The clothes bin was well serviced. Do you take part in the national spring clean-up? This is a great initiative run by An Taisce in conjunction with the County Council, in which litter pickers, segregation bags and gloves are provided free. Details of this scheme are available from the County Council.

### **Tidiness:**

The main issue with tidiness concerns the site across from the school where lots of builders material was strewn about, and the area was overgrown and ugly looking by the side of the roads with lots of tall vegetation. There are the remains of a stone wall along outside, and you could bring the condition of this site to the attention of Kilkenny County Council who have certain powers over dereliction etc.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

I parked my car outside the Catholic Church and immediately saw a notice nailed on the old prominent tree that read something like "keep the bags covered". I looked under the cover to find that there were five bags of what looked like household waste. A short time later a lorry came along and picked up the waste and drove off. Sometime later again, a man came up and tidied up the plastic sheets and maybe took them away. It appeared to me that some people leave the waste at this spot for collection outside the church, perhaps on a Tuesday? In my view this should not be tolerated and I do not know why it is happening as there appeared to be the normal household bins outside some other houses.

I am wondering if the school is involved in the green flag programmes and you could enquire about this as these green initiatives are wonderful for the children who nowadays are able to teach their parents how best to look after the local environment from what they are learning at school.

**Residential Areas:**

There are some really beautiful houses in the village and the people look after their homes very well. There are a few older sheds on the side of the road going out to the graveyard that need a freshening up to improve the aesthetics of this lovely district.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

The roads surfaces are in good condition. The nice grassed area at Connell's cross give good views for the drivers approaching this junction.

I approached the village from Carrick on Suir and as there was no signpost for the village, I only realised I was in the village when I saw the notice board over the community hall. There are good signposts for Owing on the approaches on Pilltown and Windgap roads with nice raised stone flower beds. Perhaps the county council could consider the putting in place of a few more signs?

**General Impression:**

I appreciate the fact that your committee are doing your best for this village. However I did find some issues that are out of your control but you could follow them up with the relevant authorities and see what could be done. I think you really need some work to be done on a Fás scheme to help out with the fine work you are doing yourselves.