

# Tidy Towns Competition 2014

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kilmeague** Ref: **300**  
County: **Kildare** Mark: **200**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **24/06/2014**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2014</b>
Community Involvement & Planning	60	38
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	28
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	25
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	15
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	8
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	42
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	21
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	23
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>200</b>

### Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2014 and we note that your last participation was in 2006. As no doubt you have noticed, the competition has changed since then with the addition of new criteria and in fact some of these changes apply for 2014. We have noted that your committee of eight people hold monthly meetings throughout the year and you have strong links with local businesses and have the support of Kildare County Council for an environmental project by consultants. The involvement with local schools is commendable. Many thanks for attaching a sketch map of the area. Please consider the preparation of a 3 year plan by identifying suitable projects under the eight criteria of the competition and deciding on phasing of their implementation. This would help you to get sponsorship. We are pleased that you find the competition useful as a focus in making Kilmeague cleaner and more presentable.

### Built Environment and Streetscape / An Timpeallacht Thógtha agus Sráid-dreacha:

The visitor is forced to slow down when passing through Kilmeague because of the sharp bend on the main thoroughfare. This does help people to take in the view of the buildings. We admired the colourful building from Eleson's down to Colm Coffey Butchers on the corner as well as Cill Dara Betting on the other corner. Others premises such as Talking Head, Ali's Montessori and the other private houses all looked well. The old church on the side of The Hill is an important part of your heritage and it is good to see it being maintained. The grounds have nice mature trees, the sign needs cleaning, entrance gate needs to be refitted and cleaned and some weeds in the gutters of the church need attention. The boundary wall was painted and a planting strip maintained on the outside.

### Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The main structural elements in the landscape are trees and while you have some good examples in Kilmeague, you have plenty of scope for further planting. We advise that it is best to use a single species on a road or street for uniformity and in your rural location the most appropriate types are native or naturalized species rather than exotic species such as flowering cherries. Also, it is important to ensure that the base of new trees is maintained free of weeds and grass and also flower beds to ensure early establishment. In that regard, we thought it a good idea to plant under the finger post signs as you have done; it also reduces the amount of clutter. When trees are established it is important to remove the stakes as the stems can get damaged from the ties or stake and this mentioned again under Residential Streets & Housing Areas below. Guideline for plant containers is to use them only where planting directly into the ground is not possible. Therefore, plant containers on grassed areas make little sense. The use of permanent planting is encouraged rather than relying on annuals which are more time consuming.

### **Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fiadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádúrtha:**

We note the attached report by Flynn, Furney, Environmental Consultants which included a tree and hedgerow survey, field trip and some tree planting. As no doubt you appreciate, there a rich natural area surrounding your community and it is important to promote an awareness of its many traits and to map these habitats. Appreciating your local wildlife resources is vital in order to achieve under this category. In this regard researching and raising awareness is more important than 'doing' at the early stages. Biodiversity is under threat globally and sadly Ireland is a part of this trend. Habitats of value include specimen trees, hedgerows, treelines, streams, woodlands and wetlands. List the plants and animals to be found in your natural environment and recognise their significance (native, protected, or alien invasive?). In particular, it is important to recognise invasive species and obtain advice on how best to remove them from your area without causing them to spread further.

### **Sustainable Waste and Resource Management / Bainistiú Acmhainní agus Dramhaíola Inbhuanaithe:**

This category is becoming more and more important and the available marks are now increased to 50 to highlight the need for communities to address the issues involved in tackling the growing waste mountain that is creating problems of pollution, unwanted land use, and the use of dwindling resources. We note that you do not have any actions listed under this heading and therefore suggest that there are a number of measures that your village can take in regard to sustainability. Contact your waste contractors and try to find out what is being thrown away and armed with this information you can start to think about how waste can be reduced. Examine the waste pyramid and note the recycling is only the fourth most preferred option after avoidance, reducing and re-using. One third of our waste is organic in nature, such as grass clippings. You can avoid collecting mown grass by more frequent cutting and using mulching mowers which shred the clippings and facilitate faster decomposition. In regard to water usage, self-watering hanging baskets are a help in reducing the amount of water used and also the task of watering. Other waste minimisation projects might include working with retailers to cut down on packaging, reminding people to re-use shopping bags, discouraging junk mail, encouraging the re-use of water bottles and coffee mugs at school and at work. In response to an over use of chemicals for weed control, many useful products of the past are no longer available and therefore communities are encouraged to use other means such as hoeing to maintain weeds. In some cases, allowing wildflowers to develop is an acceptable alternative. These activities will highlight the fact that you are focussing on this category and when you develop more projects in the future your marks will increase

### **Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:**

Projects listed under this heading include painting of the health board clinic and boundary wall and that you are awaiting permission to paint an ESB power box at Bodkin Heights. Back Lane had debris and lots of litter. Graffiti was noted on the ESB box in Church View estate. Some litter and weeds was evident in some residential estates mentioned below.

### **Residential Streets & Housing Areas / Sráideanna Cónaithe & Ceantair Tithíochta:**

In general, the residential estates in Kilmeague were well presented. Allen Manor estate is quite spacious with plenty of trees and grass and a nice name stone with some planting. A small amount of litter and graffiti was noted here. Castlebawn has good trees but the ties should be checked to prevent them from causing damage to tree stems. Houses are well kept and we suggest there is scope for hedges in private gardens. We liked the large maple trees at the entrance to Oaklawns estate and the fine feature planting. Roses on the screen wall are doing a fine job. Some weeds at the kerbs. Church View estate is quite large where there is room for landscape improvement. The grass needs cutting, dead trees need to be removed and there is scope for further greening within private gardens. Some litter noted here. We noted the sculpture. The elaborate tree guard and stakes on some trees should not be necessary at this stage. The small Tower View had a small amount of litter and weeds at the kerb. The grass margins were well cut. The new buildings of Preston Close looked well as did the planting outside them. At Preston Heights, the well-kept houses were overshadowed by weeds, dumped grass, overgrown planting and some weeds in the gutters. In one estate we noted the use of Photinia 'Red Robin' planted in a margin and wish to advise that this species will not work as a street tree because its stem will not be able to support the crown. It is best grown as a shrub.

### **Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes / Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna & Lánaí:**

We note that you are working in conjunction with Kildare Co. Co. to clear some untidy areas and commend you for this work. The various signs in Kilmeague were clean and make a good impression and road surfaces and footpaths were generally very good