

# Tidy Towns Competition 2015

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kildorrery** Ref: **457**  
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **297**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **19/06/2015**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2014</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2015</b>
Community Involvement & Planning	60	40	41
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	38	40
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	40	42
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	30	31
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	15	16
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	60	62
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	28	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	34	35
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>297</b>

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

Our visit to Kildorrery was a most pleasant one, especially as it was our first time, so in welcoming you to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2015, we are also welcoming ourselves. Your application was accompanied by plenty of material but we do advise that less can be more. In that regard, it is not necessary to attach details of rotas, paper clippings from newspapers or newsletters. It is quite sufficient to tell us about your activities and to include some pictures but please cut down on paper as much as you can. Last year's adjudicator advised reducing the size of pictures and we agree with that as well as reducing font size in some cases. Your committee of 20 members appear to have done a wonderful job in improving your community so well done. We note your focus has three headings, community awareness, maintenance and long term development and this seems a good strategy. You have strong links with residents, voluntary groups and we note that a member is assigned to work with a youth programme. You receive support from local businesses and public bodies. The use of Facebook, monthly newsletter etc., are your means of communication. Many thanks for attaching a map of the area with project locations marked for our attention and some photographs. While we found the map useful, project number 3 could not be located. Also, some projects were difficult to find because they are not marked on site, for example Gate's Meadow and Gate's House. Please make the map larger next time and the legend with a small description can be on a separate page if necessary. These suggestions if implemented would make it easier for adjudicators especially during the site visit.

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

We were pleasantly surprised to see so many well painted buildings everywhere we visited in the town and we know from the pictures that this has not happened overnight; they are the product of previous years' work. The water tower dominates the townscape could this be an opportunity for an art feature? The older houses on the left were noted, especially one with plenty of roses; we suggest more of the same. The Topaz Service Station, Centra and O'Sullivan's Coaches were clean and tidy. There was no litter. The large expanse of hard surface in this area could be softened with some trees. Main Street has a good road surface and the houses look well. The concrete footpaths look well and the buildings painted. No weeds on the gutters or chimneys and no litter to be seen. Overhead wires are unsightly, especially when everything else looks so well. Despite several premises being vacant and for sale, they are all in good condition. The Hornbeam trees look well – the tall mobile phone mast overshadows the nice streetscape. The Community Office with the Thatch and Thyme Restaurant was splendid. It is great to see this restored building serving a useful purpose. The before and after pictures gave us an idea of the extent of work involved here and in the rear garden, arch and car park. We admired the small garden at the rear leading to the car park. To the left of the Community Office, the house and gate were well painted. Thornhill premises were well presented. The restored thatched house on the Mitchelstown Road is a nice feature. Does it have a name? St. Bartholomew's Church is well painted and has good planting at the Calvary and at the Priest's

House. We liked the two Horse Chestnut Trees in the front. The rear of the church needs painting; perhaps that is for 2016. The creamery was well painted and restored and the car park had a good tarmac surface. Some softening would reduce the hard impact of this area. The cart and churns here and the mural were noted. The school was a delight, very clean. There were fine trees on the boundary and the planting in containers outside looked well. There was one activity flag and one green flag. The cemetery boundary had a nice stone wall and it is well maintained. The gravel paths were noted as were the newly planted trees. The GAA has a fine entrance with its stone wall boundary. The extensive car park has a poor surface and could do with some softening. The colourful playground beside the school and the new grotto was not on the map. Walsh's premises was very good. The Post Office looked fine. There is a nice planting in the front and a stone wall.

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

The main structural elements in the landscape are trees and you have many good examples on the various approach roads and surrounding landscape. It is clear that you have received expert advice in regard to the choice of trees. Very few Irish towns have such good specimen trees on their approach. In planting new trees it is best to use a single species on a road or street for uniformity and in general, this has been your approach. We admired the Hornbeam trees in the streets will form excellent specimens in years to come. The specimens in some other streets need to be re-examined and perhaps replaced with more upright species suited to their location. We admired the yew hedge on the Fermoy Road on the boundary of the Irish Tree Centre. The nursery planting there also pleased and added to the town's environment. Planting schemes on the approach roads where the focus is on perennial species were very pleasing. Well done to so many for adding ornamentation of hanging baskets and window boxes to their houses. The Community garden at Oak Lawn is an excellent facility and is well used and we enjoyed the garden at the Thatch and Thyme.

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

Projects listed under this heading include the Heritage and Wildlife Trail, the pheasant project, the bug hotels and how the trout anglers are caring for the waters of the Funcheon River. The wildlife signs were of a very good standard. Gate's Meadow is a wonderful resource, especially for its collection of oak trees; we also saw a Castanea specimen. The meadow is mostly grass, we saw one Ragged Robin, and more wildflowers would be welcome. The mound on the roadside hides this meadow from passers-by. The information on ringforts was very good. You have 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?). This would be a very useful annual project for schools. Is the playground part of a town park with a focus on nature?

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

This category is becoming more and more important 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. Well done to the students and teachers of the National School for achieving its 3rd green flag. The well-planted Community garden was admired and we noted the use of water butts for the plants there. We note your promotion of environmental awareness through the website and the advice received from Dr. Mary Stack of Cork County Council. There are a number of other measures that you can take in regard to sustainability. For example the recycling banks are located at the GAA grounds. Your waste contractors can inform you on how much waste is being recycled. 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:**

Actions listed under this heading include regular weeding at the base of walls and kerbs and maintenance of notice boards, power washing of walls and signs. Congratulations on being the outright winners in the County Litter Challenge last year. You have excelled in this regard as we saw little evidence of litter in Kildorrery with the exception of the picnic area at the bridge on the Funcheon River on the Mitchelstown Road. There was some litter in the bin and in the adjacent field. May we suggest the use of litter bins with covers that cannot be accessed by birds? There are steps to access this facility but a ramp near the bridge would be more inviting. Signs throughout the town were clean.

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

Hillcrest estate was very clean and tidy; the entrance sign at the wall and the wall on the left was very good. The

planting on the right was to a high standard. The houses were well painted; they could do with more hedges and trees on the open space. We suggest planting climbing plants such as ivy against the concrete wall on the open space. Oaklawn housing estate had no weeds and no litter. It has fine trees and nice seats and well planted flower beds. Bearn Deara estate has attractive housing. We suggest the planting of climbing plants on the approach walls to soften the impact. The trees here are mixed species; one type would be much better. The gardens have room for more planting such as shrubs or hedges. The planting on the corner of the open space needs to be infilled and tidied. Upon leaving here we admired the lovely view of the surrounding hills.

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

There is a wonderful feature at the Farahy Road approach it is well-maintained and we liked the interesting displays of farm implements. The signs here were clean. The information signs here are to a very high standard; we enjoyed reading about the history of Cow & Gate. There are very good seats here and a great selection of trees especially oaks, Hornbeam and Maple. No weeds or litter were to be seen. We liked the idea of the grass mounds. The displays of creamery cans are well done and thank you for not putting flowers in them. The Salvia and other plants here looked very well. Mitchelstown Road has fine specimens of oak, Hornbeam and a Beech tree. There is a good sensitive approach to maintenance, nice to see clover. Irish Tree Centre sign had barrels were the subject of last year's comments. They are not very conspicuous but some climbing plants would hide them further. The flowers beneath the sign are not in scale with the surroundings. Hydrangea and Prunus ottoluyken are planted in sequence on this road. The Hydrangea will make a great display in the summer and the rose beds will look great also. All was clean and tidy and no litter to be seen and more important again, no overuse of weedkiller. The road and the paving was very good and the signs were clean. A finger post sign for Gate's Meadow would help to locate it – it is hidden from view as you pass by. We noted the street trees and the hanging baskets on the Limerick Road. A few houses here need attention.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

You have a wonderful community. the approach is very special compared with many other entries in this competition. The fine tree specimens are a particular feature combined with others. The buildings are very well maintained. those are items that stand out from our visit. Well done to all concerned for this marvellous effort.