

Tidy Towns Competition 2015

Adjudication Report

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| Centre: Killeigh | Ref: 596 |
| County: Offaly | Mark: 246 |
| Category: A | Date(s): 20/06/2015 |

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2015 |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Community Involvement & Planning | 60 | 31 |
| Built Environment and Streetscape | 50 | 38 |
| Landscaping and Open Spaces | 50 | 40 |
| Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities | 50 | 16 |
| Sustainable Waste and Resource Management | 50 | 9 |
| Tidiness and Litter Control | 90 | 45 |
| Residential Streets & Housing Areas | 50 | 32 |
| Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes | 50 | 35 |
| TOTAL MARK | 450 | 246 |

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Killeigh Residents Development Association is welcomed back to the SuperValu TidyTowns 2015 after a break of one year. It is great to have you back in the competition and we hope that your participation helps you in your efforts to improve the living experience in your village. Thank you for your completed entry form and for your simple map that meets the adjudicator's requirements. You leave two of the sections of the entry form without any comment. Those two sections are the ones that groups find most challenging so do not give lose heart if you too find them difficult. You are not alone. You keep the community informed as to your activities, very important. The adjudicator would love to hear more about how the public area enhancement scheme assisted your work. Give more information next year also on the Municipal Community Grant, how much was involved and what was done with the money. You state that the competition incentivises you to maintain the village to a high standard and to plan your projects, very important motives for being involved. Keep up the good work now that you are back on the saddle again.

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

This beautiful and historic village was a joy to visit. The adjudicator feels that your submission had not done it justice. The map needed to show a lot more detail to ensure that nothing was missed. The information panel in the Green illustrated how much history there is attached to the little place. The information panel on Mick the Miller gave a wonderful cameo of the local background to this famous dog. Then one witnesses the fabulous walls by sneaking a glimpse of some of the backs of the buildings on the street, that wonderful coach entrance at the wing of the Church of Ireland, the cemetery down there, the nicely softened walls of the ball alley, and the walk to the Seven Holy Wells that did not get a mention on your map. The Seven Wells is a humbling site where one experiences the devotion of so many. The information panel here is wonderful and the use of the Gaeilge as in Crann na gceirteacha lifted the heart of the adjudicator. But this is a living village and Gormans is buzzing and looks beautiful, it is a pity about the village store but across the road the modern Church is a wonderful building, the accompanying car park a testament to the use that is made of it, the GAA dressing rooms are necessary part of the built environment judging by the activity out on the field, the appearance of the school surely reflects the vibrant nature of this vibrant community. This is a worthwhile visit. The discovery of the famine graveyard further adds to the antiquity of this village.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

On arrival the trees, the majestic tress, so many specimen trees made an immediate impact. They are on the Green, they are on the roadside but they are also flourishing inside the walls of so many households. Those private trees tell us that those residences have been in situ for many years. We know that this is no 'Johnny built lately' of a

village but a village steeped in history and steeped in lore. A project for you is to do an audit of these trees, both private and public. What a challenging and exciting prospect that would be. Please do not take them for granted. They are an important element of your rich inheritance. They are also a responsibility but they need care and they need to be replaced from time to time. The occasional hanging baskets and window boxes or the occasional tubs of plants are important. One loved the use of the troughs as containers for the summer bedding. There was no mention of the cemetery under the built environment because the adjudicator wanted to highlight the landscaping that resulted from the road realignment at the cemetery. Beautiful and so well maintained. There are lovely examples of imaginative use of shrubs and floral displays around the village. An example is at the junction where that Georgian house stands with its fanlight window. But be restrained in your use of weedkiller. Out that road, which is not named on the map, there is a divine curved bed of flowers, beautiful. Well done to somebody. There is a lovely bed across from the school but the flat stoned retainer is in need of maintenance. The adjudicator wondered how those two delightful jugs dressed in summer colour survive greedy hands. The wall in the Church grounds at the rear of the garage has been beautifully camouflaged with the pyracantha, the clematis and the cotoneaster.

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

What a pity that your submission left this section blank. There were two things that struck the adjudicator as the basis for expansion in this section. The walkway down to the Seven Wells is a nature walk. Learn more about that. Then among the delights experienced down at the Seven Wells was the sight of the apiary in the neighbouring field. These were the first beehives the adjudicator came across in Offaly. Talk to the beekeeper and find out what contribution these bees are making to growth in Killeigh. Would that every village and town would lead the adjudicator to an apiary. The adjudicator is somewhat bothered that the hawthorn hedge in the Church yard has been trimmed out of season.

Sustainable Waste and Resource Management / Bainistiú Acmhainní agus Dramhaíola Inbhuanaíthe:

It appears that you have not got around to this section of the competition as yet. A pity but understandable too. You could mention the Green Flag at the school in your submission. And those Green Flags were waving proudly in the June breeze. That gains marks because all of the modules for achieving Green Flag status relate to sustainable living. The adjudicator urges you to read the latest Tidy Towns handbook update which is now much more user friendly and suggests many tangible projects that appeal to groups. There must be recycling activity in the Killeigh area that could have been mentioned under the sustainability section. Have a go.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The greatest challenge to the tidiness of Killeigh is the ceaseless traffic. It is relentless. Thankfully there are traffic calming measures and there is a vital and well placed pedestrian crossing. If there were speed displays at both sides of the village they might help the guilty to slow down, out of respect for the locals, much of whose life is lived on those few hundred yards of street. The wide parking spaces on the street are also vital to the safety of users of the shops. The road markings give a tidy appearance to the village as does the appearance of the park. You are correct about the need for that fence. The present fence detracts from the august surroundings. A bad gate or a premises that needs a coat of paint also detract from the appearance of your village. A garage can often be a challenge to the Tidy Towns group but in this case one must compliment the proprietor. That long stretch of footpath on the Mountmellick approach road helps the appearance of the village as well as being of importance to the pedestrians. The condition of a few signs offend. One of the signs pointing to the Seven Wells needs a bit of a wash badly. Beware of weeds growing along the kerb in the vicinity of the school. All of the bins in the Green were full at around one o'clock in the day. That situation prompts the question how often is the rubbish collected. The Green is the greatest litter black spot in the village. Well done on your litter picks but it is clear that more is necessary. Other than that area the rest of the village escapes the wrath of the adjudicator.

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

There are a number of eras of house buildings evident in the village. That means that the residences on the streets, which generally date from the last two centuries are special gems. These retain that distinctive noble character in the attention to maintenance whether the finish be of dash or of cut limestone. It is most likely that what was once the local forge is now home to people. The front is a delight. The more modern houses also are charming. The group of houses that are set back from the road about a mile from the village with a grassed area in front are a charm. Another beautiful cluster of houses sit behind the Green and their little enclave will be further improved by your fence. There may be a few sites vacant in Millbrook Grove and the road may be awaiting a tar macadam coat but those residents who have built and made their homes here are creating a residential haven.

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

The trees beckon one into the village ever before one arrives. As the main road is a busy road the surface is in good order. Walls help create the personality of the village as one approaches. Pay attention to grass margins as first impressions are hard to shake. Well done to the residents on the approach roads who add to the village colour with the quality of the presentation of their homes, the landscaping and the care of the patch outside the front. Thankfully there are traffic calming measures. The mowing along the cemetery wall adds to the respectful appearance of the area. One feels that the grass across the road should be mown also.

Concluding Remarks:

The adjudicator really enjoyed the visit to Killeigh, an unexpected enjoyment. The map suggested that there would be very little to enthuse over in this village. How misleading that map was. Your village centre is a joy to experience, to sit and take in the surroundings, not least of which is the panel on Mick the Miller.