

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kilcummin - Cill Chuimín** Ref: **1020**
County: **Kerry** Mark: **287**
Category: **B** Date(s): **25/06/2019**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2018	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	38	39
Streetscape & Public Places	60	37	38
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	37	38
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	29	30
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	15	16
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	59	60
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	31	32
TOTAL MARK	470	279	287

Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Kilcummin Cill Chuimín páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019.

Your committee of 15 members supported by another 20 volunteers is a great representation within the village. Ten meetings throughout the year is a high level of activity and you have links with residents, voluntary groups and schools. Many public bodies provide some assistance and we note Kilcummin Historical Group, Kerry Earth Education and St. Brendan's Trust among the list. The use of Facebook and weekly publications are your means of communication. Three national schools were involved in the planting of the Environmental Park. Many thanks for attaching a very detailed map of the area with project locations marked for our attention. We note you are delaying the preparation of a 3/5 year plan until the sewerage scheme is completed. However, we suggest that now is a good time to be thinking of projects that could be implemented as part of the completion of the sewerage scheme. No doubt, it will be disruptive, but during the reinstatement works there might be an opportunity for some areas to be improved in a manner that suits your community.

Streetscape & Public Places / Sráid-Dreach & Áiteanna Poiblí:

The Church of Our Lady of Lourdes and the Parish Centre are modern buildings which look very well in a landscaped setting of mature trees. The old stone wall boundary fronting the site with the road provides a contrasting visual appearance; it is great to see the traditional wall being retained. The Recreational Hall across the road from the church looks splendid and we note the paving matches that of the footpath and islands at the parking bays. Nearby, we admired the growth of ivy on a low wall boundary fronting the school and this successful planting was continued around the corner. The National School is a fine complex and there are trees in the grounds. The Care Facility is a fine complex to the side of the village. We greatly admired the façade of stone buildings facing the car park. The village centre is a junction of four roads with houses on some corners. The Post Office looks well with flower beds neat and tidy, but the post-box needs painting. On the opposite side of the junction, what looks like two large houses have a stone wall boundary and are framed with mature trees. A Monkey Puzzle tree dominates the view on a third corner of the junction within the grounds of another house, which is somewhat screened with a stone wall boundary and hedge growing on the inside. The Village Inn is a modern building with a large open car park that accommodates recycling bring banks. There are existing trees and hedges around the site, but it would be great to have this site improved with trees/hedges to help soften this extensive hard-surface area. This can be achieved in several ways, the simplest would be planting a hedge and trees along the front boundary with the road, defining the entrance. That would help to reduce the impact of the larger space. Other alternatives would be having the car park designed to include regulated parking spaces with spaces for trees. The Mass Rock identified by the cross erected in 1910 is a special place in your history; its importance is highlighted by the walled enclosure and well-maintained site. The old church being used for storage

is painted blue; some trees and shrubs in the grounds add softening. The GAA grounds is a fine complex that is clean and tidy and well-maintained. Some of the boundary is a green fence and the rest a concrete wall. We suggest the planting of a hedge inside the fence and some climbing plants such as ivy against the wall. Holy Cross Cemetery is relatively new and surrounded by mature trees. The front wall is well-painted, and the parking spaces are marked on the tarmac. In recent decades, there has been insufficient attention paid to planting trees in cemeteries and very often we see that all the space is used for graves. Older cemeteries usually had some trees, often yew trees. Since there is still quite an amount of space available in this cemetery, we suggest that trees be planted now, before it is too late. How about forming an avenue from the gate to the existing graves and dedicating a linear space of at least 3 metres on each side that would not be used for graves. The space beneath the trees could be grass or some ground cover shrubs. The walls around the cemetery could be softened by planting ivy at the base just as you have done around the school boundary.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The Village renewal project completed in recent years is very well done. Paving of Castlestone and concrete kerbs are very functional and attractive. The boundary wall at back of footpath is built with a concrete block wall faced in stone and is very well done. A beech hedge planted behind the wall is developing well. Oak trees planted behind the wall were a very good choice, but we wonder why flowering cherry trees (which are native to Japan) were included, unless the plan was to remove them as the oak trees matured. Last year's adjudicator referred to the overhead wire that may impact in time on the oak trees. We ask why this service was not placed underground when the paving was constructed and suspect that perhaps ducting is already in place and you are waiting for the utility company to come and do that work. We noted you have applied for funding to underground cabling. The Sorbus (Mountain Ash) trees planted on the islands are not doing well and we wonder about the preparation of the tree pit before they were planted. There may be an issue of compaction underground that is impacting on their roots. Please check the supporting stakes and ties because they should not be required after two years and if not attended to, can damage tree stems. If considering more seasonal flowers the use of permanent planting including herbaceous perennials for floral displays is encouraged rather than relying on annuals which are more time consuming.

Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality / An Dúlra agus an Bhithéagsúlacht i do cheantar:

The Environmental Park is being discussed under this heading because so many of its features are relevant to nature and biodiversity. We were very impressed with this unique amenity which provides a great variety of features, including wetlands coppicing, a herb/sensory garden. The interpretive information here is wonderful, advising about plant colours that are good for us and those which are poisonous – we saw the red Foxglove. Well done. The orchard looks well, and the apples were forming. The Willow structure must be a delight for children and the bug hotel provides for other interests. There are different styles of seats and the allotments section caught our eye. We wonder if the potato leaves had signs of blight – did you spray to protect them from the disease. The various trees here have established well, so we suggest that you should check the supporting stakes and ties as they should be removed before they cause damage to the tree stems. We saw some items nailed to trees and we advise not to do that; it causes damage to stems. The container decorated with bottle caps was a novel idea. This park being so close to the school is a wonderful outdoor classroom and the children are fortunate to have it on their doorstep. Well done.

It is important to remember 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. Habitats of value include specimen trees, hedgerows, treelines, streams, woodlands and wetlands. Try to list the plants and animals to be found there and recognise their significance (native, protected, or alien invasive?). This information can be fun to gather and can involve the schools or other interested parties. Raise awareness through holding events such as hedgerow walks or bat walks. Contact the Irish Wildlife Trust for more information.

Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:

This category is about tackling the growing waste mountain that is creating problems of pollution, unwanted land use, and the use of dwindling resources. It is a global and a local problem. To save the Earth we need to move quickly to a zero-waste society. Your village is playing its part by helping to manage the bring banks and having an annual clothing collection. We note that the national school has water butts for collection of rainwater for watering flowers and they engage in composting and segregation of litter and waste. The emphasis here really needs to be on reducing the volume of waste produced rather than recycling (which is taken for granted). At this level of the contest the adjudicator wants to see innovation in tackling bigger issues of food waste, plastic disposal and energy use. What are homes and businesses doing to tackle these?

There are several other measures that your town can take in regard to sustainability.

- Regarding water usage, self-watering hanging baskets are a help in reducing the amount of water used and also the task of watering.
- Reminding people to re-use shopping bags and encouraging the re-use of water bottles and coffee mugs at school and at work.

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. For more helpful tips and case studies from other Tidy Towns entrants please take a look at <http://localprevention.ie/tidy-towns/>

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Your actions under this heading include the annual clean-up and regular litter patrols involving the community and schools. Well done on this valuable contribution to community improvement. We are pleased to note that we found Kilcummin very clean and tidy, no dereliction and all signs were clean.

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

Private houses in and around Kilcummin are in good condition and well-maintained. The attractive Pairc Chuimin residential estate has the estate name in raised lettering on stone walls both sides of the entrance. This is very well done and a huge contrast with many other estates which have a name stone or indeed no identification at all. This is a large estate of two storey houses and a central open space; the standard of landscaping is very high. We admired the trees flanking the entrance and hedges in private gardens add softening. In Mountain View estate there are fine houses that are well-maintained. Some have trees and/or hedges in their gardens. There is great scope for more tree planting on the central open space houses painted.

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

The bilingual name stone on the approach from Killarney looks well, but the ground beneath looks quite bare. This area is very shaded from tall trees, which is great, so we don't suggest planting shrubs or flowers, but we wonder why there is no grass or native vegetation growing there. It looks like it is being sprayed with weed killer. Quite suddenly, the landscape changes and there are hard-surface parking bays with a footpath and several island extensions from the footpath in between. This looks very well, and the oak trees planted behind the wall will in time become an important landmarks for the village. A similar treatment was done beyond the national school and the design unifies the streetscape. The Boundary wall and gates of the Environment Park are high quality. A proposed footpath between the cemetery and post office is a good idea and would greatly improve that route for pedestrians.

Concluding Remarks:

You have a beautiful village and it is great that the village renewal programme has brought about several well-designed features. We hope this report provides some guidance for future projects.