

Tidy Towns Competition 2019

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kilcoole - Cill Chomhghaill** Ref: **1121**
County: **Wicklow** Mark: **256**
Category: **D** Date(s): **10/07/2019**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2018	Mark Awarded 2019
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	40	42
Streetscape & Public Places	60	35	37
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	35	36
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	21	23
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	9	10
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53	55
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	24	25
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	29	28
TOTAL MARK	470	246	256

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

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Kilcoole - Cill Chomhghaill páirt a ghlacadh i gComórtas Náisiúnta SuperValu na mBailte Slachtmhara 2019. Well done Keep Kilcoole Tidy you have a great number of volunteers working in your town. It is also clear that you have great cooperation with local businesses and agencies – both signs of great community spirit. I really enjoyed reading your Keep Kilcoole Tidy newsletter - this is very informative, many thanks for including it. What I like about the newsletter is how it informs new residents of Kilcoole who may not be aware of the treasures in the area such as your wonderful Walkways. This kind of inclusiveness and information is so important nowadays with so many people moved away from their home place and settled in new areas. Many thanks also for your very clear and concise entry form it was very helpfully laid out with clear numbers on the map that were very easily relatable back to the text.

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

Congratulations on your beautifully designed and presented heritage notice boards all around the village and what a good idea to have the beautiful artwork for these signs framed in a heritage room in your community centre – another example of inclusiveness and how you are encouraging a sense of ownership amongst all Kilcoole's residents both old and new. Your installation of the three new heritage plaques will add more to Kilcoole's story – make sure to include them in your entry form for next year's adjudicator to enjoy. Your Mass Path and Ballydonarea Loop Walks are fantastic projects – TidyTowns work at its best. Well done on completing these. Unfortunately, time did not allow this adjudicator to walk all of the walkways but I will be back another time!

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

This adjudicator has been to Kilcoole several times before but had no idea of the existence of the Rock. The views here are breath-taking and very inspirational – there's definitely something in the idea that this was what first attracted Kilcoole's first residents. A more visible sign on the main street perhaps is needed to guide the visitor street just to make sure nobody misses this wonderful spot! The management of the grassy area on the way up to the rock as a meadow is a nice touch – just make sure to manage like a hay meadow with its first cut in early July, lift the cuttings and then a final cut again in September. This management will reap many wildflower rewards for little outlay. The old church dedicated to St. Mary is a little heritage gem hidden away into the ancient history of your area. It's a shame the visitor can't access it easily, there was a padlock on the gate of the house where the key is kept, not to mention off-putting signs about guard dogs! The pathway leading from St. Mary's to the Rock and on into the centre of the village points to an ancient history in the area. Such a path could form part of another lovely Kilcoole walking trail. The path needs resurfacing as you probably know but this would be a worthwhile project. This

adjudicator found the path by chance so a few more finger signs would be worthwhile. The blocked Old Road leading from the centre of the village to St. Mary's church is a bit unsightly now with a lot of herbicide used but there is potential to make something of this sunny little spot with some benches and pots filled with pollinator-friendly colourful perennials perhaps?

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

Your pollination garden is beautiful and it smelled divine an adjudication day! Your choice of plant species is good with plants of interest for both insects and birds. Well done on the completion of your scientific study of the Kilcoole Stream. This is a great piece of research to have organised and will hopefully inspire many future projects in Kilcoole as well as the conservation of your precious water heritage. The grassland management down at the railway station car park is great with a lovely grassland meadow and a nice neat mown edge. You have installed 20 bird boxes, a big number. Their installation will hopefully increase local knowledge about birds. Make sure to link in with your near neighbours in Birdwatch Ireland and run some bird events along these walks – they make lovely community get-togethers.

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

Your school polytunnel looks fantastic in the photo. This is a very worthwhile project with which to engage the local school. Lots more work can now be done on onto the future in this category which can be broken down into its different sections of waste, water, energy and transport. Seek help from local experts and have a few community talks and events to raise awareness as lots can be done here. Check out <https://localprevention.ie/tidy-towns/> for lots more helpful ideas.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Well done to all the volunteers who work hard keeping Kilcoole clear of litter. It looked well on adjudication day with just a few blemishes which unfortunately happen when a busy road passes through your village. It was good to see that you participated in the Pure Mile programme this year. This project is a great concept and a nice one to latch onto. Indeed, you are spoilt for choice as to which mile to enter into the competition in Kilcoole!

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

An audit of trees might be worthwhile here in the housing estates of Kilcoole as some areas had great trees while others need to be replaced. Keep up your communications with the various Residents Association as this is always worthwhile and will lead to good cooperation over the years.

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

I am docking one mark in this section for herbicide use on grass verges. It is unnecessary management - a strip of green grass sits far more easily on the eye than a strip of dead brown grass. Also there is not much point in putting effort into pollinator-friendly projects if you are using herbicide in the same area which is poisoning the pollinator species. The way forward will have to involve looking at our landscape in a different way and realising that the odd plant out of place is alright and the use of poisons in our environment is not alright as the plummeting numbers of our pollinator species demonstrates. Please have a look at the community version of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan freely downloadable at www.pollinators.ie/resources for more advice on this topic.

Concluding Remarks:

Kilcoole clearly has a strong community spirit and you have achieved much in your area. I look forward to a return visit to walk the full lengths your lovely walkways. Keep up your good work and use the resources mentioned above to guide you in your activities – there's lots of good advice for community groups now because the authorities amongst others now recognise how important your work is!