

# Tidy Towns Competition 2015

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Killashee** Ref: **1379**  
County: **Longford** Mark: **231**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **19/06/2015**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2014</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2015</b>
Community Involvement & Planning	60	28	29
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	28	29
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	31	33
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	22	23
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	10	11
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	54	53
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	26	27
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	25	26
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>231</b>

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

Ta Fáilte Romhat Cill na Sidhe (or as a second blue village sign states 'Cill na Sí' – it would be good to coordinate spellings)! Welcome Killashee to the Super Valu 2015 National Tidy Towns competition. We note that you meet monthly with more regular meetings for officers. You mention that this is to ensure that the plan of work is adhered to and to deal with any emerging issues and queries. It is good to deal with issues before they become problems. However, we do not appear to have received any plan from you. Last year's adjudicator thanked you for your village enhancement plan which was spearheaded by your own group. However we note that this plan is now complete. We would encourage you to submit a Tidy Towns plan - a three or five-year plan will focus your mind on what you can hope to achieve - no matter how simple a plan it is. A plan need not be prepared professionally, but you should consult locally in preparing such a plan. You should also consider any statutory and non-statutory plans applicable to Killashee in drawing up your work programme. Please refer to the Tidy Towns Handbook for advice in relation to the preparation of a plan. It is good to prepare the plan under the adjudication category headings. It is essential to progress in the competition and to gain extra marks under this particular category that you submit such a plan in 2016. Failing to submit a plan causes loss of marks in this category.

In your Entry Form you list only three groups who assist you - namely the local authority, FÁS and TÚS. Perhaps you can look at the possibility of obtaining additional assistance in 2016 from other agencies and bodies. The Tidy Towns Handbook and other Tidy Towns committees could give you some ideas as to where you might seek more help/funding.

Your communication is via Facebook, the local newspaper and the church newsletter. This is good - as it covers all age groups. We hope that you also circulate local minority churches. We are glad to hear that the children participate in supervised litter picks. Well done to the school who have recently been awarded their second Green Flag. You are relatively new participants in the competition having entered for the last five years. We are happy to hear that the 'aesthetics of the village and its environs have much improved' in that period. Thank you for your clear map which numbered the various projects sequentially corresponding to the entry form numbers. Thank you for taking this entry form guidance 'on board.' It makes the work of the adjudicator easier.

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

You list three projects under this category heading. We looked at each. We are glad that businesses are cooperating in maintaining their premises. Keep maintaining and improving stone walls in your vicinity using lime mortar as traditional mortaring material where necessary.

The school Scoil Naomh Earnain was well presented with a good 1958 Irish sign. There were two flagpoles at the

school - one with a Green Flag and the other pole awaiting its new Green Flag! The Health Centre wall would benefit from power washing and some planting. Both churches were well presented. The vast surfaced area in the forecourt of the Catholic Church requires resurfacing, but would also benefit from the breaking up of the hard surface area through landscaping. The wall (into which the stone Killashee bilingual sign is inserted) at the same church requires painting. This faces incoming traffic on the Longford approach and is therefore important as a first impression area.

The Chestnut Tree Bar and adjacent premises - together with their surrounding site were very well presented, and are a great introduction to the village as one approaches from Longford. Magan's is likewise well presented, although the disused and worn petrol pump on the footpath outside the premises detracts. The striking red village pump looked magnificent in its well-tended surrounds. The weighbridge in the footpath is an important part of your built heritage and is in great condition.

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

Planting 13 native trees and fruit trees as well as 48 native shrubs shows commitment to maintaining the landscape of your village. We admired all the trees. Well done on the other projects undertaken under this category also. It would be nice to see a photograph of your spring daffodil planting. The green areas around the village are well maintained. The plastic flower pots on the lovely stone bridge looked somewhat incongruous and out of place - despite their bright colours - as this is a rural canal-side area and pots look quite 'urban'. Any planting at this location should be in the soil for sustainability, visual, and water conservation purposes. We also thought that the concrete circular pot (near the Killashee Village information board at the Green detracted from the lovely rural aspect of this area. The shrub bed at the entrance to the village from the Longford side (as one turns the corner beyond the Chestnut Tree Bar) looked really well, as did the magnificently landscaped N63 directional sign area - which really catches the eye. We really liked the amazing display of pale yellow roses near Magan's. Keep to sustainable planting of native trees and shrubs in the soil and you will retain the landscape character of the village.

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

Some of the landscaping which you have carried out involves planting species to attract bees and other wildlife. Well done on contacting the Heritage Officer in your local authority with regard to the carrying out of a biodiversity study. We hope to hear about progress with this plan in 2016. Birdfeeders around the school are an encouragement to the children to develop an interest in birdlife. You might read the Tidy Towns Handbook which is quite detailed on this category. The Heritage Council's 'Wildlife in Towns and Villages' booklet is also a useful resource. Last year's adjudicator commented on the use of weed killer in a number of areas in your village, and generally you have taken this on board in 2015.

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

It would appear that you are not going to have recycling facilities in the village. Is there any plan in place to assist people who do not have transport to access recycling in the adjacent centres? Remember however that recycling is only part of sustainable waste and resource management. Your car boot sale is a good example of resource management, and it also provides you with some funding. We are sure you will enjoy your new Christmas tree this year - which has now become part of your planted environment. Good luck with your plans to install a water butt. We noticed solar powered school signs. Have you looked at the Tidy Towns publication in relation to Sustainable Waste and Resource Management - the updated version sent to you as an updated section of the Tidy Towns Handbook? Have you considered trying to organise a community Sustainable Waste and Resource Management seminar or talk? Your local authority County Environmental Awareness Officer would be a good person to contact for advice. You could increase your marks in this category as a community by taking on board some of the suggested projects in the publication mentioned above.

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

You mention washing down signage under the Built Environment category but we credit it here. However we saw some dirty signage remaining (see Approach Roads category below). We congratulate the children on their efforts with litter picking. Your weekly litter patrols appear to be providing good results. You have also been meticulous in removing advertising posters.

The site opposite the Chestnut Tree Bar looks very poorly, and should - if at all possible - be screened or grassed - with hedging planted along the old timber fencing. The site is weedy and also contained a small amount of litter. The potted evergreen planting along the footpath outside this site does nothing to ameliorate its poor presentation - if anything it possibly draws attention to it. Evergreen planting is not as suitable for attracting wildlife as deciduous planting. These pots are also an obstruction along the footpath.

Around the canal bridge there is quite an amount of untidiness. A black creosote fence was in a poor state of repair and requires re-painting. The area around it is very weedy. It also has some fly posting attached. By contrast the Royal Blue Way/Waterways Ireland/Longford Tourism sign is bright and new. This is one of the projects you list under 'Built Environment.' The roadside margins along and near the bridge need weeding in places. On the opposite side an unpainted field gate and weedy recessed area looked poorly. We noticed a few small pieces of litter hereabouts. A Longford county council site notice sign from 2012 in relation to cycle ways is torn and out-of-date and should be removed. There was a fly post on an electricity pole. A sandwich board was placed underneath the village sign on this approach road and also under the directional canal signposts on the opposite side of the road at the bridge. Another sandwich board was observed fixed with concrete blocks in front of a house opposite the bridge

on the roadside edge. A black and yellow barrier beside the canal requires repainting. The generic County Longford village sign relating to Killashee at the Green is faded (in common with other village signs throughout County). Whereas these signs are excellent and informative, they have been in place for perhaps 10 years now, and need 'touching up'. There was faded fly posting on a traffic sign pole near the post-box. The litter bin sponsored by Magan's needs repainting. What about a colour other than black/? Black is the most difficult colour for someone with a visual impairment to see.

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

The 3 roofed level property across from Magan's looks really well, as do the properties beside and opposite Magan's – all these form the focal point of the village. You are an encouragement and practical help to residential property owners. Cluain na Sidhe had a weed-free footpath on its approach. However one tree was missing and the stake on another tree was broken. The same was noted in an inner green area. A few gardens needed trimming, and a few chimneys need painting. The green area with nice tree groups looked well at 2 corners, but at one corner we noted burnt vegetation from weed killing. The fencing to the back of the estate is a bit sub-standard and needs planting.

At Cnoc na Sidhe we observed some parking on footpaths which is bad practice. Hanging basket brackets on many houses were not in use, and should be removed if unused. An ugly retaining wall of mass concrete within the estate would benefit from planting. Opposite this estate there was a seemingly abandoned house with overgrown banks.

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

The maintenance and improvement of natural stone walls is of importance on the approach roads also. (You mention this under the Built Environment category). The road verges are well maintained. You have carried out a lot of work under this category this year. The resurfacing of the footpath to the Church of Ireland/cemetery must be of great benefit to the community - as well as looking well. You have repaired a wall and added a flower bed near the Catholic Church. Holly bushes have been planted along the boundary on the Clondra Road and along the Lanesborough Road. You have taken last year's adjudicators advice on-board in this regard. Some field gates have been painted, but we would like to see all field gates on the approaches and within the village painted in a uniform colour if possible.

On the Clondra approach road the village boulder name sign was slightly obscured by growth which was supposed to enhance it. A good large stone recessed entrance would benefit from weeding. At the edge of that recessed entrance a road sign for a junction was off-centre (facing slightly inwards instead of facing approaching traffic). A road traffic sign nearer the village had a very dirty striped upright. The road sign for the opening bridge also had a very dirty striped upright. Here too it would be good if field gates could be painted. The immediate approach to the village is very attractive. On the Ballymahon approach road the native trees planted need to be staked correctly as they were billowing in the wind on adjudication day. The stile restoration project is good. On the Longford approach there were some dusty 'competing' road signs and overgrowth on the approach to the canal bridge. Can signage be amalgamated? Perhaps you could talk to the NRA/local authority. Beyond the canal bridge on the Longford approach we noted some dead branches inside the ditch and also some bare hedging edges. Road markings around the canal bridge area are quite faded. The green space on the Lanesborough approach had one fly post. Part of the open space needs reseeding. We admired the bog oak and the planted bicycle. Two village signs are located very close to one another. Are two necessary? We noticed some dead branches and one farm area/building needs screening on this approach. On the Keenagh Road two properties would benefit from screening. The 'children crossing' sign was dirty. On the same road field gates and white fencing at the 60 K pH need paint.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

Killashee is a lovely village and you are taking care of your village. We enjoyed our visit on a sunny day and were glad to see canoeists enjoying the canal. It is difficult keeping a village on a main road free from litter and keeping everything clean, but you are succeeding well. You live in lovely surroundings. We wish you well for the future. Go n-éirí libh!