

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kildavin** Ref: **1147**
County: **Carlow** Mark: **270**
Category: **A** Date(s): **09/07/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	38	39
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	33	34
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	38	39
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	21	22
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	14	14
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	62	62
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	31	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	29	29
TOTAL MARK	450	266	270

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Welcome Kildavin to the 2017 Tidy Towns competition, many thanks for your entry. Thank you for preparing a three year plan. The plan would benefit from being in a tabulate form with projects for each year indicated. I think that the 2016 adjudicator was asking you to highlight on the map locations where the projects were carried out as opposed to just "special locations". Highlighting the projects makes it much easier for your adjudicator to find them, assess and award marks appropriately. You might consider not covering such a wide area in your map next year.

<https://www.openstreetmap.org> is a good resource for royalty free, clear maps. When you have compiled your list of projects completed in the last year, number them sequentially in your entry form and keep the same numbers for each project on the map with an appropriate legend. Some projects may not be appropriate to indicate on the map, such as surveys, so leave them off the map.

You have good communications within your community and are well integrated into a wide and varied group of organisations. It is great to see cooperation with Clonegal and Bunclody. Keep up the involvement with the school and I wish you success with your ambitious three year plan. Thank you for the photographs and don't forget to take before and after photographs especially of painting projects. In writing this report I have included suggestions that you may or may not (for reasons unknown to this adjudicator) be able to complete over the coming years. They are given in the spirit of constructive criticism and please don't let them take away from the many years of work that you have put into up keeping your village.

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

The development of the walkway to Spellman Park GAA grounds will be a fine addition to the village and provide safer access to the grounds. Please try to retain and repair the stone walls along this route as they are the foundation of the special atmosphere of your village. The path may need to be aligned behind the wall in places or it might be more suitable to have the path behind the existing stone walls for the complete route? Conways Pub and Restaurant looked very welcoming on adjudication day. The colour scheme was much admired. The idea of providing a link between the South Leinster Walkway and the Wicklow Way is a brilliant idea and would surely bring additional tourists to the village. Please update us on your progress in next years application. I wonder would it be possible to address the bare block wall at the top of the village beside the church and school as it terminates the vista heading up the hill. The vista coming from Spellman Park terminated by the Church of Ireland is wonderful. Check all planters leave at least 1.2m and ideally 1.8m width of path to leave access for all, wheelchair, buggies etc. The contemporary stone paving pattern was admired at the community garden. The pig sculpture was an interesting and eye-catching addition to the weighing house.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

It is great to see that you are taking action on the banks at school as it is a prominent location. There may be a need for additional plants on top of what is planted. Roses are a good choice as some of the bare ground appears to be created by people taking shortcuts across the fence to the carpark and the rose thorns will discourage this behaviour. Some of the wooden planters in the village need repair and/or replacing as they are rotten or have loose metal bands that are falling off. The trees in and at the side of Conway's were magnificent. Are there any plans to look at managing/replacing them in the long term, or planting more at suitable locations around the village, as they add so much character to the village. Choose sites carefully as you will be planting for future generations. To use the Chinese proverb "The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now."

The planting variety behind the stag statue will continue to swamp the tourist information panel, deer statue and stone wall. Maybe consider removing the planting in autumn, replant it elsewhere, and replace it with a more suitable low growing plant that will not block the fine stone wall behind and let the information panel stand out. It may not even need any plant.

Trees need to be kept weed/grass free, for a minimum of three years, 1m radius around the base to allow them to establish properly. You can hand weed or use mulch with/without a weed block membrane. Keeping the area around the tree base free from other growth makes a huge difference to the growth of the tree and helps minimise damage from strimmers and lawnmower decks scratching the base of the trunk of the tree. The tree stakes in Crowsgrove are not supporting the trees but are damaging them by the tree rubbing off the stake in the wind. The trees are holding up the stakes in the majority of cases. The tree stakes should be removed when the tree no longer need support.

The raised herb and vegetable is a nice addition but was a bit overgrown and could do with a prune back.

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

Please give specific details of the awareness campaign that you have initiated on the river Slaney and what specific actions you have implemented from the National Pollinator Plan in next year's entry. At the southern approach off the N80, maybe consider allowing the currently maintained short cut grass grow long and allow wildflowers to bloom and set seed. Sightlines will also need to be maintained here so take care, but the extent of short grass is not required. Other possible locations for this kind of treatment were the large areas of short grass outside Spellman Park, the large areas of grass in Crowsgrove estate and also at the graveyard, adjacent to the limes. Adequate sightlines can still be maintained whilst allowing grass and wildflowers to grow which would be of great benefit to wildlife and help to raise awareness at these much visited locations. Check out sightlines required with your local authority area engineer. Ideally link these meadow areas back to hedgerows. Use vinegar, dishwashing liquid and salt to kill weeds as an alternative to glyphosate (RoundUp, Rambo) weed killers. There are numerous recipes online. Or there are weed burners. The most environmentally friendly way is to mulch (with/without membrane) and/or handweed. Record the specific amount of weedkiller that you are using now and track the progress over the coming years and let your adjudicator know in your entry form.

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

Well done to all involved with the Green Flag in the National School. It's brilliant to see that children are being introduced to the source of their food and are involved in watching it grow. Thank you for the photos of the cooking demonstration with an emphasis on locally produced food. It was very well attended. No need to include the "Calling Time on Waste" booklet in your application. Try to give your adjudicator how behaviour has changed in this area. Record the current situation and monitor the changes. Place an estimate on how much of harmful cleaning products have been replaced by greener methods. Well done in raising awareness of these issues in your website. Also see <http://localprevention.ie/tidy-towns/> for many inspirational ideas for this category.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Your village looked largely litter free on adjudication day, but some things do need attention. The railings at the steps into the school grounds need painting/ repair. The Kildavin to The Nine Stones sign needs painting. Some field gates within the village could do with painting also. 50kmh sign from southern approach off N80 could do with a wash. The remains of a timber pole in the ground beside the bin at the recycling center should be removed, or maybe get someone to carve it into a mini sculpture? Well done on your joint Spring Clean with Bunclody.

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

The work on getting an estate name signs for Crowsgrove is to be welcomed. Take care and try to use a material and style that is in keeping with how you want to present your village. Using a similar style and material throughout the village will make a big impact on how the village looks. Glassheen looked well presented.

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

The "Kildavin" planting coming off the southern approach off the N80 is difficult to see and appreciate. Might the plants be moved in the autumn to the bank on the left hand of the sign for Bagenalstown/Kildavin opposite its current location. A few lower tree branches may need removing also. This may not be feasible and it might be easier to plant a new sign here. On the approach road from the GAA pitch maybe ask the landowner to allow trees grow up from the cut hedges. They could be 20/30m apart and will provide valuable habitats for wildlife. Look up for overhead wires before choosing locations. There are opportunities along the approach roads to allow foxgloves and other wildflowers to grow also.

Concluding Remarks:

Your stone walls and large parkland trees really add character to your village and they should be continued to be protected, maintained and developed . I enjoyed my visit and hope to return soon.