

Tidy Towns Competition 2025

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Straffan - Teach Sraifain** Ref: **385**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **396**
Category: **C** Date(s): **17/06/2025**
24/07/2025

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2024	Mark Awarded 2025
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	51	52
Streetscape & Public Places	80	46	48
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	51	53
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	47	49
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	23	24
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	74	76
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	43	45
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	47	49
TOTAL MARK	550	382	396

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

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Bhailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2025. Go raibh maith agaibh as bhur iarratas a chur isteach. Maith sibh don obair atá déanta agaibh in bhur cheantar go dtí seo - guímid gach rath oraibh i bhur dtionscadail amach anseo. Ádh mór. Straffan are welcome to the Supervalu Tidy Towns competition for 2025. Thank you for your application and map. It was a pleasure as always to visit your town after a number of years and admire the new projects, which have been completed to develop and enhance the area. Like most villages and towns, Straffan has grown in population and of course this also means more housing. There is a deep sense of pride in the community on their continued maintenance of the town to match this growing demand. There is an active committee of fourteen members of which most are retired. Most Tidy Towns groups involve several retired people which brings great experience and is to the benefit of all committee members. There are also a number of volunteers who help with litter picking and other tasks. Meetings are held as required to organise work plans and projects. Communication is through WhatsApp, public notices, and word of mouth. There is ongoing support from Kildare County Council, local school, businesses, sporting organisations and all other community groups in the town through funding and advice. There is good interaction with the youth from the area, from Drama Green School to other groups in the community. Students from Celbridge secondary school volunteer with Straffan Tidy Towns as part of the Gaisce award. This is a particularly effective way of involving youth in your activities. Well done on your achievement in 2024 national pride of place competition, on winning a national award category for the community hall.

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

Straffan and the surrounding countryside are rich in heritage and history. The committee are adamant that these heritage sites will be appreciated and remembered in Straffan for future generations. All projects developed to meet present day demands of the community are in keeping with the heritage of Straffan. Your new project this year, of a heritage trail, is commended. The community hall looks pristine from works completed on the building and surrounds. The school is very well presented and has space for outdoor classes which the pupils can enjoy, weather permitting. Maintenance of the Lych gate entrance to the cemetery and the grounds is ongoing and caters well for the needs of those visiting the cemetery. The churches are both looking superb with their bright facades and landscaped grounds. The fundraising event which is held at the Church of Ireland to help maintain these buildings, is well known, with many customers travelling great distances to take part in buying and selling. You are fortunate to have superb businesses in your midst, such as the K Club and Barberstown House, who engage with the Tidy Towns on any new developments and projects. They both add immensely to Straffan and are complimented on the high standard of their presentation. Lodge Park steam museum and walled gardens is a wonderful place for cyclists to meet and enjoy the surroundings and refreshments. Straffan is also fortunate to have thriving businesses in the area which is most important for shopping locally and enjoying a night out. The service points have been enhanced into points of interest from the application of superb artwork. The bollards are fresh and clean bring much needed

safety to the streetscape.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The well maintained roundabout leading to Straffan gives a splendid first impression to those visiting. The entrance signs are bright and colourful. The themed colour scheme, which is carried through to most of the planting, shows thought and planning to make every effort to co-ordinate the landscaping. Trees and hedging were admired on the approach roads and throughout the streetscape and housing estates. The areas of natural wildlife planting were also admired. Planting of tubs and ground beds and reducing on hanging baskets is commended. Ground planting is more appropriate where different plants can be used, and it also helps to reduce on maintenance.

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

You are fortunate to have such an accessible area of natural habitats at the K Club, where the community can walk and enjoy the natural surroundings and learn about local species and habitats. You are commended on working together so wildlife on the estate can be monitored and protected. Driving through the grounds there are many areas of interest for wildlife enthusiasts, and it would make an ideal project to monitor and record these areas. Trees are also in abundance with many native species. You are working to a new Biodiversity plan which was put on hold to complete your heritage project. Next year's application will no doubt include some more interesting projects in this area. Planting throughout Straffan includes pollinator friendly plants that complements the natural surroundings of the town. The insect/bug hotel would have a high star rating on its presentation. The GAA grounds will make an ideal area to display information boards on plants and wildlife in the surroundings. There is a lot of footfall in GAA grounds and is a superb place to learn more about nature as well as enjoy the recreational aspect of the area.

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

In this category groups are asked to show how they are making their area more sustainable by their activities. The Community Hall project has included solar panels to help reduce the electricity cost for the hall. More homes are installing solar panels with the help of a grant to reduce on costs. The use of rainwater as noted from water butts is also commended. Food waste is another area where large savings can be made, and it is positive that you are promoting saving methods in the community. Walking and cycling are good on reducing emissions. The provision of cycle stands is also important. It is important that the businesses of the area are showing good examples on making their premises more sustainable. Locals can adapt a number of these measures to their own homes.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

There is a good plan in place around keeping Straffan clean, tidy and litter free, with the wider community getting involved and ensuring that this happens. When an area promotes an air of cleanliness it is most likely that the community and visitors will adopt to this trend. Keeping the kerbs free of litter and not using chemicals is highly commended. The Green Kilometre clean ups ensure roadside verges outside your area are litter free. This creates an awareness among the community and shows a profound sense of pride in where they live and work. Have you noticed a reduction in the amount of litter that is collected on Clean Up days? Hopefully, it is reducing with all the ongoing work involved.

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

The residential areas of Straffan are exceptionally well presented. The planting throughout is bright and colourful and includes pollinator friendly plants, which is important. The planting scheme colour is carried throughout the streetscape. Trees are exceptional, particularly the Hornbeams. St Bridget's Terrace was also visited and admired on its presentation, particularly the cottage style garden. It was charming to relax on the seating and enjoy the colourful gardens and well painted facades of the houses around. It shows the community of Straffan have a deep sense of pride in their homes and community. The residents are commended for their work in presenting their homes and gardens to such a high standard as well as helping with projects in the wider community.

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

The approach road to Straffan, starting at the well-presented roundabout gives a very good first impression to those visiting. The ground and container planting along entrance roads is very colourful and well maintained. Trees and hedging form a large part of the boundary on all approach roads and are well cared for. The planting around Barberstown House was greatly admired. The entrance from Naas has superb entrance signage and landscaping at the K Club. Perhaps, all the entrance signs on all roads should be uniform in design, while ensuring all vegetation is cut back from signage. Verges are neat while retaining a corridor for wildlife with splendid natural planting noted. You mention the bollards need attention. They do serve a purpose in keeping traffic off the grass and they can be attractive.

Concluding Remarks:

Straffan was a pleasure to visit and adjudicate. You are committed to retain the natural historical qualities of the area. You are doing splendid work in this area and are wished well in the future.

Second Round Adjudication:

Thank you for the very fine work that went into your entry this year. This was detailed but easily read and gave a great feel for your work through the last year. First of all, we would like to congratulate you on winning your Pride of

Place Award in 2024. This is an amazing achievement which you richly deserve. We were delighted to be asked to carry out second-round adjudication for your lovely little village.

On approach, we noted the great improvements at the roundabout and adjacent roadside areas at Barberstown Castle. This really makes for a great first impression. Later, uncut verges and hedgerows have quite correctly been left untouched for wildlife. We'd have liked to have visited properly the grounds of your Church of Ireland church but these were locked on adjudication day unfortunately. It was noted though that this could be the site of a little nature reserve, with the right management. In your entry, you mention the large volumes of traffic that pass through your village. In that vein, we wondered whether there isn't need for better pedestrian crossing at the heart of your village. It feels like there should be a crossing near the junction, rather than further down. The pedestrian gets rather a poor deal too when they reach the shop/petrol station. Here, the footpath comes to an end and they must either walk across the forecourt or on the road. Perhaps this could be explored.

The aforementioned service station, shop and adjacent beauty salon were all in good order on adjudication day. So too the other few businesses of Straffan. The Interior Design cum Café looked very well with its outdoor seating area. Well-kept also was the adjacent salon. The painted junction boxes look great. We noted that great attention to detail has been paid with all signs being clean and areas swept.

We admire very much your tenacity in completing the heritage trail. Such a worthwhile project for Straffan! The blue plaques look great. No doubt the main information board will be super too. This was the first time that we had seen your renovated Community Centre and it really looked fantastic. A special word of praise for the information board in front of the RC Church. Not only was the information very interesting and well-written, but the presentation is superb. This is really an example for others to follow.

A number of residential areas were visited and none disappointed. Lovely landscape planting at the front of Straffan Gate was noted. Church View is such a beautiful terrace. Hammerstone was neat and tidy and the trees at The Beeches were admired.

We were very encouraged to see such improvements in Straffan. We are very pleased to endorse the comments and points allocation of our colleague. You are wished well in all your future endeavours.