

Tidy Towns Competition 2025

Adjudication Report

Centre:	Ballinamore - Béal an Átha Mhóir	Ref:	422
County:	Leitrim	Mark:	348
Category:	C	Date(s):	21/07/2025

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2024	Mark Awarded 2025
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	50	51
Streetscape & Public Places	80	44	45
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	52	52
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	38	39
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	29	30
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	57	57
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	39	40
TOTAL MARK	550	342	348

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.

Welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition for 2025. Thank you for your entry which included a coloured map and a numbered legend indicating the location of your various projects. You have been successful in increasing your committee membership from 10 to 15 and your volunteers from 15 to 25. You have a good working relationship with other groups in the community, including your youth and schools. You get support from Leitrim County Council, Leitrim Volunteer Centre, Rehab Care, the Cherry Blossom Centre, Men's Shed, Hen's Shed, Active Age Group and Waterways Ireland. Communication is achieved through local media, text alert, Facebook and Leitrim Volunteer Web. Well done to your Liaison Officer, who visits the national and secondary schools regarding your overall campaign, including, litter picks, biodiversity and Leave No Trace. Well done on the ONE specific project to reinforce Hydrangea planting around the town, actively designating areas for wildlife, and encouraging biodiversity by planting fruit trees at the Sports Hall. Congratulations to the National School for creating the vegetables and fruit garden and on achieving second place in the 'Love Where You Live' competition.

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

The Junction Hub is a very successful refurbishment and reuse of the former railway station complex. No doubt this continue to provide a significant artistic and educational community facility of great value to the town. The sympathetic restoration of the former railway buildings has been very well achieved, and, externally, the paved surfaces have been very successfully landscaped. At the old Courthouse and Genealogical Center, a similar treatment would hugely enhance these important historical town centre buildings. Hopefully, the feasibility study will focus on refurbishment and reuse of this complex. Here, the external forecourt is again successfully landscaped with an appropriate selection of materials. External street furniture, including tables, seating, lighting lanterns and plant boxes, combine to create an important and functional public realm space. Well done to Men's Shed on the provision of some very attractive, blue coloured seating admired here. Opposite and higher on the street, the Lakelands Angling Centre, with its white coloured walls, and vivid red door and windows looks excellent. The external display of goods here provided a busy atmosphere. Lower down on Main Street, a cluster of hospitality buildings, have some very welcoming and colourful presentations including Smyths, Scollán's, Peter's Bar, Lawrence's Bar, Tabhairne an Bainc and Shorts Heritage Bar. At the Hotel, gold leaf lettering and an array of colourful flower presentations, were admired. The primary care centre at the Line has an excellent contemporary design and is well landscaped. The impact of the car park area was visually reduced by some well-considered planting and, here, the threshold gardens of the individual units, with good quality bi-lingual signs, look particularly

well. Unfortunately, the directional sign at the entrance was in need of a refresh and a clean. Last year's adjudicator made a number of suggestions that you might consider to improve green spaces surrounding this important area of your town, close by the entrance to the atmospheric Canal Walk. On Park Road, excellent presentations were observed at the Community School, the Children's Playground, the Garda Station and The Den. Well done to all concerned with these very impressive presentations.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The canal and lock area were particularly busy on the day of adjudication and were a great illustration of how popular this area has become. Your entry form lists a substantial maintenance programme that your workers and volunteers carry out, spread throughout the town and its environs. You are to be congratulated on your maintenance partnership arrangement with Sean Bhaile and Clós Eaglaise social housing estates and we wish this initiative success in the Love Where You Live competition. At the top of High Street, close by the previously mentioned Angling Centre shop, a row of single-storey, traditional town houses was observed. These pastel coloured streetscape houses have a charming scale, retain their original window and door proportions, and are worthy of long term conservation.

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

Ballinamore is surrounded by important wetland, bog and lake habitats. Its ecological value is reinforced by low-intensity farming methods in the environs, conservation education as promoted by local groups such as the Tidy Towns committee and the ongoing development of trails and walks to encourage closer interaction between residents/visitors and the town's natural environment. The town overlooks a canal connecting the Erne and Shannon rivers, revitalised in 1994 as the Shannon-erne Waterway. The Canal Walkway offers tranquil waterside views, following towpaths, local roads and the canal itself and is designed to take residents/visitors through diverse riparian and wetland habitats, contributing to habitat connectivity and public awareness of local biodiversity. The ongoing maintenance of such walkways places a relentless pressure on local volunteers and workers. Similarly, the expanding Ballinamore Greenway follows the old railway corridor through areas of wetlands, lakes, marshes and woodland, supporting biodiversity corridors and wildlife movement. Leitrim's forthcoming local authority biodiversity action plan (LABAP 2025-2030) frames biodiversity promotion across transport and recreational infrastructure, and encourages public consultation to shape local biodiversity actions. This plan encourages the development of interpretive signage and participatory biodiversity mapping, alongside nature trails, to engage residents and visitors with habitat restoration and species conservation efforts. The Tidy Towns committee members, and volunteers, continue to be involved in such initiatives as swift and bat box projects, 'foraging with Avril', community gardens and interpretive arts at 'The Junction' Hub, pollinator friendly planting throughout the town and managing green verges for wildlife. You mentioned also the establishment of a new Biodiversity Group in the area.

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

Some years ago your committee was successful in procuring €100 funding to purchase a Polytunnel. It is good to read today, that this polytunnel continues to enable you to harvest seeds and propagate bulbs for planting in your various landscaping projects. More recently PeacePlus funding has been received for the development of a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), due to commence shortly and includes a plan to develop facilities for disabled users and to extend the existing playground nearby. Further funding to enable Ballinamore to build a low-carbon, sustainable community was awarded by the Community Climate Action Programme to promote Solar Panels and EV Chargers in the town. Sustainability in Ballinamore emerges from strong, grassroots leadership as seen in the Tidy Towns Committee, local schools, and community groups such as the Ballinamore Area Community Council, working in tandem with strategic support and funding from Leitrim County Council and EU programmes. This collaborative model ensures ongoing community engagement to create low-carbon, inclusive and environmentally robust infrastructure. Ballinamore Community School runs a successful Green Schools programme where students engage in composting, pollinator planting, refillable bottle stations, cycle promotion, and more, contributing actively to school and local sustainability culture.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Success under this agenda stems from a close synergy between community determination, a structured Tidy Towns planning approach, and Leitrim County Council support through guidance and funding streams. Hopefully you will be successful in your appeal for further funding for power washing of footpaths, especially outside the tourist office. A tidy, green town correlates with a perceived better quality of life for residents and longer stay for tourists. Your Tidy Towns members, volunteers and workers organise regular litter picks, flower planting and cooperative maintenance efforts such as painting and cleaning of public areas. However, there are some problems, such as dereliction, which are difficult for a local voluntary committee to handle. Your committee has had great success over the years in encouraging businesses and residents to maintain and enhance their properties. Derelict buildings remain a visible issue in Ballinamore, partly tied to systemic vacancy rates in County Leitrim. Leitrim County Council is addressing the problem through grant schemes, awareness events, emerging enforcement tools like site registers and levies and targeted redevelopment projects. As an example, LCC recently purchased a vacant Main Street property which is now being converted into four social-housing units. Perhaps, the most noteworthy example of ongoing dereliction is the historical and architectural gem, the old Courthouse as earlier mentioned. Located at the very center of town, it holds a dominant position and forms an important part of the town's unique character. It is good to read that the Ballinamore Development Company has commissioned a feasibility study to explore viable options for the development of the Courthouse. This study aims to enhance the building's social and economic value for the community, including, the potential incorporation of a John McGahern cultural experience. The vision for Ballinamore, as outlined in the Leitrim County Development Plan, is to

strengthen its role as a self-sustaining growth town with well-developed infrastructure, significant employment opportunities, and comprehensive community facilities. This approach supports the regeneration of derelict areas, while preserving the town's unique character.

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

It was encouraging to observe new housing under construction at Park Road. We look forward to the completion of this scheme in the near future. Elsewhere, the town has a good range of housing schemes and all were visited. The standard of housing estate presentation is high and is a credit to your residents. Again, last year's adjudicator made a number of suggestions that you might consider, particularly in relation to the hosting of inter-estate competitions. Competitions have proved to be very effective in many towns and villages throughout the country. Committees have found that the contact helps to foster relationships between Tidy Towns groups and residents and, in turn, provides an acknowledgement of community efforts.

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

The Enniskillen approach road, along to Park Road, is lined with some previously mentioned, well presented properties including the GAA grounds, Sports complex, Community School and The Den. Generally, announcement signage is bright and welcoming but the twinning sign has now faded, is difficult to read and is in need of a freshen up. The panoramic views enjoyed along the Mohill/Fenagh entrance road are hugely enhanced by some very well considered planting interventions along the linear green, roadside margins, and by the presentations of the forecourt ground at the schools and Men's Shed. The Greenway development is an exciting project and new planting was admired here. Announcement signs had a welcoming appearance and verges were managed to good eco-principles. Well done to your TÚS workers on some excellent planting presentations at various locations throughout your environs.

Concluding Remarks:

The committee is well aware of what is needed to ensure a viable future for Ballinamore. Your 5-year Plan outlines a structured focus for you to create achievable goals. The commitment of your workers and volunteers is to be seen throughout the town. This, combined with your structured approach, will ensure a sustainable future.